



RESEARCH UNIT FOR THE
STUDY OF SOCIETY, LAW
AND RELIGION (RUSLR)



PUBLIC LECTURE

“Islam and Moral Regulation in Indonesia: An End in Sight?”

When: Wednesday, 21 October 2009 at 1.00pm

Where: Moot Court Room, Ligertwood Building, Law School

Speaker: Tim Lindsey is Professor of Asian Law and Director of the Asian Law Centre and Foundation Director of the Centre for Islamic Law and Society in the Melbourne Law School. He is also an ARC Federation Fellow, leading a 5-year research program titled “Islam and Modernity: Syari’ah, Terrorism and Governance in South-East Asia”. He is Chair of the Australia Indonesia Institute and a founding editor of the *Australian Journal of Asian Law*. Tim’s recent publications include *Indonesia: Law and Society*, *Corruption in Asia* (with Howard Dick), *Chinese Indonesians: Remembering, Distorting, Forgetting* (with Helen Pausacker) and *Law Reform in Developing and Transitional States*. He is completing a three book series on Islam and laws in Southeast Asia.

Synopsis: Indonesia’s democratisation and decentralisation in the wake of Soeharto’s resignation in May 1998 ended three decades of state repression of public expressions of Islamic identity. The result was a dramatic reassertion of Islamic politics and ‘Syariahisation’ as it is known in Indonesia: attempts to legislate norms derived from Islamic traditions, at both local and national levels, including in Aceh. These attempts have typically been socially conservative and highly controversial, and the best-known cases relate to pornography, sexuality and moral regulation. They have provoked debate, protests and sometimes violence, and women and minority groups have been targets of legal harassment and violence. So far, however, the government has been careful to avoid intervention in this controversy, even if that means neglecting its legal responsibilities. Professor Lindsey will argue, however, that despite the debate they have provoked, the proponents of legal Islamisation have been largely unsuccessful in achieving their decades-old objectives of enforcing a conservative interpretation of Syari’ah, and the tide may now be turning against them.

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