



Submission No 61

Inquiry into Australia's Relationship with Timor-Leste

Name: Ms Patricia Olsen

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee

March 26th 2013-03

Dear Sir/Madam

- I spent a month in Gleno, Timor –Leste in 2009 as a volunteer in an English program run by Friends of Ermera supported by Casey Council Victoria.

Have you visited towns far from Dili? The standard of living for these people is extremely low. As our near neighbour, they deserve the highest level of our support. I wish them to be able to learn English if they so wish and to view our democratic way of life as preferable.

I wish to endorse the points made by Rae Kingsbury, Honorary Consul Timor Leste Vic.

- 1 The Australian government should recognise through a motion passed in Parliament official recognition of the role played and the substantial sacrifices made by the people of Timor-Leste in supporting Australian military forces in the defence of Australia in 1942. It should also re-name Australian scholarships to Timor-Leste students in recognition of the role played by the people of Timor-Leste as a continuing reminder of the historical and close relations that exists between the two countries.
- 2 The Australian Government should negotiate in good faith and under the terms of the UNCLOS with the Government of Timor-Leste over any future discussion over the sea boundary between the two countries. Any such negotiation should remain quarantined from the wider bilateral relationship between the two countries.
- 3 The Australian government should commit to continuing the current levels and extent of its aid program to Timor-Leste.
- 4 Encourage and support Australian businesses to invest in Timor-Leste, especially in employment creation industries such as agriculture and tourism.
- 5 Support and extend Timor-Leste Seasonal Workers and training programs in Australia.
- 6 Encouragement and support for community to community relations between Australia and Timor-Leste, through Friendship groups, service organisations (e.g. Rotary), church groups, educational/school tours and other people to people relations.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Olsen