Media Release

John Elferink
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

**Attorney-General to connect with criminal lawyers**

19 June 2015

Attorney-General John Elferink says he is looking forward to a robust and enlightening debate when he addresses a biennial conference of Northern Territory lawyers.

Issues including the use of expert forensic evidence, indigenous community sentencing and the right to silence are on the agenda of the Criminal Lawyers Association of the Northern Territory conference in Bali.

“The Territory Government has embarked upon major reforms of the criminal justice system since 2012,” Mr Elferink said.

“We have introduced the Serious Sex Offender Act, codified the rules of evidence and passed legislation to streamline procedures for summary criminal matters.

“The conference is a great opportunity to connect with the Territory’s criminal lawyers. I’m sure we’ll have plenty to talk about.”

The conference opens tomorrow and runs for six days, but Mr Elferink will return to Darwin after delivering his address on Monday.

En route to Bali Mr Elferink will also visit Timor-Leste in his capacity as Health Minister.

He will be given a tour of the country’s major hospital, the Hospital Nacional Guido Valadares, by its head of emergency medicine, Dr Antony Chenhall.

“I’m keen to learn much more about the health service in Timor-Leste,” Mr Elferink said.

“The country faces major challenges in providing healthcare and has forged very close ties with our own Department of Health.

“I’ll be looking to see what else we can do to help improve the healthcare of the Timorese people and forge even closer ties with them.”
Mr Elferink will also meet with representatives of Marie Stopes International to learn about its work in Timor-Leste and South East Asia.

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