



2021 – 2022

ANNUAL

REPORT

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Vision, Mission and Values

VISION

A Stronger and Prosperous Fiji through Excellence in Foreign Service

MISSION

To advance Fiji's interests through the Effective Formulation and Implementation of its Foreign Policy

VALUES

- **Accountability**
- **Honesty**
- **Commitment**
- **Loyalty**
- **Courtesy**
- **Professionalism**
- **Integrity**
- **Transparency**

About the Report

This Annual Report is aligned to the Financial Regulations within the Fijian Civil Service and details the Ministry of Foreign Affairs performance(s) and commitment(s) in the strategic priority areas for the 2021-2022 financial year.

In Summary, the Annual Report includes the following:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Organizational Structure;
- The Bureau and Divisional contributions to the Strategic Priority Areas; and
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Achievements and Results aligned to the Operational Plan for the 2021/2022 financial year.

The Annual Report also includes activities that show a shift in priorities given the implications of COVID-19.



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Referral Letter from the Permanent Secretary

Date: 12 December, 2025

Honourable Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka

Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Office of the Prime Minister

Government Building

SUVA.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the Financial Management Act of 2004, I hereby submit the 2021-2022 Annual Report for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for your information and presentation to Parliament.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Raijeli Taga'.

Dr. Raijeli Taga

Permanent Secretary

Permanent Secretary's Foreword

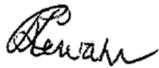
I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report highlighting the key achievements for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the 2021-2022 financial year.

This period marked the COVID-19 recovery phase where vaccines became available, containment measures were relaxed with the ease of curfews and restrictions, reopening of Fiji's international borders and the resumption of services.

Despite the enormous challenges imposed by the pandemic and natural disasters, the Ministry continued to engage with international and regional partners to advance Fiji's interests using innovative approaches.

I acknowledge with appreciation the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their resilience during this challenging times. The report is a testimony to the unwavering commitment and dedication that our Fijian diplomats towards delivering under such exceptional circumstances.

Looking ahead the Ministry continued its efforts to maximize opportunities to rebuild Fiji's economy and climate resilience.

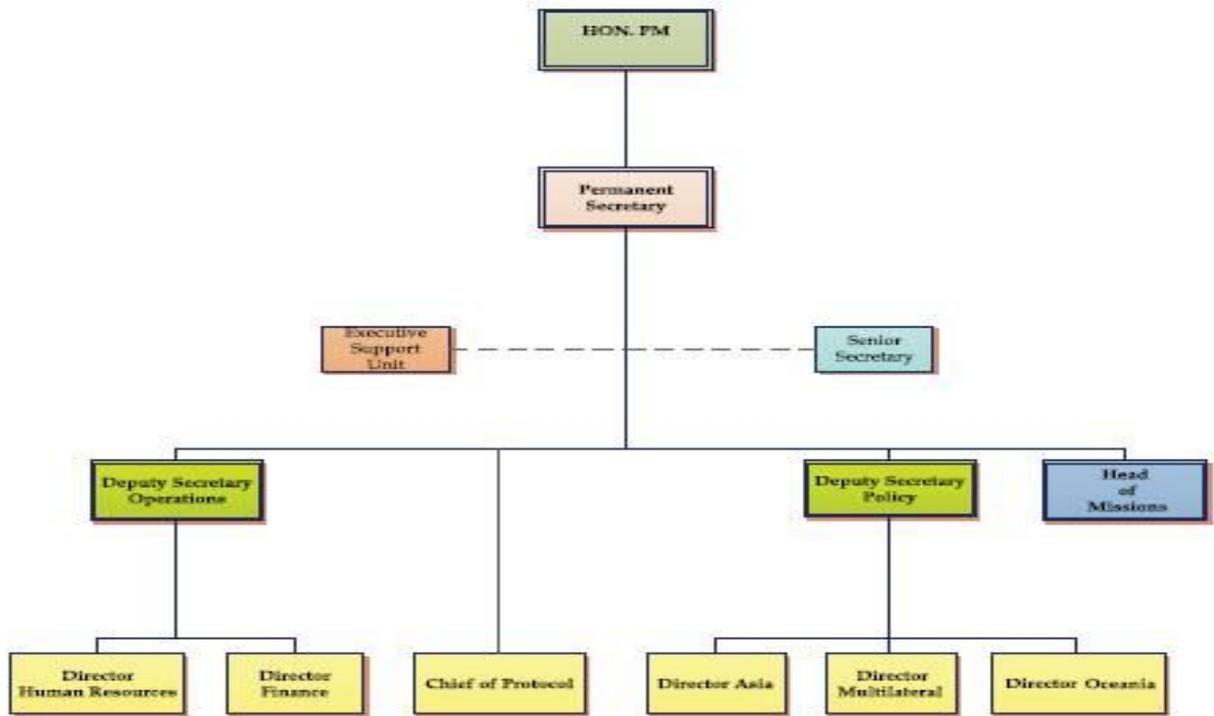


Dr. Raijeli Taga
Permanent Secretary

Abbreviations & Acronyms

Hon. MFA	Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Hon. PM	Honourable Prime Minister
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
CAPP	Climate Action Pacific Partnership
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
PFSO	Principal Foreign Service Officer
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
ISA	International Seabed Authority
MACC	Maritime Affairs Coordinating Committee
PSIDS	Pacific Small Islands Developing States
DINFO	Department of Information
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
WFP	World Food Programme
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
UNECA	UN Economic Commission in Africa
ISO	International Sugar Organization
AU	African Union
PIDF	Pacific Islands Development Forum
RAD	Roving Ambassador's Division
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
ESDP	Economic and Social Development Programme

2021/2022 Organizational Structure



Executive Management Team



Yogesh J. Karan
Acting Permanent Secretary



Esale Nayasi
Deputy Secretary



Peter Emberson
Director Multilateral



Jonetani Tagiretaua
Director Oceania



Apolosi Lovaqai
Director Asia



Jiko Rasooosoqo
Chief of Protocol



Josefa Tuima
Director Finance



Manjula Shah
Director Human Resources

2021/2022 Achievement Reports

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents its 2021-2022 Annual Report, highlighting Fiji's active participation in global initiatives to foster climate resilience, economic recovery, sustainable development, and human rights advocacy. The report features six strategic priorities, underscoring Fiji's leadership in advocating for national interests, namely:

- Global Leadership
- Trade and Investment
- Socio-Economic Development
- Public Diplomacy
- Peace and Security
- Human Rights and Democratic Values

1.0 Multilateral Affairs Bureau (Europe, Africa, South America & the Caribbean)

Executive Summary

Fiji expanded its intervention in environmental issues in connection with the appointment of a new Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP) Director General. That was fully endorsed with regional commitment towards a resilient Pacific. Commonwealth Action Group on Ocean and climate change spoke for ocean and climate solutions for all with the Commonwealth Blue Charter.

Climate and Economic Recovery Agenda at the 76th UNGA, Fiji's representative stressed that currently the world must be on a path to finally overcome one threat by updating its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This reconfirmed Fiji's leadership on climate resilience, biodiversity, and the global goal of keeping temperatures below 1.5°C. All this further enhanced and put into effect international and regional climate agreements.

Oceans Conservation and Sustainable Development in Fiji's lead at the UN Ocean Conference, proposed a 2030 moratorium on deep-sea mining. The impetus for this was found in its National Ocean Policy, envisioning that 30% of its waters be protected and in line with both the targets of SDG 14 as well as Blue Charter commitments.

Peace and Security for the Future Strategic partnerships were adopted in order to foster regional stability and look after the ocean. Fiji's commitment towards securing and policing its maritime borders was recognised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Strategic Priority 1- Global Leadership

Fiji welcomed the Appointment of the New SPREP DG

The Fijian Government welcomed the appointment of Mr. Sefanaia Nawadra as the new Director General for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The appointment was announced at the 30th SPREP Meeting of Officials on Thursday, 9th September 2021.

