



## Timor Sea Justice Campaign News

## Latest News

### Australia and East Timor recommence talks over gas and oil dispute

Tuesday, October 28, 2014

Reports from Fairfax Media that Australia and East Timor have recommenced discussions about how to settle the dispute over maritime boundaries, have been welcomed by Australian community activists calling for fair and permanent maritime boundaries to be established in accordance with current international law.

The Timor Sea Justice Campaign's spokesperson in Melbourne, Tom Clarke, said the news was an encouraging sign, but now was the time for Australians to increase the pressure on the Government to ensure East Timor gets a fair go during negotiations.

"It's early days, but this is a positive first step in the right direction," said Mr Clarke.

On Tuesday, [Fairfax Media reported](#) the "two countries have already begun talks on a framework for negotiations on the boundary dispute."

"Essentially, these are just 'talks about talks' but you have to start somewhere and it's good to see that the Australian Government is seemingly willing to move on from its underhanded and bullying tactics that have plagued this issue for decades," said Mr Clarke.

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The Timor Sea Justice Campaign – which has active groups in Melbourne and Sydney – said it would be launching a ‘crowd funding’ initiative to help bankroll its plans for campaigning in 2015.

“We’ve obviously been in this situation before and seen things go pear-shaped due to Australia’s refusal to acknowledge current international law as it’s applied to maritime boundaries. So it’s important that the Government is aware that Australians are watching and given the allegations about bugging the previous negotiations and so on, the public are likely to be on the look out for a rat,” said Mr Clarke.

The Timor Sea Justice Campaign has consistently urged the Australian Government to resubmit to the maritime boundary jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea – both of which Australia preemptively withdrew from in 2002.

“It’s hard to take seriously the arguments put forward by the Australian Government whilst it refuses to recognise the independent umpire in these matters. So resubmitting Australia to the ICJ’s jurisdiction when it comes to maritime boundaries would be a key step in ensuring that these negotiations get off on the right track,” said Mr Clarke.

*For further information or comments, please call Tom Clarke on 0422 545 763.*

(Details of next TSJC Melbourne meeting to be held late November coming soon.)