


Australia, East Timor Reach ‘Breakthrough’ Maritime Agreement

By **Ruth Liew**

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- Contract addresses legal status of Greater Sunrise gas field
 - Deal supports ‘national interest’ of both countries: Bishop
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Australia has reached an agreement with East Timor to settle a dispute on maritime boundaries in the oil- and gas-rich Timor Sea, the Permanent Court of Arbitration said in a [release <https://pcacases.com/web/sendAttach/2230>](https://pcacases.com/web/sendAttach/2230).


The agreement addresses the legal status of the Greater Sunrise gas field and comes after the Southeast Asian nation said in January it wanted to [terminate](#)  a 2006 treaty that split the field’s petroleum revenue evenly between the two countries. The new contract will also establish a “special regime” for Greater Sunrise and revenue sharing, according to the statement from the Copenhagen-based court.

The deal, which the court labeled a “breakthrough,” follows years of dispute between the two nations over maritime arrangements in the Timor Sea. East Timor, which became a sovereign state in 2002, depends heavily on oil and gas revenue.

“This is a landmark day in the relationship between Timor-Leste and Australia,”

Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop said in the statement. "This agreement, which supports the national interest of both our nations, further strengthens the long-standing and deep ties between our governments and our people."

Details of the agreement remain confidential, according to the court statement. "The parties will continue to meet with the commission in order to finalize their agreement in October 2017," the court said.

- [Link](#)  to Woodside Hopeful Timor Talks May Lead to Sunrise Development
- [Link <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/timor-leste/Pages/australias-maritime-arrangements-with-timor-leste.aspx>](http://dfat.gov.au/geo/timor-leste/Pages/australias-maritime-arrangements-with-timor-leste.aspx) to Australian government website on Timor Sea arrangements