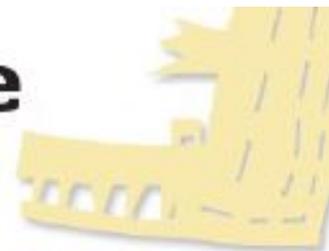




Australia Timor-Leste Advancement Society



Ongoing Development in Timor-Leste a Priority



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It has been reported that the World Bank recently warned of dire situations in Timor-Leste, particularly in child nutrition and education, which pose severe threats to the future of the young nation.

Despite Timor-Leste making great progress, the Bank pointed to the high rates of impoverishment and death in the new nation compared to others in Asia. Five percent of Timorese children will not survive to the age of five. There is widespread evidence of poor childhood nutrition. Low levels of education delivery and quality result in poor school performance, leading to low employment prospects. Poverty follows, as well as the increased likelihood of poor health for those who reach adulthood.

The youth of Timor-Leste have been adversely affected by the nation's financial situation and structural problems and by the effects of the COVID pandemic, states the Bank. It calls on the new nation "to improve the efficiency, equity and sustainability of its investments in human capital."

Part of this necessary endeavour is to reduce malnutrition and to improve education. The crisis in education requires targeted spending, especially on improving the capacity of teachers.

The report emphasises the responsibility of the Timorese people themselves to drive the country's income growth.

Reflection on this report highlights the need of friends of the Timorese people, such as ATLAS supporters and donors, to step up to assist in the improvements needed.

In recognition of the debt as yet unpaid to the Timorese and understanding that Australia's past actions have contributed to the present situation, many Australians see the World Bank's report as a call to respond to the crisis and to assist the Timorese people.

The Timorese have the same goals for themselves and their children as we have – health, education, and long and happy lives.

Advancement in Australia/Timor-Leste Relations

By the time this newsletter is received, most Australians would know that the prosecution of Bernard Collaery in relation to Timor Sea matters has been discontinued.

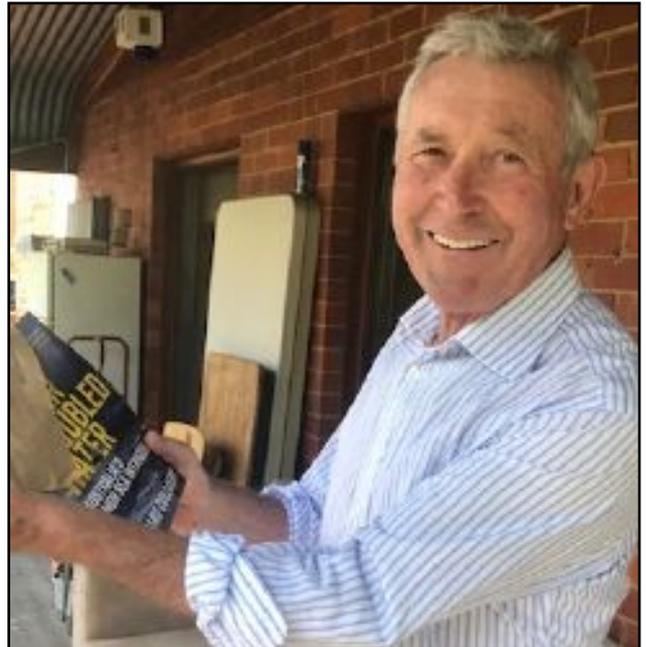
On July 7, the Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus and the Foreign Minister Penny Wong issued a joint media release declaring that the charges against Mr Collaery were being dropped.

Statements by the Timorese President, His Excellency José Ramos-Horta and past president Xanana Gusmão have shown that the Timorese people are pleased that this action has taken place. Australians too, are relieved that this unnecessary, long and expensive prosecution has now been dropped. Here is a statement by Bernard Collaery:

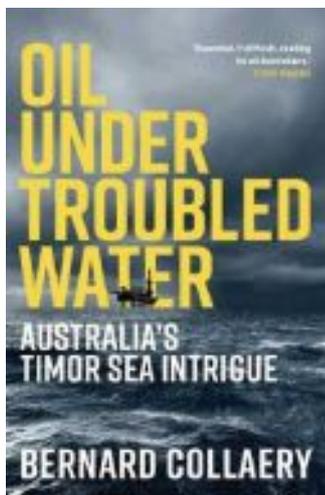
"I am very pleased that the new Attorney-General has looked at this prosecution and all it has involved and taken steps to bring the case to an end. This is a good decision for the administration of justice in Australia.

