

MEDIA RELEASE
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TIMOR SEA JUSTICE CAMPAIGN
media release

International Court of Justice orders Australia to seal seized document and cease spying on Timor

Australia has been ordered by the International Court of Justice not to access the documents dramatically seized during ASIO raids on the Canberra offices of lawyers representing East Timor in a dispute over a dispute regarding a oil and gas treaty worth \$40 billion in government revenues.

The Timor Sea Justice Campaign's spokesperson, Tom Clarke, said the Court had made a binding legal order for Australia not to use national security as an alibi for commercial espionage.

"This is a bit of a wake up call for Australia because the highest authority in the world has warned that you cant just deploy James Bond in order to short-change your neighbours in your commercial dealings," said Mr Clarke.

The order regarding this injunction-like request regarding the documents, is a provisional order – the court may yet order the documents to be returned – but contained a number of elements that would be pleasing to East Timor ahead of the legal proceedings regarding the legality of the raids.

Mr Clarke says seeing Australia participating in a ICJ case highlighted Australia's refusal to accept the same independent umpire's decision on the much more important issue of the positioning of permanent maritime boundaries.

"Australia was willing to send an elite legal team to defend itself in what is essentially a squabble about whether envelopes should be sealed, yet when it comes to the problem at the core of this entire episode – the absence of permanent maritime boundaries between Australia and East Timor – Australia will not even consider showing up in a court," said Mr Clarke.

Just months before East Timor became independent in 2002, Australia withdrew its recognition of the maritime boundary

jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.
If permanent maritime boundaries were established in accordance with current international law, East Timor's probable exclusive economic zone would likely encompass all of the Greater Sunrise field as well as all of the joint development area that Timor currently shares with Australia.

Mr Clarke said Australia should move on from the temporary resource sharing arrangements that are currently short-changing East Timor and instead establish permanent maritime boundaries with our tiny neighbour.

"Our PM Tony Abbott should enter into fresh negotiations in good faith with East Timor to establish permanent maritime boundaries half way between the two coastlines. That's a simple and fair solution and it is also what international law prescribes in such situations," said Mr Clarke.

For further information or comments, contact:
TSJC Spokesperson, Tom Clarke, on 0422 545 763.

A fair go for East Timor.

Timor Sea Justice Campaign

The TSJC is comprised of concerned Australians of various ages, backgrounds and political persuasions who all want our Government to give East Timor a fair go. Specifically, we're calling for the establishment of permanent maritime boundaries in accordance with current international law.

www.TimorSeaJustice.com