

SUBMISSION NO. 25

From: Bryan Havenhand [bh@globalexchange.com.au]

Sent: Wednesday 31 July 2002

Subject: Inquiry into the Timor Sea Treaty and the Exchange of Notes between East Timor and Australia

Dear Sir

I am submitting a brief submission to your inquiry by way of some key points.

1. The issue covered by the above documents is not a difficult one to understand nor to resolve.
2. Australia has gained much credibility and goodwill in the eyes of the world in ensuring that East Timor has been able to gain its independence.
3. Australia can destroy this credibility and goodwill by attempting to substantially limit the main source of income for East Timor, one of the poorest countries in the world.
4. Australia is one of the wealthiest countries in the world and attempting to limit the economic and social growth prospects of its nearest neighbour - one of the world's poorest countries - is not smart politics in any sense of the meaning of 'smart'.
5. East Timor will - especially given Australia's attitude to the issue of sea boundaries - be reliant on development aid from Australia for the long term. If it is the intention of the Australian government to attempt to control East Timor's government and democratic process through development aid then it is the worst sort of foreign policy possible.
6. The most honest way to resolve this current issue is for Australia to acknowledge common international practice with regard to sea borders and to implement that quickly and with good grace. The outcome will mean different sea borders to those in place, good relations between Australia and East Timor, a greater income to East Timor from oil and gas, less of Australia's foreign aid monies going to East Timor and a greater capability of future East Timor governments to be able to build the country's infrastructure and economic and social well being. This has only positive outcomes for Australia.

I hope your inquiry draws similar conclusions to these.

Yours respectfully

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