

SUBMISSION NO. 29

Dear Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission for consideration by the Joint Standing Committee On Treaties.

I have been an activist supporting the Independence of East Timor since my visit in May 1975 when I witnessed first hand the enormous support of the Maubere people for Fretilin who then as now most eloquently expressed the aspirations of the people.

Successive Australian Governments from the Whitlam Government onward have little to be proud of in their acquiescence of the ongoing Indonesian invasion and oppressive occupation culminating in the bloody spectacle we all witnessed following the UN supervised vote for Independence/Autonomy.

The treaty signed with the Indonesian Government must be considered an invalid treaty given the fact that it was signed between Indonesia and Australia when the UN at no time recognised Indonesian sovereignty.

Australia gave de jure recognition purely to serve our own interests and I believe Indonesia gave favourable consideration to Australian boundary claims to reward that de jure recognition.

The Australian Governments decision to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the International Court on Law of the sea whilst simultaneously offering to enter into 'negotiations' with the Government of the Democratic Republic of East Timor on the question of the boundary between our countries appears to me to be a most unfriendly act designed to hold on to a boundary which the International Court would most certainly redraw under contemporary guidelines to equidistant between our two countries (high water mark).

I submit that the Joint Standing Committee should press the Australian Government to act expeditiously in a principled manner to resolve the outstanding issue of the seabed boundary between Australia and East Timor in accordance with International Law. If this can not be resolved by agreement, to utilise International Arbitration.

Australia must not become 'pirates' depriving the East Timorese people of their rightful share of the rich resources in the area .

East Timor need their resources to become a truly Independent Nation.

Australia must not stand in their way.

Yours sincerely,

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