

TIMOR SEA JUSTICE CAMPAIGN

A FAIR GO FOR EAST TIMOR



Timor Sea Justice Campaign News

40 years after East Timor first declared independence – its journey to full sovereignty continues

Saturday, November 28, 2015

Forty years ago on this day, East Timor first declared its independence. Today – having endured a brutal military occupation to reclaim its Independence in 2002 – it's still striving to achieve full sovereignty.

Timor Sea Justice Campaign spokesperson, Tom Clarke, said it was well overdue for the Australian Government to negotiate with East Timor the establishment of permanent maritime boundaries so that our neighbours can finish their journey to complete independence.

“The Timorese fought long and hard for their Independence, yet today when they look at a map of their country, their borders are incomplete. As a sovereign nation, East Timor is entitled to permanent maritime boundaries. The only thing preventing that from being a reality is the greed of the Australian Government,” said Mr Clarke.

East Timor has never had permanent maritime boundaries. It has repeatedly asked the Australian Government to agree to permanent maritime boundaries based on current international law, but instead Australia has jostled the fledgling nation into a series of temporary resource sharing agreements. Those agreements short-change East Timor out of billions of dollars in

gas and oil revenue.

This week on the [ABC's Lateline program](#), senior Timorese Government figures expressed their anger and disappointment that the Australian Government had bugged the Timorese cabinet room during the negotiations over those resource sharing treaties. Mr Clarke said the frustration from East Timor was understandable.

"It's pretty outrageous. I believe most Australians would like to think that our spies are trying to keep us safe, not helping the Government rip-off our poor neighbours like East Timor," said Mr Clarke.

In a [provisional ruling](#) from the International Court of Justice last year, the Australian Government was ordered to cease interfering with East Timor's communications and to stop using national security as an alibi for commercial espionage.

Mr Clarke said today's 40th anniversary of East Timor's Independence Day provided a suitably symbolic opportunity for the Australian Government to turn over a new leaf.

"Australia has a very dodgy record when it comes to the Timor Sea, but Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull could draw a line in the sand and provide a way forward if he's willing to sit down in good faith with his Timorese counterpart and enter fresh negotiations about establishing permanent and equitable maritime boundaries," said Mr Clarke.

The Timor Sea Justice Campaign is planning to ramp up its grassroots campaigning in 2016 and is currently [raising funds](#) to hire a campaign coordinator.

For further information or comments, please contact Tom Clarke on 0422 545 763

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Thanks to everyone who came to today's protest. Our next campaign meeting 6:30 Thursday 17 December at Trades Hall [pic.twitter.com/XZJVZyKzZZ](#)



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