



## FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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**PRESIDENT:** Daniel Urai

**YOUR REF:** .....

**NATIONAL SECRETARY:** Felix Anthony

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#### RESPONSE TO AG's COMMENTS

The FTUC rejects the unfounded allegations made by the Attorney General in regards to the ACTU and NZCTU delegation's visit to Fiji. The AG has attempted to put a spin on the visit and distract attention from the real issues that have been in contention between the regime and the Trade Union Movement locally and internationally.

He claims that there are no violations of Human and Trade Union rights in Fiji. The ILO and the International Community have condemned Fiji for violations within the decrees manufactured and imposed by the regime and regular violations of people's right to freedom of movement, assembly and speech (to name a few) through the imposition of the PER. The AG seems to not quite understand that if citizens are not free to speak out, or are not allowed to assemble and discuss issues of interest and rights, that workers are not free to belong to a Union of their choosing, these are violations of human rights. The AG is so out of touch with reality that he believes, to oppress people, deny their fundamental rights and to steal their right to be governed by an elected government, is all good.

A fine example would be the one-sided local media reporting from government's sources only in the past months. This is simply shameful and unethical by any media standards. The people recognize this fact.

The claim that Unions are out to damage the economy is utter nonsense. The regime is doing a fine job at that and needs no help. Condemnation of the regime by Trade Unions and the International Community the world over is a result of the regime's own actions. If such condemnation impacts the economy, then it is time that the AG and the regime takes full responsibility for its own doing and not attempt to pass the blame to others.

It is time that the Regime takes seriously the concerns that are being raised internationally on Fiji and act to get Fiji back on the right track and mend relations with the International Community. This may not be so palatable to the AG as this may mean he would have to give up the power he has amassed and imposes on the people of Fiji with impunity. His claims that the Trade Union leaders are there for their survival is hollow. The current Trade Union leaders did not grab power from the people. They were elected in a very democratic fashion unlike the AG. We challenge the AG to stand for elections and seek the mandate of the people before he has the audacity to speak like an elected representative of the people. Union leaders possess more mandate of the people than the AG ever did or probably ever will. It is time he remembered this before attempting to lecture to the people of Fiji.

The Fiji Trades Union Congress will continue to fight for freedom and the restoration of democracy. The AG decision not to allow the delegation into the country only further isolates Fiji and further damages our country's reputation internationally.

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NATIONAL SECRETARY**

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