

Sunrise facetiousness

(December 2022)

In a Bloomberg [interview](#) held in Singapore on December 12th, 2022, the President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste introduced a novel but quite innovative proposition:

“Billions and billions are found quickly to support Ukraine. To all of this I said give us at minimum \$100 billion and we’ll follow your passionate approach to stop digging for oil and gas.”

It wasn't previously known that Mr. Ramos-Horta was capable of such facetiousness.

Perhaps was he acting on the advice of the Honourable Steve Bracks, AC (Companion of the Order of Australia), who, as Special Representative for Greater Sunrise, represents the Australian Government and consults with the Government of Timor-Leste and other key stakeholders, including the Sunrise Joint Venture?

It appears that the new policy of the government of Mr. Ramos-Horta may be to cause the U.S. and their allies to pay Mr. Ramos-Horta \$100 billion for not producing oil and gas which, in fact, would be worth only about half as much in revenue if it were produced, one fifth as much in profit if the pipeline went to Darwin, and a net negative value if the pipeline went to Timor.

Brilliant!

By the same token, Mr. Horta has invented the perfect remedy to fight global climate change: using the same rates, give the oil and gas producers of the world a lump sum of \$240 trillion to stop all production once and for all. I am sure they will be happy to comply. On the other hand, that would be 3 years of worldwide GDP so I'm not sure where they'd find the funds.

I can feel a touch of desperation in Mr. Horta's statements, particularly when he mentioned the Ukraine.

Also, despite the figures given in the article, it so happens that a pipeline to Darwin would be significantly shorter and much shallower than a pipeline to Timor.

One wonders why the project hasn't started yet if the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Koreans have expressed so much appetite for developing the project in Timor. Is Mr.

Ramos-Horta giving them the cold shoulder out of brotherly love for Australia? May I suggest he call them without delay?

As for joining ASEAN, as I have written for years, for a small country like East Timor, joining the organization is tantamount to driving the last nail in its own coffin.

For the sake of comparison, refer to the [Darwin/Beaço quiz](#).

More seriously:

QUESTIONS

1. Isn't Mr. Ramos-Horta's last statement plain evidence that he is not willing to develop any part of Sunrise any time soon?
2. Isn't he aware that the profit at Sunrise is all in the production of liquids?
3. Isn't he aware that the production of liquids can only be achieved from facilities located offshore, neither in Australia, nor in Timor?
4. Isn't he aware that in all possible development plans the production of liquids antecedes that of natural gas, which is first reinjected in the reservoir?
5. Doesn't he have plain evidence of the fact from just looking at Bayu Undan?
6. Isn't he aware that Woodside has expressed repeatedly their desire to start the production of liquids at any time?
7. Isn't he aware that until his maritime boundaries are defined with Indonesia* he has no defined maritime boundaries, not even territorial waters, and thus he can't start any development at all?
8. Isn't he aware that most (80%) of the Sunrise fields lie in the Indonesian Exclusive Economic Zone, and that whatever Timorese Exclusive Economic Zone there was at one point disappeared when he overturned the previous treaties?
9. So why is he not doing what it takes to start operations offshore to produce liquids, therefore returning about \$5 billion to his coffers, which would pave the way to the potential production of natural gas in a second stage? That would entail:
 - a. Formally defining maritime boundaries with Indonesia;
 - b. Giving the green light to the offshore production of liquids.

ANSWER to 9.

Because he and his confederates have profusely demonstrated over the past 23 years that they are not eager to develop Sunrise, no matter how, no matter when. The prerogatives and privileges enjoyed by their ruling class rest on the conservation of the status quo and the preservation of the general population's poverty. People in power are naturally Conservatives, and are willing to do anything in their power to conserve things the way they are, even if only unconsciously. The ones who crave change are those who are devoid of any power or resource.

*: For extensive research and information about maritime boundaries in the Timor Sea, please refer to:

[Maritime boundaries of East Timor: a graphical presentation of some historical and current issues](#)