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Timor Sec Treaty
Submission No: 57

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The Hon Julie Bishop MP
Parliament House, Canberra 2600
ACT

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BY: *G. H. Gould*

To the Hon Julie Bishop

In relation to the current negotiations between Australian and the East Timor about the ownership of the Timor Gap I would like to view my opinions on the situation.

The ratification of the current Treaty will not provide the best possible outcome for East Timor and is likely to lead to a negative perception of Australia from the East Timorese people.

The failure to unlock the resources of the Timor Sea for the full benefit of East Timor may have significant consequences for longer-term human development, economic self-reliance and stability in East Timor. Revenues from oil and natural gas currently represent East Timor's greatest hope for meeting the people's basic needs, including economic development, health and education. In contrast, Australia is already well endowed with natural, mineral and petroleum resources and wealth.

As a new nation, the people of East Timor deserve the opportunity to pursue their desire to delimit their sovereign boundaries and secure their physical place in the world.

Australia's withdrawal from the dispute settlement mechanisms of the ICJ and UNCLOS seems to be an over-reaction that severely limits East Timor's options in seeking an objective, third party resolution of the maritime boundary dispute.

Please consider these points and I hope your contribution to the negotiation process will lead to an equal decision that will not disadvantage East Timor.

Yours truly,

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