

**Meanwhile, Andrew Wilkie says prosecuting Timor-Leste bugging whistleblower is 'insane'. All the day's events, live**

## **'Time to bury the bodies' - former spy and Timor-Leste 'whistleblower' charged - Wilkie**

**Andrew Wilkie** has just wrapped up his speech.

For those who need a reminder, Australia and Indonesia signed the Timor Gap treaty in 1989 while Timor-Leste was under Indonesian occupation, leaving it with no maritime border.

What that meant was Australia was able to claim the oil and gas in what became the Timor Gap. Timor-Leste gained its independence in 2002, but still had no permanent maritime border.

Negotiations began as to where the border should sit in 2004. That same year, a former Australian spy, who was known as Witness K, gave testimony at the Hague about an Australian intelligence operation to bug Timor-Leste's cabinet rooms during those negotiations. Two years later, a \$40bn treaty was signed between Australia and Timor-Leste, but no permanent border was set, with the ruling the revenue would be split.

The spying allegations became public in 2013. Timor-Leste dropped the spying case last year, and earlier this year a permanent maritime border was set and agreed between Australia and Timor-Leste and a new treaty over the gas and oil profits was agreed to.

So, fast forward to the federation chamber and Wilkie.

The whistleblower in the spying case had his passport seized. And despite numerous attempts he is yet to get it back. Now, Wilkie says, he and his lawyer are being prosecuted:

“This is obviously an insane development in its own right, but an insane development made all the more curious by Australia's recent commitment to a new treaty with East Timor.

“It seems that with the diplomacy out of the way, it is time to bury the bodies.

“The bottom line is that spying on East Timor was indeed illegal and unscrupulous. Although it was the Howard government's initiative, the crime has subsequently been covered up by all governments ever since and now this government wants to turn the former ASIS officer and his lawyer into political prisoners.

“But that is what happens in a pre-police state. Where instead of a royal commission, they lock up people who more likely deserve the Order of Australia.”