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Krav på Australien

Organisationen La' o Hamutuk ("Gå tillsammans"; <http://www.etan.org/1h>) uppmanade i januari aktivister att protestera mot Australiens stöd av oljetillgångarna i Timorhavet. Tidpunkten hade valts med anledning av "Australia Day" den 26 januari. Denna dag år 1788 upprättades nämligen den första brittiska bosättningen i Australien. Östtimorkommittén lämnade därför den 23 januari över följande brev, som är taget från kampanjmaterialet, till Australiens ambassadör i Sverige:

Ambassador Richard Rowe
The Commonwealth of Australia's Embassy in
Sweden
Sergels Torg 12
111 57 Stockholm

To the Ambassador,

It is well-known that East Timor will continue to require economic and political aid from Australia and other rich nations for several years. Such support is not only necessary to prevent this impoverished infant democracy from becoming a "failed, anarchic state", but it is also a meager compensation for a quarter-century of Australian complicity with Indonesia's brutal military invasion and occupation.

However, in the long term, the interests of East Timor and Australia are best served by East Timor achieving complete political and economic independence. Unfortunately, short-sighted Australian policies are obstructing these goals, by refusing to fairly and expeditiously settle maritime boundaries, and by

stealing oil and gas which lie under territory claimed by both nations, but closer to East Timor than to Australia. If Australia succeeds in bullying East Timor to accept the current "interim" agreement for the next few decades, then Australia will have taken nearly 60% of the country's entire oil and gas entitlement.

Australia began collecting revenues from the disputed Laminaria-Corallina oil field while the smoke was still rising from the ashes of Dili. Since late 1999, the Commonwealth government has taken in more than A\$ 1.7 billion from that field, far more than Australia has given East Timor in aid over the same period. (The great majority of the \$2 billion is for troop deployments, most of which ADF would have been spent whether or not the soldiers came to East Timor.)

More than 200 years ago, colonists viewed Australia as "terra nullius", as they took over land from people who had lived on it for millennia. Although that racist ideology is now discredited, Australia's "mare nullius" policies in the Timor Sea today deny East Timor's hard-won sovereignty and refuse to comply with international law.

Every nation, no matter how young or fragile, is entitled to know where its territory ends, especially when that territory contains the nation's birthright.

Australia should comply with East Timor's government's requests to suspend petroleum exploration and development in disputed areas, and to quickly negotiate a boundary based on international legal principles.

That is the best and most just way Australian

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can support East Timor's long-term stability,
and it won't cost Australian taxpayers one
penny or put any Australian soldiers at risk.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Jonsson
Chairman East Timor Committee

Fotnot: Östtimorkommittén undertecknade i oktober ett brev