



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA • THE SENATE

GORDON D. McINTOSH
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT OFFICES
ST. MARTIN'S CENTRE
44 ST. GEORGE'S TERRACE
PERTH, W.A. 6000
(G.P.O. BOX B58, PERTH, W.A. 6001)
TELEPHONE 3254116

24th January, 1985

The Hon. Bill Hayden,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600.

Dear Bill,

I am sure that you are aware that the United Nations Human Rights Commission will be meeting in Geneva in early February and that East Timor will be on the Agenda.

I therefore request that you direct our representatives on the Commission to deal with any discussion on the matter of East Timor in accordance with the resolution passed by the National Conference, in July last.

I feel that a direction should be given to representatives to initiate or co-sponsor a resolution calling on the Indonesian Government to allow:

"free access to humanitarian relief teams, to international organisations such as Red Cross, Amnesty and the Commission of Jurists, and to allow an independent international mission to enter the territory to make an independent and impartial report on conditions." (ALP Platform 1984, 7 East Timor, p.101)

Such a resolution will encourage continued impartial United Nations participation in East Timor.

Whatever progress is being made in East Timor under defacto Indonesian control, enough reports of human rights violations are continuing to be made to human rights organisations, such as those mentioned above, to warrant the strongest of diplomatic actions from governments such as ours, so proud of our record in the area of human rights.

I trust that this request will be treated favourably by you and your officers.

Yours sincerely,

GORDON D. McINTOSH.
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.



a
+

62

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

14 FEB 1985

Senator Gordon D. McIntosh,
Senator for Western Australia,
G.P.O. Box B58,
PERTH W.A. 6001

Dear Senator McIntosh,

Thank you for your of 24 January 1985 concerning the human rights situation in East Timor.

The Australian Government follows developments in East Timor with close interest. Its policy on East Timor has been reaffirmed many times, most recently during my visit to Jakarta in July 1984. During that visit, I discussed the 1984 ALP resolution on Indonesia and East Timor with Indonesian leaders. I acknowledged that those points of the resolution which call for Australia to support international initiatives concerning East Timor, including the efforts of the UN Secretary-General to bring about a resolution of the East Timor issue and for greater international access to the province, were viewed with reservation by the Indonesian Government. I also put forward the request contained in the ALP resolution for an independent international mission to enter the territory to report on conditions. However, Indonesian leaders indicated that this proposal was unlikely to be accepted.

The Government is aware of various reports from Amnesty International and other sources concerning human rights abuses in East Timor. The Government does not have sufficient or enough substantial information with which to confirm these reports. However its concern about the human rights situation in East Timor is on public record and widely known, including to the Indonesian authorities.

You raise the question of possible examination of the situation in East Timor at the 41st Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR 41). As you may recall this matter was considered by the Commission in open session at its 39th session in February 1983 but we are not aware of any moves for the present to take public consideration of the situation in East Timor any further at the forthcoming 41st session. There is a possibility that East Timor could be raised (with a number of other countries) under confidential procedures. As a member of the

2.

the Commission, Australia is bound to respect the Commission's rules of confidentiality and not to discuss what should or does occur during such proceedings.

If East Timor is raised at CHR 41, the Australian delegation will seek to play a constructive role bearing closely in mind the needs of the East Timorese. The Government's concerns about aspects of the human rights situation in East Timor would at the same time be registered in the most effective way possible.

As a general policy, the Australian Government believes that the people of East Timor can be most effectively assisted through the provision of humanitarian aid. Since 1975, the Australian Government has provided \$8.3 million in humanitarian assistance to East Timor, chiefly to the International Committee on the Red Cross (ICRC). The Government continues to support access to East Timor by the ICRC and other reputable international humanitarian agencies such as UNICEF.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Hayden', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

BILL HAYDEN M.P.



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA · THE SENATE

GORDON D. McINTOSH.
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT OFFICES
CITY CENTRE TOWER
44 ST GEORGE'S TERRACE
PERTH, W.A. 6000
(G.P.O. BOX 858, PERTH, W.A. 6001)

14th March, 1985

The Hon. Bill Hayden, M.P.,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600.

Dear Bill,

I write in response to your letter of 14th February, last, concerning the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

I am sure that word-processing equipment has lessened the burden of departmental typists responsible for typing replies to letters on particular Foreign Affairs issues. Perhaps, then, it would be unfair of me to complain that your reply is identically worded to others received from the Department by other persons or bodies - but I do believe I have every right to complain that the departmental response to my original letter, and signed by you, did not answer the specific proposal raised by me.

The intent of my letter was quite straight-forward.... I urged that the Australian Government, in line with present Party policy, "initiate or co-sponsor" a Resolution calling for free access for humanitarian relief and human rights organisations to East Timor.

If the Government was not prepared to do that, then I think it is fair to expect a statement to that effect and an explanation as to why not. Instead, I am expected to accept vague statements like "We are not aware of any moves for the present to take public consideration of the situation in East Timor any further..."

I have listened to, and read, this sort of departmental doublespeak on Timor for over ten years - and it is a source of continual disappointment to me that it remains unchanged whatever the Government.

Given that the United Nations Human Rights Commission Session has now concluded, I would be pleased to know what contribution, if any, the Australian Mission to Geneva did make on the East Timor question.

Yours sincerely,

GORDON D. McINTOSH.
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.



MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

85.079.06
558/36/2/9

~~5~~ MAY 1985

Senator Gordon D. McIntosh,
Senator for Western Australia,
Commonwealth Parliament Offices,
City Centre Tower,
44 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Senator McIntosh,

I am writing in response to your letter of 14 March concerning consideration of East Timor at the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

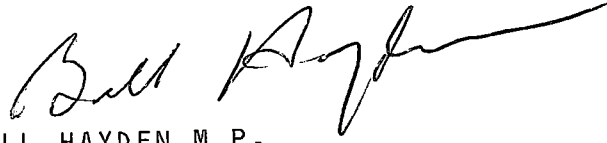
The human rights situation in East Timor was considered in closed session by the Commission at its recent 41st session (CHR 41) in Geneva. Consideration took place on the basis of a recommendation from the Commission's Working Group on situations. There is no question of co-sponsorship of such a recommendation. It emanates from the Working Group and is put to CHR members, in confidential session, for adoption or rejection following examination of the problem and dialogue with the representative of the Government concerned.

The confidential procedures ensure a forum for franker, less political and more constructive exchanges on human rights concerns directly with representatives of involved Governments. CHR members are obliged to respect the rules of confidentiality and not to discuss publicly the proceedings which take place. The Australian Government supports the confidential procedures as a useful mechanism for constructive dialogue and participates actively during the discussions while respecting their confidentiality.

Consideration of East Timor at CHR 41 and Australia's vote has now, however, been made a public issue through media reports in Indonesian newspapers and elsewhere. It is therefore proper for me to advise that Australia voted for the Working Group recommendation which was to keep the human rights situation in East Timor under review by the Commission. Australia's vote, which was explained at the meeting, was decided in the context of our broader human rights concerns, including the need for proper

international access to East Timor, and on the basis of our best considered assessment of the situation. The recommendation was however defeated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Hayden", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

BILL HAYDEN M.P.