



FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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Regime Should Take Responsibility

The Fiji Trades Union Congress calls upon the Government to revoke all decrees that have violated Human and Trade Union rights in Fiji. This must also include the restoration of all fundamental workers' rights for all civil servants, workers in Government-owned Corporations and all workers who have been deprived of their rights under the Essential Industries Decree and its Amendments. It is also essential that Government revokes all decrees that limit or deprive people of their fundamental rights including the rights to assemble, free speech, free media and to ensure that people are free from any form of discrimination when determining their political preferences. The Government must also ensure that all its citizens enjoy full political rights as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The FTUC also calls upon the Government to ensure that there is no form of intimidation of any of its citizens.

All these are essential pre-requisites to a free and fair elections. It is time the Regime walks its talk on respecting the human rights of its people. There can never be any justification of moving Fiji forward if the Regime continues to deny the people their rights. The recognition of these fundamental rights and social justice are prerequisites to economic progress and peace.

The Country will soon be going to elections and it is imperative the so-called government ensures that the people of Fiji are allowed and encouraged to part take in the democratic process to choose a government without fear or any duress. The people and consequently the Country will become stronger if we empower people rather than instill fear and deprive them of their rights as this Regime has done in the past years. It is time that this Government makes peace with its people and this can only be done by restoring all rights including respect for indigenous rights and freedom of religion. The alternative is that it would pay a heavy price for its autocratic rule that would be remembered as the worst period in our Country's history.

The FTUC also calls upon the Government to make public all electoral regulations and the election dates to enable all political parties to prepare and educate people to make informed choices during the elections.

Transparency and accountability was the war cry of this Regime when it overthrew the elected Government. We have not seen any of this in the past seven years but this may be the last opportunity to make good that promise to the people albeit, it may only be the only instance. It is wrong and unfair that government is taking advantage of its position to promote its own political agenda and party. Again its promise that no one in government will be allowed to stand for elections have also fallen on the wayside. To the contrary it not only is allowing all its Ministers and senior civil servants to participate in political activity, Government resources are also being used.

We remind Government that the people expected to vote for them are closely watching and the verdict of the people will depend on all these issues. It is the last chance for this Government to do the right thing or be responsible for its demise. No longer can the Regime blame past Governments for the Country's current problems, it must take full responsibility. It can no longer also claim to be new; definitely not after eight years of governance. So when talking of past Governments, the Regime needs to understand that it falls in the same category except that never in our history have the people and workers in Fiji been shackled as we are today.



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