



EAST TIMOR

Submission No: ...23.1...

General Information:

Population:	794,298	Local name:	Timor-Leste
Urban population:	23.5%	Capital:	Dili
Life expectancy:	57.4 years	Surface area:	14,874 sq km
Major religion:	Roman Catholic	Literacy rate:	43%
Languages:	12, including Tetum (official), Portuguese (official), Indonesian and English		

Governance:

The Democratic Republic of East Timor assumed independence on 20 May 2002.

Head of State:	President Kay Rala Jose Alexandre (Xanana) Gusmão
Head of Government:	Prime Minister Dr Mari Bin Amude Alkatiri

Economic indicators:

	1999	2000	2001	2002
GDP (US\$m)	270	321	385	377
GDP per capita (US\$)	337	396	478	430 (a)
Real GDP growth (% change)	-35	15	17	3
Inflation (% change)	140	3	0	5
Current account balance (% GDP)	-34	-80	-72	-63
Population beneath poverty line:	41%			
Unemployment rate (2001 est) (b)	16.8%			

Source: International Monetary Fund 2003 Timor-Leste and Development Partners Meeting, Staff Statement

(a) World Bank figure

(b) ADB figure

Relations with Australia:

Aid. Australia is a major donor to East Timor and is mid-way through a A\$150 million four-year aid program (2002-03: A\$35m, 2003-04: A\$35m). Commonwealth and State agencies also provide significant additional assistance.

Policing and Military Assistance. Australia contributes 45 personnel to the UN Police and some 900 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel to the UN peacekeeping force. Numbers will decline with the general draw-down of the UN mission. The ADF is also helping to establish and train the East Timor Defence Force.

Trade. In 2002, East Timor was Australia's 84th largest trading partner with Australian exports valued at A\$52.5m; and East Timorese exports to Australia were valued at A\$720,000. Both nations will profit in the future from jointly-controlled oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea. Australia has agreed to grant East Timor tariff free access to Australian markets.