



## FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS

32 DES VOUEX ROAD, P.O. BOX 1418, SUVA, FIJI

PRESIDENT: Daniel Urai

YOUR REF: .....

NATIONAL SECRETARY: Felix Anthony

OUR REF: PUB/01

DATE:21/07/11

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### PRESS RELEASE (2) –

#### RESPONSE TO RECENT GOVERNMENT ACTIONS REGARDING TRADE UNIONS

We, the FTUC, condemn the direct interference of the Government in the affairs of our affiliate, the Fiji Public Service Association (FPSA) through the media release by the Ministry of Information and the comments of the Attorney General. Government has no business in the internal affairs of any Union.

We remind the Government that Officials of the affiliates of FTUC are **elected** and therefore have full legitimacy unlike this Government. Unions have a mandate to speak on behalf of the workers they represent and are governed by rules and a Constitution. If any member is aggrieved by any decision of the Union, the Constitution of the Unions provide for process to address these concerns. It does not require Government to try and intervene in the internal affairs of the unions.

The FTUC clearly sees such intervention by Government as an attempt to weaken the solidarity of Unions and their members. **This will not work**. It appears that Government has a long term political agenda. The FTUC urges Government to respect the rights of workers and their Freedom of Association. Such actions are also in breach of ILO Core Conventions which the Government has ratified and is

obligated to respect and promote. It is our sincere hope that Fiji is not judged as a rouge state in the ILO.

The FTUC is also concerned at the comments attributed to the Attorney General which appear to be petty in nature where personal attacks are being made on various elected leaders of the Unions. We remind the Attorney General that these Unions and their Leaders are legitimate and legal and that the Attorney General has no standing in questioning the actions or decisions of these Unions for obvious reasons.

We ask, what consultations and mandate the Attorney General has to produce Decrees and impose them on the citizens. If the Attorney General wants accountability from Unions, he needs to start with himself. Can he tell the Nation what he is costing the taxpayers and why the taxpayers who did not choose him to lead, should pay.

**FELIX ANTHONY  
NATIONAL SECRETARY**

*All correspondence to be addressed to the National Secretary  
Phone: (679) 3315377, 3315402/ Fax: (679) 3300306 / Email: ftuc1@connect.com.fj*