The Fijian leader congratulated the new appointee and reaffirmed the nation's commitment to the development of a resilient Pacific environment through an enduring partnership with regional organizations such as SPREP. It was also stated that Fiji was proud to have one of its own take on the important role for the region and had confidence in the appointee's abilities and expertise to advance opportunities for a resilient Pacific environment.

The Fijian leader conveyed best wishes and assured continued support as the new Director General assumed the role. Fiji continued to call for international solidarity and accelerated action on climate adaptation and resilience building, with a focus on the enormous challenges faced by vulnerable communities, including Pacific islands and Small Island Developing States.

Island Nations urged Commonwealth Leaders to Bolster Ocean Climate Action

Ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Rwanda, small island nations called for stronger global support on ocean and climate action. Fiji's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom (UK), highlighted the link between ocean health and climate change, stressing the need for urgent action.

A roundtable discussion followed, focusing on regional efforts to address these issues and how the Commonwealth can help. The Commonwealth Blue Charter, endorsed in 2018, involved 54 countries collaborating on ocean challenges. Fiji led the Action Group on Ocean and Climate Change, addressing marine pollution, unsustainable fisheries, and coral reef loss.

21st Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Minister's Meeting (CFAMM)

Fiji participated in the 21st Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Minister's Meeting (CFAMM), joining fellow foreign ministers in reaffirming their commitment to a progressive, inclusive, and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussions focused on the Commonwealth's role in global recovery, particularly in areas like trade and economic recovery, health and vaccine equity, and climate change.

The key issues highlighted were the challenges faced by SIDS, particularly in terms of pandemic impact and climate change and stressed the need for Commonwealth's support in providing innovative financial tools to help SIDS recover sustainably. On climate change, Fiji highlighted its efforts towards a green and blue economy and further emphasized the opportunity to "build back greener" in the aftermath of COVID-19. This was reaffirmed through the development of a National Adaptation Plan and its incorporation into updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), showcasing Fiji's commitment to addressing climate change and advancing a sustainable future.

76th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA76) – Virtual

Fiji's delegation to the 76th session of the UNGA High-level week in New York, was the first UN General Assembly where leaders attended in person and virtually. The objectives of the meeting were based on, building resilience post COVID-19 through hope and sustainability, responding to the needs of the planet, respecting the rights of people and revitalizing the United

Nations. The meeting was aimed at large economies, nudging them to renew their commitment to climate actions leading up to COP26 in Glasgow.

UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon

Fijian and Australian leaders met at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, where Fiji highlighted its priorities in ocean conservation, climate action, and sustainable development. Fiji emphasized its goals for climate mitigation, sustainable shipping, and combating illegal fishing, and sought Australia's support for these initiatives and upcoming global climate forums. Australia reaffirmed their commitment to the Fiji-Australia Vuvale Partnership and expressed solidarity, emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation to tackle climate change, ocean issues, and the impacts of the pandemic.

6th Annual SDG Business Forum – Virtual

Fiji joined the 6th Annual SDG Business Forum at the margins of the UN General Assembly and urged SIDS to engage private sector investment in global health and education. Fiji highlighted the challenges faced by SIDS to keep their economies afloat during the pandemic and reinforced the importance of SDGs for business continuity and stability amid future challenges.

Transformative Action for Nature and People High-level Event

Fiji participated at the 'Transformative Action for Nature and People High-level', an event held along the margins of UNGA76 and highlighted nature's value as non-negotiable and its importance to socio-economic development, whilst we mitigate against the impact of climate change and the warm ocean levels.

Fiji called for far greater global solidarity to protect the environment and biodiversity, to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and to recommit to the 1.5 Celsius.

Fiji affirmed its decisive actions to deliver its commitment to climate adaptation and oceans conservation as transformative actions and financing to address the biodiversity loss by 2030.

20th Anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA)

Fiji reaffirmed commitment to the United Nations' mission of building fair, equal, respectful, and solidarity societies, particularly in the context of the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). At a high-level UN meeting convened by the UN Secretary-General and the leader of the General Assembly, world leaders reviewed past efforts to combat racism and discussed ways to strengthen measures against racial discrimination. In a statement, Fiji emphasized dedication to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the DDPA. Fiji further stressed that the fight against racism is a global struggle and warned that racism persists when ignored.

UN Food Summit - 2021

Fiji representing the 18 members of Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), delivered a comprehensive statement on the challenges, collective actions and plans pursued by the region to build a resilient and sustainable food systems. Fiji emphasized the region's unwavering commitment for global food systems transformation at the UN Food Summit 2021 and reiterated that food is a crosscutting aspect of human development. These statements were aligned to PIFs stance on food security as the key driver of change, framed within the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent in improving the socio-economic well-being for all Pacific people.

20th Anniversary of the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Fiji reaffirmed its commitment and solidarity with the international community to support efforts in making the world free of nuclear weapons. This was emphasized at the High-Level

Plenary meeting to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

The virtual meeting held at the margins of UNGA76 was convened to raise awareness on threats posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the need for their elimination, in addition to mobilizing international efforts toward a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Fiji added that it is vital that nuclear disarmament progress beyond its current state and concerted collective effort is needed to advance towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Worldwide Moratorium on Deep Seabed Mining

At the inaugural One Ocean Summit, Fiji urged global ocean nations to adopt a moratorium on deep seabed mining until 2030. Fiji emphasized the vulnerability of SIDS like Fiji and highlighted the Glasgow Climate Pact, in fostering discussions on the ocean-climate connection.

Fiji outlined its' National Ocean Policy aimed at designating 30% of its Exclusive Economic Zone as Marine Protected Areas by 2030 and its exploration of innovative financing. Through a sovereign green bond and a blue bond initiative to support sustainable fisheries and green shipping. Fiji called for global solidarity, stressing the Blue Pacific's role in environmental and human well-being.

114th Session of OACPS Council of Ministers Meeting

At the 114th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers in Brussels, the Council discussed ongoing projects funded by the European Development Fund (EDF), trade negotiations with the European Union, and reforms within the OACPS Secretariat. Fiji advocated for prudent financial management, increased staff diversity, and enhanced engagement with the OACPS diaspora and emphasized the need for strategic decisions that ensure the long-term financial stability and operational effectiveness of the OACPS.

Fiji further called for greater representation from the Pacific region within the Secretariat.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) First State Parties Meeting, Vienna

At the First State Parties Meeting of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in Vienna, Fiji called on global leaders to prioritize the pursuit of a nuclear-free world and highlighted the catastrophic environmental and humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, particularly the ongoing devastation caused by nuclear testing in the Pacific, which has led to generational health issues.

Fiji urged nations to commit to the TPNW and promote nuclear disarmament for a global shift toward sustainable development and resilience against climate change. As Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Fiji stressed the need for nuclear-free engagement in the Pacific region and reaffirmed its commitment to a nuclear weapons-free world, emphasizing the moral and practical necessity of disarmament.

Meeting with the IFRC Secretary-General

Fiji had a bilateral meeting at the margins of COP26 with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) SG and pledged greater partnership in the advancement of humanitarian needs and services. Fiji conveyed appreciation to IFRC for its remarkable support in the region and noted potential cooperation opportunities in the areas of disaster preparedness and climate resilience.

12th IRENA Assembly

Fiji attended the Twelfth Session of the International Renewable Energy Agency's (IRENA) Assembly, held virtually in Abu Dhabi. Fiji urged global leaders to intensify efforts to tackle climate, energy, and development challenges, reiterating Fiji's call at COP26 for developed nations and major carbon emitters to reduce emissions.

Fiji's participation aimed to leverage IRENA's expertise in advancing renewable energy projects aligned with its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). The assembly also discussed the COP26 outcomes and energy transitions.

UN 46th Plenary Meeting on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

Fiji attended the UN 46th Plenary Meeting on Oceans and the Law of the Sea and urged support for PIF Declaration on Maritime Boundaries and Climate Change-related sea-level rise and echoed the sentiments of Pacific leaders where climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihoods of the Pacific communities. This coincided with the region's collective commitment to safeguarding the interests of Pacific people at the PIFs 50th Anniversary that endorsed the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of climate change-related-sea-level rise. The Declaration is intended as a formal statement of Forum Members' view on how the UNCLOS rules on maritime zones apply in the situation of climate change-related sea-level rise. Fiji urged the UN Member States to support the Declaration. Fiji called on the UN to accept that oceanic states and request for the same protection in international law that is available to landlocked states.

