

## Labor's Wong bound for East Timor

Labor's foreign affairs spokeswoman Penny Wong will meet East Timorese leaders and senior ministers during her two-day visit to Dili.

**Source:** AAP 14 June 2017

Federal Labor is hopeful Australia can reset ties with East Timor after years of turbulence over a maritime boundary dispute.

Opposition foreign affairs spokeswoman Penny Wong is off to Dili on Wednesday.

She will meet new President Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres, Prime Minister Dr Rui Maria de Araujo and senior ministers.

"All Australians are rightly proud of the role we played in supporting the Timorese people to claim their place as one of the world's newest and proudest democracies," Senator Wong said, referring to the Australian-led international peacekeeping mission following unrest after an independence referendum in 1999.

"However, our bilateral relations have been strained by the maritime boundary dispute."

Australia and the East Timor government are taking part in conciliation in The Hague on the issue.

East Timor notified Australia in January that it wished to tear up a 2006 treaty which split 50-50 future revenue of the Greater Sunrise oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea.

The reserve contains gas and oil worth an estimated \$50 billion but how the share of the spoils will be divided up must now be revisited.

Labor pledged in February last year its support for reaching a binding international resolution with East Timor, either through bilateral negotiation or international arbitration.

Senator Wong will also visit Australian aid projects and attend a dinner with Timorese women leaders.