



## 2/2 Commando Association of Australia (Inc)

43 Marriott Way Morley WA 6062

8 Apr 2016

The Hon. Julie Bishop  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
PO Box 2010  
Subiaco WA 6904

Dear Ms Bishop

I write to advise you of a unanimous motion of a recent committee meeting of the 2/2 Commando Association of Australia Inc. By that resolution, I am asked to inform you that, in the view of our association, in respect of maritime boundaries between Australia and Timor Leste:

1. Australia should enter good faith negotiations with Timor Leste; and
2. If no agreement is reached, both parties should participate in binding arbitration,

The men of the 2/2 Commando Squadron and their families have always felt a moral and ethical responsibility, often referred to as a "debt of honour" to the people of Timor Leste. This is in response to the Timorese people's courageous and determined support of our commandos in WWII, and the message to them by the Australian Government sent via leaflets dropped by air across East Timor after the withdrawal saying,

*"Your friends will not forget you"*

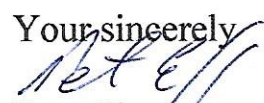
Australian Government 1942

The 2/2 was evacuated from east Timor in late 1942. The Timorese paid dearly for their support of our troops, with an estimated 40,000 to 70,000 perishing during the Japanese occupation.

The road to independence for the people of Timor Leste has not been easy. During the Indonesian occupation (1975 to 1999), it is estimated that a quarter of its population of 800,000 people lost their lives as a result of famine or violence.

In 2016, Timor Leste, like any sovereign nation, seeks to establish its sea borders. I ask that this be done in a manner that takes into account the strong bonds between the people of Timor Leste and Australia – a relationship that has endured for over 65 years.

I would be grateful to receive your response.

Your sincerely  
  
Peter Epps  
President