
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Visit to Timor-Leste and Indonesia

7 to 11 November 2011

Report of the Delegation

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

June 2013
Canberra

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Foreword

Between 7 and 11 November 2011, I was pleased to lead a delegation of the Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade to Timor-Leste and Indonesia.

The principal purpose of the visit was to meet and conduct discussions with counterpart committees in the national parliaments of Indonesia and Timor-Leste. In doing so, the Committee sought to deepen the connection with counterparts in these parliaments and to help build Australia's relationship with Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

The visit followed the proposal made by the Presiding Officers in 2008 for an exchange program with the foreign affairs committee of the Indonesian Parliament, and first recommended in the Committee's report of its major inquiry into Australia's relationship with Indonesia, entitled *Near Neighbours – Good Neighbours*.

The *Near Neighbours* report noted that such meetings would represent a 'valuable connection' between the foreign affairs committees of the parliaments and would allow 'for both parties to air concerns, exchange viewpoints and, on occasion, to clarify misunderstandings.'

Following as it did the decision of the Australian Government to suspend the live cattle trade with Indonesia and the emergence of the issue of Indonesian minors being held in detention in Australia, the delegation's visit to Indonesia provided exactly this opportunity for concerns to be aired and viewpoints to be exchanged.

The delegation was pleased to note that despite these irritants, the relationship with Indonesia is now of such breadth and depth that the relationship can withstand such challenges.

Nevertheless, the delegation is of the view that Australian governments should at all times adopt a respectful mode of communication and dialogue with Indonesia and Timor-Leste. An element of this should be, wherever possible, a 'no surprises' approach towards our neighbours.

I am pleased to note that following its visit the Committee commenced an inquiry into Australia's relationship with Timor-Leste. This is timely as the United Nations mandate has now expired and the Australian-led International Stabilisation Force has departed the country. It is an appropriate time to be recasting the relationship in Timor-Leste's post-Independence era. Challenges continue to emerge in this relationship too and the inquiry represents an opportunity for the Committee to assist in helping navigate a way through.

A theme which emerged in both Timor-Leste and Indonesia was that Australia's trade relationship with both countries is significantly underdone, particularly given the significance of the broader relationship between our countries.

In addition to the acknowledgments listed in the report, I express particular thanks to the Embassy in Jakarta for arranging an opportunity for me to participate in an interview on a national television show in Indonesia. This gave me the opportunity to emphasise the value and importance Australian parliamentarians place on our relationship with Indonesia.

The delegation hopes that exchanges between the foreign affairs, defence and trade committees of the Australian, Indonesian and Timor-Leste parliaments will take place on a regular basis, and continue to assist with strengthening the bonds of friendship and facilitating greater understanding between our countries.

The Hon Michael Danby MP
Delegation Leader

Membership of the Committee

Chair

Senator Michael Forshaw (to 30/06/11)
Mr Michael Danby MP (from 1/07/11 to 14/05/13)
Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP (from 15/05/13)

Deputy Chair

Mrs Joanna Gash MP

Members

Senator Mark Bishop	Hon Anthony Byrne MP
Senator the Hon John Faulkner (from 30/09/10 to 14/02/11)	(to 14/03/12; from 19/09/12)
Senator David Fawcett (from 1/07/11)	Mr Nick Champion MP
Senator the Hon Alan Ferguson (to 30/06/11)	Hon Laurie Ferguson MP
Senator Mark Furner	Mr Steve Georganas MP (to 24/03/11)
Senator Sarah Hanson-Young	Mr Steve Gibbons MP (to 7/02/12)
Senator the Hon David Johnston	Hon Alan Griffin MP
Senator Scott Ludlam	Hon Harry Jenkins MP (from 7/02/12)
Senator the Hon Ian Macdonald	Dr Dennis Jensen MP
Senator Anne McEwen (from 1/07/11)	Hon Richard Marles MP (from 14/05/13)
Senator Claire Moore	Hon Robert McClelland MP
Senator Kerry O'Brien (from 14/02/11 to 30/06/11)	(from 14/03/12 to 19/09/12)
Senator Stephen Parry (from 1/07/11)	Mrs Sophie Mirabella MP
Senator Marise Payne	Hon John Murphy MP
Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens (from 1/07/11)	Mr Ken O'Dowd MP (from 25/10/10)
Senator Russell Trood (to 30/06/11)	Ms Melissa Parke MP (to 5/02/13)
	Mr Stuart Robert MP
	Hon Philip Ruddock MP
	Ms Janelle Saffin MP
	Hon Bruce Scott MP
	Hon Peter Slipper MP (from 1/11/12)
Hon Dick Adams MP (from 24/03/11)	Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP (from 25/10/10)
Hon Julie Bishop MP	Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP
Ms Gai Brodtmann MP	



Membership of the Delegation

Delegation Leader	Mr Michael Danby MP
Delegation Deputy Leader	Mrs Joanna Gash MP
Members	Mr Nick Champion MP The Hon Laurie Ferguson MP The Hon Philip Ruddock MP The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP
Delegation Secretary	Mr Jerome Brown

Committee Secretariat

Secretary	Mr Jerome Brown
Inquiry Secretaries	Dr John Carter
	Mr Robert Little
	Ms Julia Searle
	Mr Paul Zinkel
Senior Research Officer	Mr James Bunce
Defence Adviser	Commander James Crouch RAN
Administration Manager	Ms Lauren McDougall
Administration Officer	Ms Kane Moir



List of abbreviations

AANZFTA	ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AIFDR	Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BKSAP	<i>Badan Kerja Sama Antar Parlemen</i> (Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation of the People's Representative Council of the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia)
DCP	(Australian Defence Force) Defence Cooperation Program
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPD	<i>Dewan Perwakilan Daerah</i> (Regional Representative Council of the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia)
DPR	<i>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat</i> (People's Representative Council of the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia, also referred to as the House of Representatives)
F-FDTL	<i>Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste</i> (Timor-Leste Defence Force)

IA-CEPA	Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTERFET	International Force for East Timor
ISF	International Stabilisation Force (for Timor-Leste)
MPR	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat</i> (People's Consultative Assembly – the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia)
ODA	(Australia's) Official Development Assistance
PNTL	<i>Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste</i> (National Police Force of Timor-Leste)
TLPDP	Timor-Leste Police Development Program
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UN SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations
UNTAET	United Nations Administration in East Timor