Phone Meeting with the UNESCAP Executive Secretary

Fiji and UNESCAP reaffirmed their commitment to building back better from COVID-19 and advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region and discussed ongoing cooperation between Fiji and UNESCAP partnership in the post-pandemic era.

Fiji congratulated UNESCAP on its 75th anniversary and praised its contributions to regional development. Fiji's partnership with UNESCAP is reflected in initiatives like the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme, which supports SIDS in addressing climate-related challenges.

Visit of the IOM's Chief of Mission for Australia and the Pacific

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening its partnership with Fiji at a meeting which discussed shared priorities such as climate change resilience and pandemic challenges. Fiji has benefited from IOM's support in disaster relief, climate adaptation, and labour mobility initiatives, since the opening of IOM's Pacific Office in Suva in 2017. The meeting underscored continued collaboration and future prospects in tackling issues like climate resilience and pandemic response.

UNOC Meeting, Lisbon

At the conference, Fiji focused on climate mitigation, sustainable shipping, and combating illegal fishing, seeking partnerships across sectors, including private sector. Fiji met with Portuguese Prime Minister and emphasized Fiji's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with the EU, particularly in tourism, sports, education, and outsourcing services. Fiji highlighted their collaboration with Portugal through the EU's COVAX facility to provide COVID-19 vaccines to Fijians. There was also a call for Portugal's support in global initiatives like the High Seas Treaty negotiations and efforts to eliminate harmful fisheries subsidies.

Meeting with Australian leader of Foreign Affairs

Fiji met with Foreign Affairs leader in Vienna to discuss strengthening bilateral ties and exploring new areas of cooperation. Fiji's interest in collaborating with on health, fisheries, gender equality, climate change, and biodiversity conservation was highlighted. Fiji emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism practices, particularly those that benefit local communities and environmental conservation. Expressed an interest in expanding cooperation in defense, security, training, and people-to-people exchanges.

Cuba Commemorated 20 Years of Diplomatic Relations with the Pacific Islands

Cuba commemorated 20 years of diplomatic relations with Pacific Islands at a ceremony held at the Cuban Embassy in Suva Fiji highlighted Cuba's collaborative efforts with Pacific Island nations evident in initiatives such as scholarships for medical students, which have significantly contributed to bolstering health systems in the Pacific and addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was noted that 204 Pacific islanders graduating as doctors in Cuba, with more specialists anticipated in the coming years. The education exchange not only addressed the region's shortage of medical professionals, but also strengthened Cuba's bonds with Pacific nations, fostering a partnership based on mutual respect, assistance, and complementary support.

Meeting with the leader of Europe and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria

Fiji met with the leader of Europe and International Affairs, during the High-Level Segment of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) First State Parties Meeting in Vienna in June 2022. The objective was to strengthen bilateral relations with Austria and the European Union, focusing on areas such as climate change, peace and security, human rights, and multilateral cooperation.

Fiji highlighted the importance of the TPNW in Fiji's pursuit of peace and environmental preservation, recalling the devastating impact of nuclear testing in the Pacific, particularly on the islands of Malden and Kiritimati. Austria echoed the significance of the TPNW in promoting peace and acknowledged the importance of multilateralism and global cooperation in addressing these challenges.

Strategic Priority 3 - Socio Economic Development

Meeting with Ireland Government Leader

Fiji and Ireland reaffirmed commitments through collaboration in the areas of climate change, economic recovery, peace and security, conveyed during a bilateral meeting between Fiji and Ireland, at the margins of COP26. The meeting provided opportunities for collaboration a potential engagement, noting Ireland’s contribution to the COVAX facility.

Fiji looks to Ireland and the G20 countries to urgently commit to more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) aligned with the net zero carbon emissions by 2050 on the four key priorities pursued by Fiji at COP26;

1. Greater Climate Ambition from All Countries;
2. Increased Resource Mobilization for Adaptation and Loss and Damage;
3. Creating Permanence of Oceans in the UNFCCC Agenda; and
4. Promoting the Ocean-Climate Nexus and Improving Access to Affordable Climate Finance.

Commonwealth Pledges Support for Fijian Government

Fiji and the Commonwealth SG reaffirmed their commitment to deepening Fiji's cooperation with the Commonwealth, particularly in the post-COVID-19 recovery. They acknowledged the shared goals of "building back better," focusing on climate change, sustainable development, and resilient recovery. Fiji noted the Commonwealth’s support in areas like trade, health, vaccine equity, climate resilience, and regional connectivity. Both parties emphasized the importance of accelerating joint efforts on climate action, ocean conservation, and economic recovery, underscoring the Commonwealth’s vital role in Fiji's sustainable development and regional stability.

Strategic Priority 4 - Public Diplomacy Pacific Reception

Fiji, as Chair of PIFs, attended the Pacific reception ahead of the second United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. Hosted by the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and Asian Development Bank, the reception was an opportunity for dialogue with the Pacific leaders, in the pursuit of accelerating the “ocean agenda”: the adoption of science-based innovative solutions for challenges to oceans and the global marine ecosystem.

Strategic Priority 5 - Peace and Security

High Level UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference

At a Peacekeeping event co-hosted by Fiji, Ireland, and the International Peace Institute (IPI), Fiji focused on implementing action for peacekeeping and the roles of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) in United Nations Peacekeeping. Fiji’s 40-year commitment to peacekeeping, emphasizing the vital role of TCCs in selecting, preparing, equipping, and sustaining peacekeeping contingents was highlighted and Fiji's dedication to the United Nations Peacekeeping efforts was reaffirmed while honouring the contributions of peacekeepers globally.

The panel discussed the importance of diverse experiences in peacekeeping operations, noting Fiji and Ireland's involvement in countries like Kosovo, Timor Leste, Iraq, South Sudan, and the Middle East. Both countries continue to support efforts to integrate peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution.

New deal on Maritime Security with UK

Fiji and the United Kingdom strengthened their maritime security partnership with the signing of a MOU) board the Royal Navy's HMS Spey. The MOU aimed to address illegal maritime activities, promote ocean conservation, and tackle climate change.

It enhances diplomatic ties and aligns with shared goals such as the SDGs and a sustainable ocean vision. Key initiatives similar to ship riding will facilitate personnel exchanges between the Royal Navy and Fijian maritime authorities, improving cooperation and interoperability. The visit of HMS Spey to Fiji, part of its Pacific deployment, highlights the collaborative efforts between the two nations, with the ship's recent humanitarian work in Tonga underscoring its commitment to regional security and assistance.

Fiji – Solomon Islands Maritime Boundary Agreement

Fiji and Solomon Islands signed a Maritime Boundaries Delimitation Agreement during the Blue Pacific High-Level Panel Event at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum. The agreement, based on the UNCLOS, established clear maritime boundaries between the two nations, facilitated by bilateral negotiations and support from the Pacific Community (SPC) and development partners. The agreement is a significant step towards defining maritime zones in accordance with international law, strengthening relations between the two nations, safeguarding maritime rights, particularly in the face of challenges such as climate change and rising sea levels, aligning with regional efforts to protect maritime zones.

Alliance of Countries for a Deep-Sea Mining Moratorium

Fiji joined other nations in launching the Alliance of Countries for a Deep-Sea Mining Moratorium at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon. Fiji's proactive stance, having already implemented a moratorium in 2019 and becoming a regional leader on this issue, emphasized the importance of understanding the extensive socio-economic and environmental impacts of deep-sea mining on ocean ecosystems.

Additionally, Fiji called for a 10-year moratorium on seabed mining from 2020 to 2030, urging

fellow forum island states to support this initiative. Fiji proposed leading efforts at the UNGA in 2022 and 2023 to secure global consensus against deep sea mining during the "ocean decade." Fiji further stressed the need for partnerships and increased investment in ocean science, particularly focusing on deep-sea mining related research and its intersections with climate change and ocean health.

