



## FIJI TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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**PRESIDENT:** Daniel Urai

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

**NATIONAL SECRETARY:** Felix Anthony

**OUR REF:** PUB/01

**DATE:** 13/08/11

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### **PRESS RELEASE (7) – FTUC MEETING PERMIT REVOKED**

The Fiji Trades Union Congress National Council Meeting scheduled for Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011 was forced to be abandoned after police intervened and dispersed delegates advising that the permit to convene the meeting had been revoked. A letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011 from the District Officer, Nadi stated *"This is to confirm that your application for the permit to have your National Council Meeting at Hexagon Hotel from 10.30 am to 1.30pm is hereby revoked with effective from today 13/08/11 as per directive from the Commissioner Western Division."* Delegates were even denied by the police to have morning tea at the hotel and directed that everyone leave the hotel premises.

FTUC had applied for a permit to conduct the meeting after the imposition of Decree No. 35 which would have disastrous impact on the Trade Union Movement and workers of Fiji. The FTUC was to discuss the Decrees and a response to such a draconian Decree. The Workers of Fiji deserve to know the real implications of the Decree and its effect on workers.

This revocation of the permit comes soon after the Attorney General gave assurance to people of Fiji through the media that Unions intending to hold meetings should apply for a permit and that it would be granted. Another case of the Attorney General misleading the people. This is a clear demonstration of the suppression of workers' right by this regime. We demand that the authorities make clear whether Unions in Fiji have a right to meet and discuss legitimate worker issues.

The Attorney General in his recent media propaganda has grossly misled people about the recent Decrees and the Trade Union Movement clearly demonstrating his utter lack of understanding of Trade Unions and Worker issues. It is ironic that the AG should question the leadership of the unions who are elected and claims that they are not in touch with workers. The union leaders are elected by the members and are accountable to their members. He may want to tell the people of Fiji as to who elected the AG and who is he accountable to and who does he speak for. He is not allowing the Trade Unions to respond to his diatribe or meet with members. Clearly he is worried that his lies will be exposed. We can understand why the media censorship is in place. If this Government is confident that it is doing the right thing and telling people the truth, then there is no need for media censorship and the Public Emergency Regulation.

The Fiji Trades Union Congress together with FICTU met with the High Level ILO Delegation and had a very constructive meeting. All the posturing by the Attorney General in the media about his clarification on the Decrees to the ILO Delegation was purely political and did not in any way diminish the seriousness of the violations that the regime has committed. He would do well to take heed of and educate himself on the ILO Core Conventions and demonstrate respect for workers' rights and Human rights.

We are greatly appalled by the ongoing discriminatory stance of the illegal regime towards the trade union movement in Fiji.

**Felix Anthony**  
**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

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