

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 24, 2006

The Honorable Dr. Condoleezza Rice
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madame Secretary:

As you know, the United Nations recently expanded its mission in Timor-Leste substantially. As long-time supporters of the new nation, we hope that the new United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) will be as effective as possible in helping Timor-Leste restore security and continue on the path toward peaceful democracy which has been interrupted by recent violence.

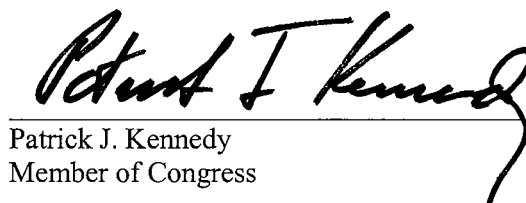
In August, disagreements within the U.N. Security Council caused it to defer a decision on whether the international military component, now led by Australia, should be fully integrated into the UN mission or remain under separate command. A final decision on the military command structure will be made after the Secretary-General reports on the issue by October 27.

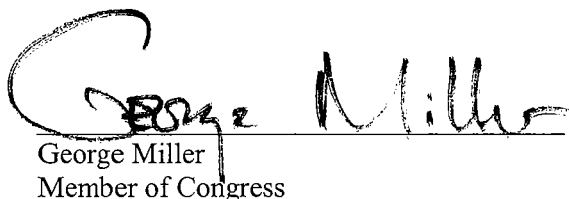
We commend the Australian government for the speed in which they responded to Timor-Leste's request for help in May 2006. However, we have concerns that a force under separate command will not only make coordination difficult, but that it will reduce the confidence and security that the people of Timor-Leste need from UNMIT at this difficult time. The U.N. Secretary-General has expressed support for a fully-integrated mission as well. Including all military components within UNMIT would also be consistent with previous UN missions in Timor-Leste. In 1999, when the Australian-led InterFET deployment helped to end post-referendum violence, it was integrated into the UNTAET peacekeeping force within a few months.

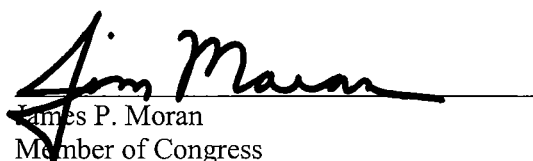
When the Security Council considers the issue again, we respectfully urge that the United States support a well-integrated and effective U.N. mission in Timor-Leste, with all international soldiers under U.N. command. We thank you for your consideration of this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress

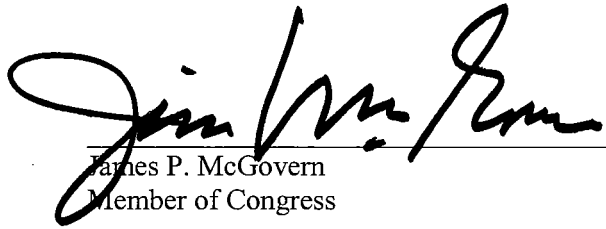

Patrick J. Kennedy
Member of Congress


George Miller
Member of Congress

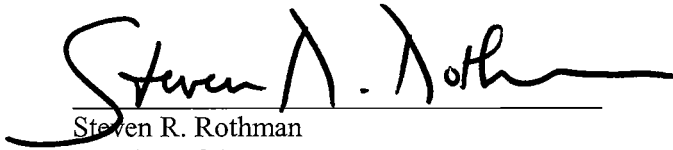

James P. Moran
Member of Congress



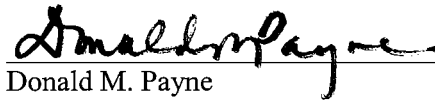
Sam Farr
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



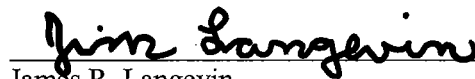
Steven R. Rothman
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress



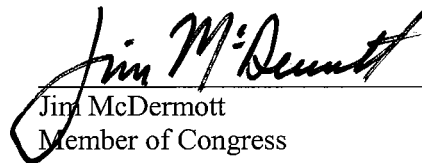
Robert Wexler
Member of Congress



James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



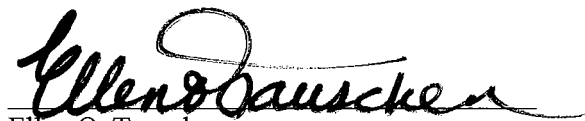
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



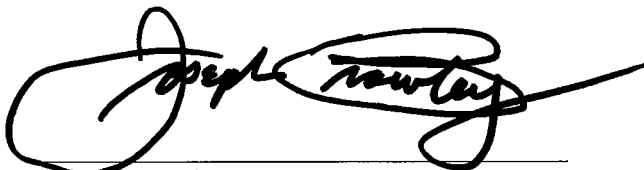
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



James L. Oberstar
Member of Congress



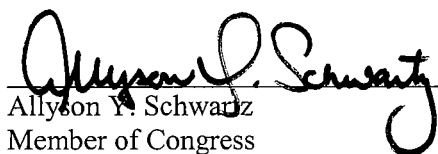
Ellen O. Tauscher
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



Lane Evans
Member of Congress



Allyson Y. Schwartz
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

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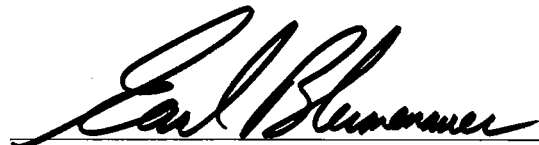
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Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress