

# TIMOR SEA JUSTICE:

## An open letter to the Australian Government's maritime boundary negotiating team.

7th March, 2005

We, the undersigned citizens of Australia, address this letter to those representatives of our government who will negotiate with representatives of the government of East Timor about maritime boundaries in the Timor Sea.

We strongly believe that the positions you take to these meetings should reflect the views of the people of Australia, the people you represent, and our values of fairness and equity.

East Timor is a country recovering from the ravages of war, with high levels of poverty, malnutrition and infant mortality. Natural resources lying in the Timor Sea, resources which under International Law lie within East Timor's Exclusive Economic Zone, could be an invaluable source of revenue for East Timor.

With their just share of Timor Sea oil and gas revenues, our new neighbours will be able to overcome starvation, illiteracy and preventable disease.

To this end, we firmly request that you:

- conclude a prompt, fair and equitable settlement which reflects East Timor's entitlement under current principles of international law.

Signed,

**The Hon John Dowd AO QC**,  
President of the Australian section of the International Commission of Jurists

**Chris Maxwell QC**, Barrister

**Julian Burnside QC**

**Sam Biondo**, Community Development Worker, Fitzroy Legal Services

**Peter Singer**,

Ira W. DeCamp Professor of Bioethics, Princeton University

**Janet Hunt**,

Research Fellow, ANU

**John McLaren**,

Emeritus Professor, Australian and Pacific Studies, Victoria University

**Dr Tim Anderson**,

University of Sydney

**Barry Mendelawitz**,

Clinical Assoc. Professor School of Medicine University of Notre Dame Australia

**Hamish Ewing**,

Associate Professor of Surgery, University of Melbourne

**John Legge AO**, Emeritus Professor, Centre of South East Asian Studies, Monash University

**Dr Jean McCaughey AO**, retired social researcher

**Bill Sobey**, retired CSIRO scientist

**Tony Kevin**, former Australian diplomat 1968-98 (Australian ambassador to Cambodia 1994-97)

**David Bridle**, musician

**Deborah Conway**, musician

**Dr Martin Wesley-Smith AM**, composer

**Mairead Hannan**, Composer, Centenary Medal recipient

**James Mollison AO**, former Director of the National Gallery of Australia and National Gallery of Victoria

**Patrick McCaughey**, former Director of the National Gallery of Victoria

**Liegh Hubbard**, Secretary of the Victorian Trades Hall Council

**Ian Melrose**, businessman

**Bernard Gerbes**, Public Accountant

- agree to set the boundaries between the two nations along the median line, halfway between the coastlines of East Timor and Australia, and with equitable lateral boundaries.
- stop unilaterally exploiting contested areas until a just settlement is reached
- place the proceeds Australia has taken from contested petroleum fields into a trust account, pending the settlement of the Timor Sea dispute.

While we recognise the dire need East Timor has for revenue, we understand that this is not a matter of charity, but one of justice.

As neighbours, East Timor and Australia have close ties. Thousands of East Timorese were killed helping Australian troops in the Second World War. In 1999, Australian troops were able to return the favour with the deployment of InterFET after the historic ballot for independence.

We the undersigned citizens of Australia want our Government to build on this goodwill between the two nations, respecting the sovereignty of East Timor and the Human Rights of its people.

Initiated by Timor Sea Justice Campaign, Melbourne.

[www.timorseajustice.org](http://www.timorseajustice.org)

**Louise Redmond**, Consultant, corporate responsibility

**Mavis Taylor**, National Living Treasure

**Dr Davis McCaughey AC**, former Governor of Victoria

**Tom Uren, AO**, former Whitlam/Hawke Minister

**Bob Brown**, Senator for Tasmania

**Andrew Bartlett**, Senator for Queensland

**Glenys Romanes**, Deputy President and Chair of Committees, Legislative Council, Parliament of Victoria

**Mary Delahunty**, Minister for the Arts and Women's Affairs, Parliament of Victoria

**Don Nardella MLA**, State Member for Melton

**Jenny Mikakos MP**, State Member for Jika Jika,

**Richard Wynne MP**, State Member for Richmond, Cabinet Secretary

**Rob Hudson MP**, State Member for Bentleigh

**Mary Gillett MP**, Parliamentary Secretary for Commonwealth Games and Women's Affairs

**Johan Scheffer**, State Member for Monash Province

**David Risstrom**, Greens Senate Candidate

**Dr Phil West**, Initiator and Co-founder – The Alannah and Madeline Foundation

**Rob Wesley-Smith**, Australians for a Free East Timor, Darwin

**Rosemary Patterson**, East Timor Mission Co-ordinator for the Carmelite Friars

**Lorna and Bill Hannan**, educationist and author

**Arnold Zable**, Novelist

**Guy Rundle**, Writer

**Rod Quantock**, Comedian

**Joseph A. Camilleri**, Pax Christi Australia

**Bishop Hilton Deakin**

**Shirley Shackleton**

Organisations:

- **Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Uniting Church in Australia**
- **Melbourne Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace**
- **Australian Coalition for Economic Justice**
- **Australia-East Timor Association.**