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Your Ref:

FROM THE PRESIDENT

21 September 2007

Mr Ivan Fernandez
The Editor
The New Paper
1000 Toa Payoh North
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Via email & fax no 6319 8265

Dear Sir

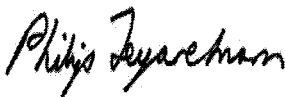
LAWYERS ENTITLED TO CHARGE REASONABLE FEES FOR WORK DONE

I refer to the article titled "Lawyers failed to get money for dead worker's family. Judge asks: will you refund fee" that was published in the New Paper on 20 September 2007.

It is true that the Law Society has provided structured schemes for pro bono work by which the profession can discharge its special responsibility to the community in relation to access to justice. Many lawyers give their time freely through these schemes as well as individually or with other organisations of our members, such as the Catholic Lawyers' Guild, the Singapore Association of Women's Lawyers and the Association of Criminal Lawyers of Singapore.

This is completely different from the question of lawyers' entitlement to charge reasonable fees for the work that they do. Lawyers do not, any more than other professionals or business entities, have any duty to reduce or waive fees. Lawyers may choose to reduce or waive fees if the client appears deserving, but they cannot be criticised for insisting on a reasonable fee for work done at the client's request regardless of the final outcome of the matter for the client.

Yours faithfully



Philip Jeyaretnam, S.C.
President



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