



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

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Catholic Bishops call for generosity in Timor Sea talks

Talks have resumed in Brisbane between East Timor and Australia on the development of oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea.

These talks follow significant progress in negotiations between the two countries in April.

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, meeting in Sydney, has appealed to the Australian Government to be generous in its negotiations with East Timor.

In issuing this statement, the Australian Bishops supported those East Timorese Bishops who recently stated their country's urgent need for financial resources for future development. They asked that the Australian government treat their country generously and fairly.

East Timor has been a close friend of Australia in the past and Australia generously responded to this friendship in recent years when the nation sought independence.

It is important that this generosity should continue in present negotiations on oil and gas resources, so that this small neighbouring country may continue to pursue the development it so urgently needs.

For more information contact Archbishop John Bathersby through Adrian Taylor on 0419 027 769 or John Ferguson at the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council on 02 9956 5811.