



A Message to Australian Troops

Having recently conducted a visit to East Timor the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade wish to express to all personnel of the Australian contingent of the INTERFET our appreciation and strong support for your role in promoting peace and stability in East Timor.

Since the deployment of INTERFET troops in late September 1999 the grave situation which existed in East Timor at that time has steadily improved. Without doubt, the success of the INTERFET mission has, in no small part, resulted from the commitment and professionalism of the Australian troops. Equally, the Committee acknowledges the excellent contribution of troops of the other nations that have participated in INTERFET.

The members of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade are grateful to the members of the Australian Defence Force who have deployed to East Timor in support of INTERFET. We acknowledge the sacrifice that this entails for each of you, particularly those who will remain in East Timor over the Christmas period. You should be conscious that the thoughts and good wishes of the Australian people go out not only to you but also to your families and loved ones.

We can be, and are, justifiably proud of our Defence Force and the people who comprise it. We wish you all continued success in your mission and a safe return.

**Senator A B Ferguson
Chairman**