Strategic Priority 6 - Human Rights and Democratic Values

Fiji in the Human Rights Council

Fiji's tenure in the UNHRC marked by its presidency during the 48th Council session held in Geneva from September 13 to October 11, 2021, came to an end. As the first Pacific SIDS to join the Council in 2019, Fiji made history by assuming the roles of Vice President in 2020 and President in 2021. Under Fiji's leadership, the Council successfully navigated challenges, ensuring sessions proceeded safely amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic, adopting a hybrid modality of both physical and virtual sessions.

Fiji led the Council through three regular sessions, three special sessions, and two universal periodic review sessions, with the third scheduled for November 2021. Despite the pandemic's constraints, special sessions addressed urgent human rights situations in Myanmar, Palestine, and Afghanistan. Notably, the 48th session achieved significant milestones, including the adoption of resolutions affirming the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, and establishing a Special Rapporteur for human rights in the context of climate change. This aligns with Fiji's commitment to advocate for this crucial recognition and address the plight of vulnerable communities, particularly SIDS.

2.0 Asia Bureau (Asia, Middle East & Russia)

Executive Summary

The Annual Report for the Fiji – Asia, Middle East, and Russia Division provides a comprehensive overview of the Division's activities and achievements during the period of 2021 to 2022, highlighting key initiatives, successes, and challenges encountered in advancing Fiji's diplomatic engagements across these diverse regions.

Key Highlights:

1. Diplomatic Engagements: The Division fostered robust diplomatic relations through strategic engagements, high-level dialogues, and bilateral visits with countries in Asia, the Middle East, and Russia. These interactions are aimed at strengthening ties, promoting mutual understanding, and advancing shared interests.
2. Economic Partnerships: In our endeavor to build back better from the global pandemic, efforts to enhance economic and socio-economic partnerships and trade relations yielded positive outcomes, with a focus on promoting investment opportunities, free market access, and trade diversification between Fiji and partners in the regions. Initiatives to boost economic cooperation contributed to sustainable growth and development.
3. Regional Collaboration: Active participation in regional forums and initiatives underscored Fiji's commitment to addressing common challenges such as climate change, sustainable development, and security issues. Through multilateral cooperation, Fiji showcased leadership and innovation on critical global issues.

Challenges and Responses:

1. Geopolitical Dynamics: The Division navigated complex geopolitical landscapes and regional dynamics, adapting strategies to effectively engage with evolving political

environments and maintain diplomatic relevance amidst shifting alliances and tensions.

2. Economic Resilience: Economic uncertainties and global events posed challenges to trade and investment activities. The division responded by promoting economic resilience, exploring new opportunities, and fostering partnerships to mitigate risks and enhance economic stability.

Outlook and Future Strategies:

Looking ahead, the Division remains committed to deepening diplomatic ties, expanding economic opportunities, and addressing regional challenges through innovative approaches and strategic partnerships. Embracing digital diplomacy, enhancing people-to-people exchanges, and advancing sustainable development goals will continue to be key focus areas in the upcoming year.

This report reflects the Division's dedication to advancing Fiji's diplomatic interests and fostering cooperation in diverse regions. Despite geo-political challenges and economic uncertainties, the Division's proactive engagements and collaborative efforts have positioned Fiji as a valued partner on the global stage, paving the way for continued success in promoting mutual understanding, economic growth, and sustainable development in the years ahead.

The Annual Report for the MFA's Asia Bureau highlights key diplomatic activities and achievements from 2021 to 2022, focusing on fostering robust diplomatic relations, enhancing economic partnerships, and engaging in regional collaboration. Diplomatic efforts involved strategic engagements, high-level dialogues, and bilateral visits aimed at strengthening ties and advancing shared interests.

Economic initiatives centered on building back better from the pandemic, with a focus on trade diversification, investment opportunities, and socio-economic partnerships that supported sustainable growth.

The Bureau actively participated in regional forums, showcasing leadership on climate change, sustainable development, and security challenges. However, geopolitical dynamics and economic uncertainties presented challenges, which were addressed by adopting new strategies and promoting economic resilience.

Looking ahead, the team plans to continue deepening diplomatic ties, expanding economic opportunities, and tackling regional issues through innovative approaches. The focus will remain on digital diplomacy, people-to-people exchanges, and advancing sustainable development goals. Overall, the report reflects the Bureau's commitment to advancing diplomatic interests and positioning the country as a valued global partner, with a strong focus on mutual understanding, economic growth, and sustainable development.

Strategic Priority 1- Global Leadership

9th Japan - Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 9)

The 9th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) was held virtually on July 2, 2021, during the unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic. In his statement, Head of Fiji's Delegation, Prime Minister Honourable Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama commended the Government of Japan for its leadership through the PALM process which provided the much-needed platform for leaders to collaboratively address challenges in the region particularly the COVID-19 pandemic. The Prime Minister also emphasized the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy which comprehensively guides the Pacific Region's priorities and actions and called on the development partners to realign their efforts to Pacific regional aspirations in the shared strategic interests as the Blue Pacific. He said the partnership between Japan and PIF Leaders is founded on historic bonds and mutual trust, and it

significantly promotes strengthened cooperation at all levels between Japan and the Pacific Islands Forum.

Inaugural China-Pacific Island Countries' Foreign Ministers Meeting

The Government of China hosted its first China-Pacific Island Countries' Foreign Ministers Meeting virtually on October 21, 2021. The Prime Minister, Honourable Josaia Bainimarama conveyed his appreciation to Foreign Minister, His Excellency Wang Yi and the People's Republic of China for convening of the inaugural Foreign Ministers' Meeting, with counterparts from the region. Despite the unprecedented economic and socio-economic challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Bainimarama reiterated that current challenges should not restrict the Leaders' ability to engage with each other. Honourable Bainimarama emphasized that there is a need to promote regional connectivity in the current digital era and hope to close the digital divide and build new digital ecosystems. It is one of many ways we can strengthen our economies through connectivity.

At these unprecedented times, partnerships and engagements are crucial to supporting the regional efforts, and in the case of Fiji, in addressing the multifaceted and cross-sectoral challenges. China's involvement with the Pacific has contributed to the development of the respective States. For instance, the strategic decision to establish the China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum is a reminder of China's aspiration to foster friendship and cooperation with the Pacific Island countries through the South-South Cooperation model and to enhance our capabilities in climate adaptation.

UAE Bilateral Cooperation

Fiji's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Naipote Katonitabua presented his Letter of Credence to the Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE, Minister of Defence, Ruler of

the Emirates of Dubai, Sheik Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Ambassador Katonitabua was deeply honoured and privileged to present his Letter of Credentials to one of the great leaders in the UAE looked forward to enhanced cooperation.

Fiji will capitalise on potential opportunities through its participation in the 2020 World Expo in Dubai and anticipation of the signing of key bilateral agreements between its two leaders on the Investment Promotion and Protection Cooperation Agreement, renewal of UAE-Fiji Defence Cooperation; Labour Mobility and Employment; Visa Free arrangement; Seafarers Cooperation; and Infrastructure Development memorandum of understanding (MOU) to name

a few. The UAE Government has supported Fiji in its pursuit towards alternative energy supply through the funding of the Lau, Kadavu and Rotuma (LAKARO) renewable energy project worth US\$5m. It also provided support in 2020 for Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and medical equipment for the fight against COVID-19.

The UAE Government through Emirates Red Crescent Authority assisted Fiji with a sum of \$6.3 million in the reconstruction of three schools in Fiji damaged by Tropical Cyclone Winston. It also donated cash assistance of FJD \$200,364 towards the rehabilitation and recovery efforts for TC Ana and Yasa.

Renewable energy solutions are also a strategic area of collaboration through which Fiji Mission in Abu Dhabi works in partnership with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). Additionally, IRENA and UAE Mission to the International Renewable Energy Agency last year co-hosted the “Renewables Talk” focused on renewable energy in the global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Fiji and the UAE have enjoyed 11 years of cordial relations since establishing diplomatic ties in March 2010. Fiji’s Embassy in Abu Dhabi was opened in September 2012.



