



## **FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS**

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### **PRESS RELEASE No. 30-17-12**

#### **Regime's Blame Game**

The Regime has clearly realized the blunder it has made in expelling the ILO Contact Mission to Fiji. Within a day of the departure of the Mission, the Regime issues a public statement inviting the Mission back to Fiji but on conditions set by the Regime. It has not told the public that the original terms of reference was actually drafted by the Ministry of Labour and agreed to including the organisations and persons that the Mission was to meet.

It is simply unexplainable why the Regime should wait for the Mission to arrive and commence its initial meeting with the Minister for Labour when someone wakes up and decides that the rules of the game must change or else leave the Country as soon as possible.

The AG has seen it fit to again embark on a name calling of Trade Unionists and play the blame game to divert attention from the real issues. The ACTU has reacted to the Regime's decision to expel the ILO Mission. The Regime needs to take full responsibility for its decisions and stop blaming others.

The FTUC is not interested in playing politics on any issue or assist the regime in making excuses for its own failings. If the regime as the AG claims is doing the right thing and respecting workers' rights, it should have no difficulty in defending its position at the US Trade Hearings or at ILO. One asks, why is the AG talking about loss of jobs as a result of the US Trade Hearings if he is confident of the

regime doing the right thing? Clearly the AG is convinced that his “cock and bull” story on labour rights is not going to be palatable to the international community. The AG has demonstrated his lack of understanding and knowledge on International Labour Rights Issues and is taking his brief from the authors of the ENI Decree which breaks every rule in the book on labour rights.

We ask the AG to address the issue of many workers who remain unemployed today through no fault of theirs, or those that remain under employed, or those that work on wages well below the poverty line, or those civil servants and employees in Government owned entities who have had a wage freeze for the past 6 years, or those 2000 plus workers who were forcibly retired at 55 without much notice or those pensioners who have to now live below the poverty line, or those destitute who have had their paltry allowances of \$30 a month discontinued. Today we have in Fiji more workers unemployed and underemployed than ever in our history. Today we have more people living in poverty than we ever had before. An indictment on the current regime. These are some of the real issues that the AG should be addressing instead of name calling and blaming others. The Union Leaders or ACTU is not responsible for this. These issues are a result of mismanagement by the regime and are real and about real people and its time that the AG understands that his bluff is no longer going to work.



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