I want to thank all of the people across Australia who have supported me and worked so hard to assist me throughout this case. I am in awe of the depth of support in our community for ethical values. I also want to thank those close to me who gave me inner strength.

I am deeply grateful for the inspirational and arduous work of the partners and staff of Gilbert + Tobin lawyers, and my dedicated team of barristers, all on a pro bono basis. Their resolute professionalism and humanity has restored my faith in the rule of law. This decision will allow me to move forward with my life and legal practice."



The photo shows Bernard Collaery on the day he received a copy of his book "Oil Under Troubled Waters" from the publisher.



"Oil Under Troubled Water" relates part of the history of Australian government dealings with East Timor regarding the resources of the Timor Sea.

It is a major contribution to the essential work of understanding Australia's place in the region and of the relationship with the Timorese people in particular.

It is a troubling book that challenges much of the Australian self-understanding as a fair and loyal friend. Its honest appraisal of Australian actions challenges both government and people to reflect on the ethical obligations we share.

"Oil Under Troubled Water" can be [obtained from Melbourne University Press.](#)

Education and Training a High Priority

The Government of Timor-Leste continues to work towards the development of standards in health and education.

Four of the Carmelite Sisters with whom ATLAS works have graduated with Bachelor of Nursing degrees: Sr Julia, Director of Fatumeta Maternity, Sr Angelica, Director Maubisse Clinic, Sr Angela from Bebonuk Clinic and Sr Inacia, Director of Motael Clinic. All were well-trained and had been working as nurses or directors of clinics for 10-20 years.

Similar government regulations relate to education and the teaching profession. For example, the degree of Bachelor of Education or Education Administration is required for principals of schools and others holding significant roles.

One Carmelite Sister has recently graduated in education from a university in Kupang, and three others are now following education courses at the National University in Dili – one in administration and three younger sisters in teacher training.



Three of the Carmelite Sisters at their recent Graduation

ATLAS members are proud to be able to support these advancements in whatever ways they can. Education and health concerns remain high priorities for the Timorese people. It is most encouraging to see the way the people are battling on, despite the challenges.

Josephine Mitchell

New ATLAS Staff Member in Timor-Leste

Maria dos Santos joins ATLAS

It's wonderful to have Maria dos Santos on board as an ATLAS staff member in Timor-Leste. Maria has long experience with Australian projects in Timor, having been employed by the various bodies that served, and still serve in Timor-Leste, under the name of Mary MacKillop.

Maria is well versed in dealing with projects and is adept at working with government institutions and other groups. She is deeply involved in local communities and is able to advise and liaise for ATLAS in a competent and timely way.

**Everyone at ATLAS
and all our supporters and donors welcome you Maria!**

Obrigada barak!



Launch of New Book on Australia and Timor-Leste

In launching Susan Connelly’s new book, *East Timor, René Girard and Neocolonial Violence: Scapegoating as Australian Policy*, Bishop Vincent Long of Parramatta expressed his gratitude for her work which brings to light the often unrecognised impact of Australia’s action on Timor-Leste during World War II and its invasion by Indonesia. Many Timorese supporters were present either in person or via Zoom.

“I am grateful to Susan for presenting us with an interpretation of Australia’s role in the suffering of the Timorese people. She has used the remarkable theories of René Girard in a way that helps people to understand the deceit and violence that has caused so many deaths and so much suffering in that small, neighbouring nation,” Bishop Long said.



Miguel Ribeiro, Silvia Nogueira Da Cunha, Benilda Lobo Brites, Olga Gago, Susan Connelly, Vincent Long, Leila Carceras Dos Santos, Jessica de Almeida, Miriam de Almeida

Timorese friends from the community in Sydney graced the event with their presence. Their traditional dances were a delight and they presented Bishop Long with a woven *tais*.



The book is available - [click here](#).

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