Fiji's Ambassador to the UAE, Naipote Katonitabua at the Presidential Palace



Ambassador Katonitabua at the Presidential Palace presenting his credentials to Sheik Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

12th International Renewable Energy Assembly (IRENA)

Minister for Infrastructure, Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources, Jone Usamate led Fiji’s delegation at the Twelfth Session of the International Renewable Energy Agency’s (IRENA) Assembly, which was held virtually on 15 and 16 January 2022, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Fiji’s participation at the IRENA Assembly was supported through Fiji’s Mission in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The global meeting brought together virtually more than 1,100 delegates from 137 countries including Heads of State, Ministers, Heads of International Organisations and CEOs, and took place under the overarching theme ‘Energy Transition: From Commitment to Action’ – reflecting the growing need to translate bold ambition into concrete steps that accelerate the shift to a cleaner, fairer, and more resilient energy system for our collective future. Hon. Usamate during his intervention called on the

global leaders and energy decision-makers to take concrete steps to shift the energy transition to the next level in the coming decade and accelerate actions at the speed necessitated by climate, energy, and development imperatives. In his statement he also reiterated that during the COP26 meeting in Glasgow, Scotland, Fiji together with Small Island Development States (SIDS) through the leadership of the Fijian Prime Minister have voiced their concern with the developed countries and heavy carbon emitters on the urgency to take decisive and concrete actions to reduce their carbon emissions. IRENA is an intergovernmental organisation that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future and serves as the principal platform for international cooperation, a centre of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy.

Fiji's Ambassador presents Credentials to Malaysia's Head of State

Fiji's Ambassador to Indonesia, Amenatave Yauvoli presented his credentials as Fiji's non-resident High Commissioner to Malaysia to the Head of State in Malaysia, His Majesty Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong XVI Al-Sultan Abdhullah Ri' Ayatuddin Al- Mustafa Billah Shah at the Istana Negara, Royal National Palace in Kuala Lumpur. In presenting his Letters of Credence, Ambassador Yauvoli conveyed the greetings and best wishes of the President of Fiji, His Excellency Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere, to His Majesty Yang Di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia, and the people of Malaysia for their continued prosperity. In receiving the Letters of Credence, His Majesty Yang Di-Pertuan Agong congratulated Ambassador Yauvoli on his appointment as the High Commissioner of the Republic of Fiji to the Federal Government of Malaysia with the assurance of the fullest cooperation and support from the Government of Malaysia towards the discharge of his duties. He extended his kind greetings and well wishes to President Katonivere, and the people of Fiji for continued

peace, progress, and prosperity. His Majesty recognised the value of the existing warm and friendly bilateral relations with Fiji and remains committed to enhancing existing cooperation to a higher level, especially throughout the post-pandemic era. His Majesty reaffirmed Malaysia's commitment to further enhance the partnership between the two nations through the expansion of bilateral relations and various cooperation in trade, health, tourism, education, and agriculture.

Fiji's Ambassador presents Credentials to the President of Singapore

Ambassador Yauvoli presented his Letters of Credence to Her Excellency Halimah Yacob, the President of the Republic of Singapore, at the Istana (Royal/National Palace) in Singapore. In receiving the Letters of Credence, President Yacob extended congratulatory remarks on Ambassador Yauvoli's appointment as the Non-Resident High Commissioner of the Republic of Fiji to the Republic of Singapore, with the assurance of the fullest cooperation and support from the Government of Singapore towards the discharge of his duties. President Yacob further recognised the value of Singapore's existing warm and friendly bilateral relations with Fiji and remains committed to enhancing existing cooperation to a higher level especially throughout the post-pandemic era. President Yacob expressed her commitment towards the vast potential for the expansion of the bilateral relations and various cooperation in trade, tourism, climate action initiatives, sports, and human-capital development. Ambassador Yauvoli was accompanied by his spouse Mrs. Ruci Yauvoli and supported by Counsellor Isaac Grace at the auspicious ceremony.

2nd China-Pacific Island Countries (PICs) Foreign Ministers' Meeting

Fiji co-chaired the 2nd China-Pacific Island Countries (PICs) Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 30 May 2022. The meeting convened with opening address from Prime Minister and Pacific Islands Forum Chair, Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama and State Councilor and Minister of

Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Wang Yi. Following the remarks from Minister Yi, the Pacific leaders had the opportunity to deliver address on their respective countries. At the meeting, the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and the People's Republic of China discussed cooperation in addressing global challenges, especially climate change, socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic and reviewed current areas of cooperation while exploring opportunities for future cooperation. The PICs acknowledged the People's Republic of China for its support towards COVID-19 response and economic recovery efforts. The two sides reaffirmed their mutual support on issues involving each other's core interests and emphasised that the partnership is based on the values of mutual respect and understanding for each other's sovereignty and choice of development path.

Strategic Priority 3 - Socio Economic Development

Fiji and Korea marks 50 years of Diplomatic Relations

Fiji established formal diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea on 30th January 1971. The 50 years of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Fiji and the Republic of Korea is testament to the commitment and aspirations for continued bilateral cooperation between the two nations. In recognising this momentous occasion, congratulatory notes were exchanged between the President of the Republic of Fiji, His Excellency Major General (Ret'd) Jioji Konusi Konrote and Korean Ambassador to Fiji, His Excellency Mr. Park Young-kyu at the State House. President Konrote said that Fiji is grateful to the Government of Korea for its contributions to Fiji's socioeconomic development over the years and most recently the assistance provided by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in the form of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). In reaffirming Fiji's partnership with Korea, President Konrote reiterated on the importance of international cooperation and solidarity in addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

President Konrote expressed Fiji's appreciation of Korea's contribution and commitment in championing our mutual interests globally, with emphasis on strategic engagements in the areas of climate change, green energy, health, education and fisheries.

Fiji and Korea sign Grant Aid Framework Agreement

The official signing of the Framework Agreement for Grant Aid took place on 13 July 2021 between the Ambassador of Korea to Fiji, His Excellency, Mr. Park Young-kyu and the Permanent Secretary Office of the Prime Minister and Acting Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan marking the exemplary partnership of 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations. The Framework formalises the cooperation between Fiji and Korea for the establishment of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Pacific Office in Fiji and advancement of regional development cooperation through KOICA's aid strategy for the Pacific Region. Through this elevated collaboration, (KOICA) will comprehensively support the regional efforts to recover and rebuild from the impacts of COVID-19. In reaffirming the Fijian Government's partnership with KOICA, Mr. Karan said the Agreement will strengthen KOICA's administration of programs and resources; enable the swift coordination of Official Development Assistance (ODA) while maximizing opportunities for enhanced engagements at regional and international levels. Ambassador Park stated that the signing of the agreement will allow both governments to implement the development cooperation in a more stable and systematic manner.



Official signing of the Framework Agreement for Grant Aid

Japan formalizes Grants for Provision of Equipment for Fisheries, Agriculture and Waterways

The Government of Japan formalised two Grant Agreements, worth 300 million Japanese Yen (approximately FJD 6 million) funding to the Government of Fiji through Japan's Economic Social Development Programme (ESDP) on February 8, 2022. The Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Yogesh Karan and His Excellency, Kawakami Fumihiro, Ambassador of Japan, formalised Japan's assistance to Fiji at the Signing and Exchange of Notes Ceremony at the Japanese Embassy in Suva.

The funding assistance will enable the procurement of heavy machinery equipment for Fisheries, Agriculture and Waterways. The provisions of heavy machinery will be utilised in post-disaster recovery, rehabilitation and ultimately support Fiji's national development priorities. Ambassador Kawakami highlighted that this assistance was in response to the needs for agriculture and fisheries development and waterways management by the relevant Ministries and will meaningfully help build Fiji's resilience against natural disasters and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. He expressed his happiness upon the formalisation of this funding assistance as it is the tangible realisation of Japan's commitment to the initiatives titled, "Strengthening the Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development" and "Climate Change and Disaster Resilience", which are two of the five prioritised cooperation areas under the Japan-Pacific Bond Policy or KIZUNA Policy, as announced by then Japanese Prime Minister, Suga Yoshihide, at the 9th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9), held in July 2021. The PALM 9 was also attended by Prime Minister Bainimarama.

