



CHIEF MINISTER
MINISTER FOR TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT

TT May June 2003
Submission No:15.....

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Ms Julie Bishop MP
Chairperson
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Parliament of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Bishop

Thank you for your letter dated 15 May 2003, inviting comments on the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Democratic Republic of Timor Leste relating to the Unitisation of the Sunrise and Troubadour fields.

I write to make this submission on behalf of the Government of the Northern Territory in support of the Sunrise International Unitisation Agreement.

It is acknowledged that the issues relating to unitising a gas field across International boundaries are complex, particularly when there are overlapping and competing claims with relation to the waters and the subsea. Nevertheless it is our strong position that the large gas and condensate reserves in the Greater Sunrise fields (7.7 Trillion cubic feet of gas and 299 million barrels of condensate) need to be developed for the benefit of both Australia and Timor Leste. The development of this gas is of vital importance to the economic future of the Northern Territory.

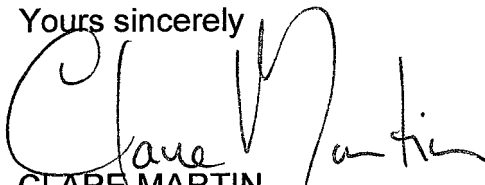
It is acknowledged that the negotiations in reaching this agreement have been protracted, complex and difficult. It is also acknowledged that given the need to negotiate permanent boundaries in the future, that the IUA, as presently negotiated, offers the best opportunity for the investors to proceed and bring the project to fruition. The delays caused by negotiations for permanent maritime boundaries will lead to unacceptable delays for both nations, whereas the Sunrise International Unitisation Agreement does present an opportunity to proceed now.



For the reasons outlined above the Northern Territory Government submits that it is in the best interests of both nations to ratify the Sunrise International Unitisation Agreement without any delay and so allow the project investors to proceed.

Should the Committee require further information or discussions I would be pleased to make available members of my Government or officers in my department for the purpose.

Yours sincerely


CLARE MARTIN

19 JUN 2003