

Submission by Peter McMullin to the joint Committee on Certain Maritime Arrangements -Timor-Leste

Dear Joint Committee Members

My submission relates to views formed over active involvement in aspects of Timor Leste's history since 2002.

I am a former President and Board Member of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In that role I was asked in 2008 to advise in relation to the establishment of a Chamber of Commerce in Timor-Leste. From 2009 til 2014, I visited Timor-Leste many times, advising and supporting the creation and development of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry-Timor-Leste (CCI-TL). The objective of my involvement was to assist in the development of Timor-Leste's non-oil and gas economy, and to encourage Australian investment into Timor-Leste. I have introduced the President and CEO of CCI-TL at various business forums around the world including B2O, the World Chambers Federation and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

My submission in respect to the matter being addressed by the Committee is as follows:

1. CMATS failed to provide certainty for investors.
2. The ongoing dispute is limiting opportunities for Australian businesses.
3. Other countries, including China, Korea, Portugal and others are not so constrained and Australian businesses are missing out.
4. Continued uncertainty has constrained the capacity of Australian Universities to provide much needed training and skills development to Timor-Leste.
5. It is important to have a longer term perspective on Australia's national interest, and progress towards the median line in accordance with international law should be Australia's objective.

I regret that time pressures preclude a more detailed submission at this stage.

Peter McMullin

9 March 2017