Japan reaffirms strong support for Fiji's development priorities.

Fiji hosted the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Hayashi Yoshimasa on 7 May 2022. Mr. Hayashi is the

second Japanese Foreign Minister to visit Fiji recently, following the historic visit of former Japanese Foreign Minister, His Excellency Kono Taro, in 2019, which marked the first visit to Fiji by a Japanese Foreign Minister in over 32 years.

During the bilateral meeting, Prime Minister Bainimarama formally welcomed Minister Yoshimasa on his first official visit to Fiji and said that the visit demonstrated Fiji and Japan's strong historical ties and relations. He acknowledged Japan's assistance to Fiji in times of great need in the timely provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), life-saving medical equipment, and contribution to the COVAX Facility, which helped with the vaccination campaign rollout and ultimately, the reopening of Fiji's international borders and our economic recovery.

Perspectives on the potential opportunities for increased collaboration in the areas of commerce, tourism, trade, education, health, security, disaster management, rural development, and infrastructure was discussed at the meeting. The significance of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy and Japan's engagement with the Pacific was also discussed at the meeting. The Prime Minister extended the Fijian Government's and the people of Fiji's best wishes to Prime Minister of Japan, Fumio Kishida, and the people of Japan. In response, Mr. Hayashi Yoshimasa commended Prime Minister Bainimarama for his exemplary leadership and commitment to the advancement of shared aspirations for global and regional peace and prosperity. Fiji is an important development partner, and Japan attaches great importance to the bilateral relations with Fiji, with mutual cooperation for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."



Virtual Meeting

Visit by His Excellency Wang Yi, the State Councilor, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

The State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Wang Yi visited Fiji for an official visit from Saturday 28 May 2022 to Tuesday 31 May 2022 marking his second official visit to Fiji since 2018. Mr. Wang Yi held bilateral discussions with the Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama which was centered on Fiji-China bilateral and multilateral areas of cooperation and evolving challenges of the post COVID era.

The Prime Minister at the joint press conference commented on the outcome of the bilateral meeting stating that he sought a stronger commitment from China on climate action. As a global community, we remain woefully short of cutting emissions in line with the 1.5-degree Celsius target of the Paris Agreement — and will continue to push for a phase-out of coal and other fossil fuels by all economies as quickly and practically as possible. Also discussed was the importance of combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, opportunities to expand sustainable ocean management in the Pacific, and ways to help Fijian exporters land more of their high-quality products and produce in the Chinese market. Following the bilateral meeting, State Councilor Wang Yi joined Prime Minister Bainimarama at the 2nd China-Pacific Island Countries (PICs) Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Visit by His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aqeel AlKhateeb, Minister for Tourism of Saudi Arabia

Prime Minister Bainimarama met with the Minister for Tourism of Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Aqeel AlKhateeb, on June 16, 2022, in Suva. Minister AlKhateeb's visit was to strengthen bilateral cooperation and diplomatic relations between the two nations, which were established in 2015. The Prime Minister welcomed Minister AlKhateeb on his first visit to Fiji and the Pacific and thanked him for the opportunity to promote dialogue on areas of enhancement of relations between the two nations. During the bilateral meeting, potential

cooperation in the tourism sector, trade and investment, green energy and technology were discussed. There was also an exchange of views on advancing shared aspirations, particularly in accelerating climate actions, ocean conservation, and initiatives promoting sustainable development.

The Prime Minister also affirmed Fiji's support for Saudi Arabia's bid to host the World Expo 2030. In response, Minister AlKhateeb expressed his sincere appreciation to Prime Minister Bainimarama for the opportunity to meet in person and the kind hospitality accorded to him during his visit to Fiji. He commended the Prime Minister for his strong leadership and commitment to the global issue of climate change. He said the visit to Fiji and the region is to seek stronger partnership opportunities in the post-pandemic era, particularly as nations worldwide work collectively to build resilience and rebuild from the pandemic and the worsening impacts of climate change.

Strategic Priority 4 - Public Diplomacy

Fiji High Commission in India commemorates Girmit Remembrance Day

The contributions of Girmitias and their descendants in all walks of life, nationally and internationally was recognised at the 143rd Girmit Remembrance Day, hosted for the first time by the Fiji High Commission in New Delhi, in collaboration with the Girmitiya Foundation of India.

The event held on 15th May 2022 was a platform to pay tribute to the Girmitias and reflect on their cultural values, sacrifices, and their perseverance towards Fiji's prosperity. India's Minister of State for External Affairs, His Excellency Shri Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, was the chief guest at the occasion. He acknowledged the assistance of the Government of India, that would enable Ministry of Education in Fiji, to re-write this part of history so that there can be better appreciation of the cultural values and its significance.

Fiji inaugurates Ganesh Utsav 2021 program

Fiji Sevashram Sangha's Ganesh Utsav 2021 inauguration was held virtually on 10 September 2021 to commence the 22nd national program from 11 – 19 September 2021. The program was officiated by the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister and Acting Permanent Secretary Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan and the Indian High Commissioner to Fiji, His Excellency Palaniswamy Subramanyan Karthigeyan.

Mr. Karan acknowledged Fiji Sevashram Sangha and their leaders for their contributions to Fiji's national development through provisions of sociocultural programs, academic opportunities for students from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds and for their work in reaching out to families in need of assistance. High Commissioner Karthigeyan said Fiji and India share a special bond and the collaboration has continued to strengthen over the years. He conveyed his appreciation to Fiji Sevashram Sangha for their service to the nation and wished them well in their future endeavours. In its recent initiative, Fiji Sevashram Sangha mobilised assistance through COVID relief supplies, building materials and educational supplies provided to families in the aftermath of TC Yasa and TC Ana.

Strategic Priority 5 - Peace and Security

Korea Offers Further Assistance for Fiji in COVID-19 Battle

The Korean Government provided further assistance worth FJ\$400,000 to aid the Fijian Government in the ongoing fight against COVID-19. The consignment that arrived in Suva on 27 July 2021 was part of Korea's ongoing assistance to Fiji's response to the second wave of the pandemic. In acknowledging this timely assistance, the Minister for Health, and Medical Services Dr. Ifereimi Waqainabete conveyed the Fijian Government's appreciation to the Government of Korea for their remarkable support and commitment towards assisting Fiji at this time of great need.

This assistance will greatly assist frontline workers to trace and contain the transmission of the virus in Fiji's communities and protect the lives of fellow Fijians. The PPE items include 56,000 face shields, 9,200 protective suits, and 385,000 KF94 masks. KF stands for 'Korean filter,' and 94 refers to the filtration efficiency, indicating how good the mask is at filtering out particles; in this case, it is 94% efficient. The mask is also highly recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Office in Fiji has also assisted through the provision of 8,000 KF94 masks, 4,623 PPE kits, and 500 Infrared non-contact thermometers with a total cost of FJ\$420,000.



Handing over of COVID-19 Assistance by Korea

Fiji's High Commission in India Mobilises Assistance for National Response to COVID-19

The Fiji High Commission in India (FHCI) in partnership with its networks in New Delhi coordinated assistance to support Fiji's national response to COVID-19. The Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) consignment mobilised by the Fiji High Commission, consisted of 5000 N95 face masks, 5000 three-ply surgical masks, 50 boxes of surgical gloves and face shields to assist the Ministry of Health and Medical Services' response to contain the pandemic. Fiji's High Commissioner to India, Mr. Kamlesh Prakash extended his appreciation to Dr Madhu Handa from Moolchand Hospital for the timely collaboration, which enabled this mobilisation of Personal Protective Equipment to Fiji. He added that the initiative complemented the efforts of Fiji's frontline workers in providing health care service to the nation. Dr Handa, who originally hails from Fiji, said she is grateful for the opportunity to reach out and give back to Fiji at

the time of great need. In a similar initiative, the Fiji High Commission in India collaborated with Medivisor Health in India and mobilised a donation of 5,000 face masks to Fiji.



