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26/8/02

BY: .....

The Hon. Julie Bishop M.P.  
Chair Joint Jt. Committee on Treaties

Dear Hon Julie Bishop, re The Timor Gap  
Having read of the 90:10 split in favour of East  
Timor concerning the oil & gas resources in the  
Timor Sea, I felt proud of our generosity as  
Australians in helping this new nation. So  
I was distressed when I learnt about our  
position concerning the maritime boundary  
issue, when for example, Australia claims  
79.9% of the production of the largest gas  
field in the area ("Greater Sunrise").  
Moreover, by withdrawing from the dispute  
settlement procedures offered by the International  
Court of Justice, & the International Tribunal  
on the Law of the Sea, we have obstructed  
any attempt to settle permanent sealed  
boundaries.

It is so essential that East Timor has full access  
to revenue from oil & natural gas, as it is  
a poor country without other resources, &  
needs this for basic needs, such as health  
& education; whereas we, of course, are  
well endowed. Our attitude will create  
negative perceptions of our country, & makes

us, as citizens, feel ashamed to be Australians.

So I am writing to ask you to ensure fairness in the settlement of maritime boundaries in the Timor Gap.

Yours sincerely,

A. Catherine Smith O.A.M.