Handing over of COVID-19 Assistance by FHC India

The Second Batch of KOICA's Vital Supplies to Support Fiji's COVID-19 Response

The Government of the Republic of Korea through the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Fiji Office provided additional support to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MoHMS) of Fiji in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The second batch of donations consisted of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and non-contact infrared thermometers to support the frontline health workers. The additional 1,420 PPE kits, which consist of surgical gowns, disposable masks (N95), non-woven aprons and masks, dental bib and masks with eye shield, together with 210 non-contact thermometers was provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea. Fiji's Minister for Health, Dr. Waqainabete stated that the support would greatly assist Fiji's frontline workers to safely and effectively deliver an enhanced public health response that is required to contain the pandemic.

Taiwan assists Fiji in the fight against COVID-19

In their response to Fiji's urgent request for assistance to help aid in the fight against the COVID-19 virus that has plagued the world, Taiwan showed goodwill and friendship to the Government of Fiji through its time of need and donated 10,000 surgical masks, 1,000 N95 masks, 50 gowns worth \$21,000 to Fijian

frontline workers to support the Government efforts in combating the rapid rise of confirmed cases of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Assistance through Coordinated efforts from Thailand

Fiji's Honorary Consul-General in Thailand and Chairman of the SPI (Saha Pathana Inter-Holding) Group of Companies Dr Chumpol Phornprapha, together with Mr. Prapol Phornprapha, Deputy Managing Director of Thitikorn PLC sent assistance in support of Fiji's national response to contain COVID-19. PPEs consisting of 300 face shields, 5000 pairs of latex gloves, 400 PPE kits, and 293 Oximeters arrived in Fiji, and a similar initiative was conducted in Fiji in 2020. Dr Chumpol said the assistance represents the cordial relations between the two nations and their shared commitment towards building back better. Minister of Health and Medical Services, Dr Ifereimi Waqainabete, extended his appreciation for this coordinated initiative that complemented the work of many health care professionals and frontline workers who have dedicated their lives to serve the nation and said Fiji is grateful for all the ongoing support and collaboration rendered by Fiji's development partners.



COVID-19 assistance from Thailand

Strategic Priority 6 - Human Rights and Democratic Values

Malaysian Government Provides Humanitarian Assistance to Fiji

The Government of Malaysia provided Humanitarian Assistance worth FJ\$30,000 to assist the Fijian Government's rehabilitation efforts following the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone (TC) Yasa.

The assistance mobilized by the Malaysian High Commission in Suva was an affirmation of the collaboration and close ties between the two countries. Malaysia's High Commissioner to Fiji, His Excellency Ilham Tuah Illias stated that they were proud to be able to contribute and assist the Fijian Government. High Commissioner Illias commended the efforts of Fiji's Health officials in containing the virus. Malaysia is also keen to utilize existing bilateral arrangements to assist in Fiji's efforts to create and foster a sustainable economy with its available resources. The Malaysian High Commission had also aided last year in the form of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs).

Fiji and Indonesia Renew Commitment for Greater Development Cooperation

Fiji and Indonesia have affirmed greater levels of cooperation in addressing COVID-19, climate change and economic recovery through a virtual meeting held between Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister and Acting Permanent Secretary Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan and Director General for the Asia Pacific and Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Abdul Kadir Jailani. The discussions focused on existing areas of cooperation while exploring potential opportunities in shared interests and priorities. Mr. Karan said Fiji is grateful to all its development partners for standing in solidarity at this time of great need and he thanked Indonesia for the humanitarian assistance provided to Fiji in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Harold. Fiji has received US\$200,000 worth of COVID-19 supplies, as stipulated under COVID-19 Agreement signed in December 2020 and over \$10,000 from the Tahir Foundation in Indonesia towards COVID-19 relief. Mr. Karan also expressed his appreciation for the concerted efforts of the two nations in swiftly coordinating repatriation flights earlier this year for Fijian nationals who were stranded in Indonesia and needed assistance to return to Fiji. Similarly, Fiji's efforts were also recognised in the repatriation of Indonesians back to their homes.

3.0 Oceania Bureau (Oceania & Americas)

Executive Summary

The Oceania Bureau within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays an important role in managing and progressing Fiji's interests across the Oceania region and North America. The Bureau is responsible for research, analysis and implementation of Fiji's strategic foreign policy objectives concerning the Oceania region working in close collaboration with relevant line Ministries, Agencies, Resident Pacific Missions in Fiji and the region as well as Fiji's Missions in Canberra and Wellington and the Roving Ambassador's Division. These efforts are essential for bolstering Fiji's international presence and influence while driving economic growth and development.

A primary focus of the Bureau is to deepen Fiji's diplomatic ties through high-level engagements and bilateral dialogues. By effectively coordinating official visits and diplomatic discussions, the Bureau aims to build robust relationships with key nations and regional organizations. This enhanced diplomatic engagement is crucial for positioning Fiji as a significant player in international affairs and securing mutual benefits.

The Bureau also emphasizes regional collaboration and cultural diplomacy. By working within the Oceania and North American region, the Bureau addresses shared challenges and promotes stability. Additionally, it supports cultural and educational exchange programs to foster mutual understanding and build long-term relationships. Addressing global issues such as climate change and sustainable development through international forums further underscores Fiji's commitment to contributing positively to global solutions.

Strategic Priority 1- Global Leadership

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)

Fiji assumed the role of the Chair of the 51st Pacific Forum Leaders

Fiji assumed the role of the Chair of the 51st Pacific Forum Leaders Meeting on Friday 5th of August 2021. The forum also commemorated the historic 50th anniversary of the Pacific Islands Forum. Prime Minister Bainimarama was joined by the Pacific leaders at a virtual meeting with the theme, "Security and Prosperity in Unity: 50 Years of the Pacific Islands Forum."

The meeting recognised the remarkable 50 years of achievements of the Forum and the opportunity for the Pacific Leaders to engage in discussions on shared interests and priorities of the region. At the meeting, the leaders collectively pursued discussions on building back better through COVID-19 recovery strategies and addressing mutual concerns raised by the Micronesian countries relating to the Forum.

In terms of climate action, a draft declaration on preserving maritime zones amidst the sea-level rise related to climate change was also considered by the Leaders. Matters that were discussed at the Foreign Ministers' meeting included the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to be held in Glasgow and the new applications from the international Forum Dialogue Partners.

President Biden Addressed the meeting of the PIF

US President Joseph Biden addressed the Forum Leaders at its meeting on 5 August 2021 and pledged America's support to the Pacific towards the COVID-19 pandemic and the global ambition to tackle the climate crisis. This was upon the invitation of the PIFS Chair, Fijian Prime Minister Bainimarama.

President Biden was thankful for the invitation and for Fiji's leadership of the Forum through a time of significant challenge to the region and to the world. He further highlighted the economic impacts and the need for Governments to work together to drive an inclusive and sustained recovery.

The United States is committed to reducing emissions by 2030 and building resilience in vulnerable communities globally. PM Bainimarama thanked President Biden for making history as the first U.S President to join the Forum, and for the positive changes on climate change. The Prime Minister also welcomed President Biden's pledge of half a billion doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine through the COVAX Facility.

Blue Pacific Talanoa Series

The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) convened a Blue Pacific Talanoa series on Friday 27th August 2021 to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests observed globally on 29th August, 2021. Officially opened by the Pacific Islands Forum Chair, Prime Minister, Bainimarama and the Secretary General of PIF, Mr. Henry Puna, the 'Talanoa' focused on the theme, "Pacific History, Global Futures: Securing a Nuclear- Free Blue Pacific".

The Blue Pacific Continent endured some of the most powerful nuclear tests conducted in world history, with more than 300 nuclear tests at atmospheric, surface and underground levels and the impacts have been nothing short of devastating. This was through residual contamination and radioactivity in the ocean and lagoons and the permanent relocation of resident populations in the Marshall Islands, to the serious and lasting impacts on the health, environment and human rights of affected communities.

The Prime Minister paid tribute to the foresight and visionary leadership of the Pacific fore bearers in their vision of a nuclear free Pacific, establishing a South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Rarotonga Treaty. The International Day against Nuclear Tests was declared by the UN General Assembly in 2009, following a resolution initiated by Kazakhstan to

mark the closure of the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test site on 29th August 1991.

Fiji Welcome Forum Leaders to Suva for the 51st Pacific Islands Forum

Leaders from across the Pacific region convened in Suva on the 11-14 July 2022, for the 51st Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) chaired by Prime Minister Bainimarama. The gathering marked an important moment to reaffirm regional relationships and set new goals for collective action. The theme of the forum "Celebrating 50 years of Pacific regionalism", underscores the commitment to collaboration and shared aspirations among member nations. Central to the agenda was the launch of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, a comprehensive framework developed over three years through extensive regional consultations.

The Forum aims to strengthen the Pacific community's resilience and sustainability, reflecting on past achievements while charting a course for future cooperation in addressing regional challenges. The gathering not only highlighted Fiji's leadership in the Pacific but also stresses the importance of regional unity in addressing shared concerns and advancing common goals for the benefit of all Pacific Islanders.



Pacific Island Forum 51st Leader's meeting held in Suva, Fiji

Pacific Group of the African Caribbean Pacific Leaders Meeting (PACP)

Prime Minister Bainimarama, serving as both Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and host of the 51st Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting in Suva, opened the Pacific Group of the African Caribbean Pacific Leaders Meeting (PACP) with

a focus on celebrating 50 years of Pacific regionalism.

The PACP Meeting, which preceded the official opening of the Leaders Meeting, provided a platform for Pacific leaders to explore collaborative opportunities in areas of mutual interest, particularly in the post-pandemic era. Following this, discussions continued with the Blue Pacific Leaders Ocean Panel, highlighting ongoing efforts to address regional challenges and opportunities related to ocean sustainability.

The event's theme, "Jubilee: Reflection, Renewal, Celebration," underscores the Forum's commitment to addressing critical issues such as economic recovery from COVID-19 and resilience against climate-related disasters, crucial for Fiji and the wider Pacific region.

PIF Leaders convened first dialogue session on "Innovative Approaches to Building Resilient and Unified Pacific"

The first dialogue session, chaired by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Chair and Prime Minister, Bainimarama, as part of the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting was convened in July 2022.

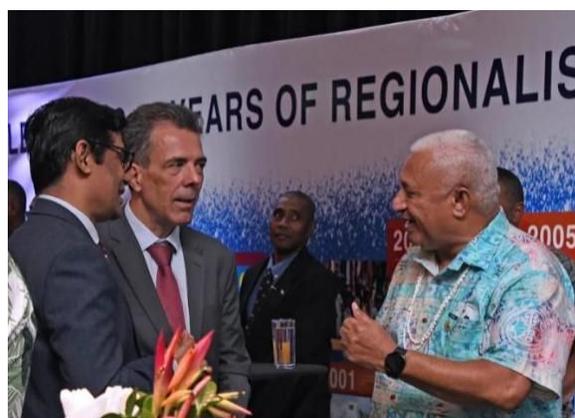
The dialogue provided an opportunity for PIF Leaders, Associate Members and Forum Observers to consider the global context in which the Pacific operates and its implications on the Pacific region and regional priorities. In his remarks Prime Minister Bainimarama said the 51st Forum is an opportunity for the region to strengthen solidarity.

The PIF Chair emphasised the importance of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent stating that he is confident the 2050 Strategy will serve as the "North Star" for the decades to come, providing the region with a long-term vision, and a sense of our shared trajectory in the key themes and strategic pathways that it sets out.

There were also discussions on the strategies to mitigate the risks of the post pandemic global recovery and innovative approaches to address those risks in a consistent and cohesive manner. It also enabled PIF Leaders, Associate Members and Forum Observers to discuss the 2050

Strategy for the Blue Pacific, while reflecting on the journey of Pacific regionalism and the Pacific Islands Forum over the last 50 years and the way forward for the Pacific Family for the next 50 years.

The dialogue called for multilateralism as the key to promoting resilience, inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic recovery within the Blue Pacific.



The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders renewed their commitment and reaffirmed the region's solidarity in advancing climate action and ocean conservation

Prime Minister Bainimarama convened a dialogue with the heads of CROP Agencies

Speaking at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Suva, Prime Minister Bainimarama emphasized the vital role of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) amidst growing challenges such as climate change, post-pandemic recovery, and complex regional dynamics.

He highlighted the urgent need for unified efforts by CROP agencies to address critical issues like climate resilience, ocean health, and sustainable fisheries management. He stressed the importance of coherent technical advice and coordinated action to support policymaking across Pacific Island states, highlighting the role of CROP in aligning efforts towards the region's shared goals.

Looking ahead, Prime Minister Bainimarama outlined the significance of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as a framework for guiding CROP agencies towards cohesive and impactful regional development. This strategy, he noted, sets out clear thematic priorities to advance Pacific interests on the global stage, calling for enhanced collaboration and strategic alignment

among CROP members to realize long-term regional aspirations.

Launch of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

Prime Minister Bainimarama, speaking as the Pacific Islands Forum Chair, emphasized the importance of unity and collective action among Pacific leaders as they concluded their week-long meetings. He called upon everyone to carry forward the spirit of solidarity, or "mana," from their time together. At the launch of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific, Prime Minister Bainimarama underscored its role in honoring the region's past while charting a bold path forward. The strategy emphasizes the empowerment of Pacific peoples, their shared values, and their proactive ownership of development agendas. Prime Minister Bainimarama stressed the urgency for unified action across critical issues like health, climate change, and regional security, asserting that a united Pacific is pivotal for lasting progress and resilience. The successful launch of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent was a key priority and achievement of Fiji's Chairmanship of the Pacific Islands Forum.



Prime Minister Bainimarama with other Pacific leaders during the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific launching as part of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York

Pacific Community (SPC)

The Fijian Government and the Pacific Community (SPC) pledged their continued commitment to collaboration, aiming for a more resilient and sustainable future in Fiji and the broader Pacific region. This commitment was reinforced at a meeting held in May 2022, between Mr. Yogesh Karan, the Permanent Secretary for the Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Stuart Minchin, the Director-General of SPC. Discussions centered

on ongoing partnerships and strategies to enhance cooperation between the Fijian Government and SPC, with a focus on addressing shared challenges such as climate change and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Karan expressed appreciation for SPC's support to Fiji and the region during critical times, particularly amid the COVID-19 crisis. He commended SPC's strategic approach in tailoring programs to align with Fiji's national priorities and development framework. Moreover, he assured the Fijian Government's backing for initiatives like the Country Programme, aimed at empowering communities in Fiji and beyond. Emphasizing regional solidarity, Mr. Karan reiterated Fiji's commitment to collective efforts in confronting common challenges and pursuing opportunities for resilient recovery.

Dr. Minchin echoed the sentiment of cooperation, highlighting SPC's strong partnership with Fiji as the host country to its major regional office. He pledged SPC's dedication to working alongside the Fijian Government to maximize development opportunities for Pacific Island nations and territories, particularly in the face of climate change and COVID-19 recovery. Recognizing SPC's role as a key scientific and technical organization in the Pacific, both parties affirmed their commitment to sustainable development aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underscoring the importance of a people-centered approach to research, science, and technology.

Fiji Bilateral Meeting with Papua New Guinea

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama and Prime Minister James Marape of Papua New Guinea had a bilateral meeting during the 51st Pacific Islands Forum in Suva, Fiji. Prime Minister Bainimarama expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Marape for his commitment to regional cooperation, noting his attendance at the Forum as a sign of dedication to the Pacific community. He also congratulated PM Marape on his recent re-election and praised PNG's leadership in regional affairs, particularly its successful handover of the Melanesian Spearhead Group Chairmanship to Vanuatu. Prime Minister

Bainimarama emphasized the potential of sub-regional agreements like the MSG Free Trade Agreement in reinforcing economic recovery efforts across the Pacific.

Prime Minister Marape thanked Prime Minister Bainimarama for Fiji's hospitality and affirmed Papua New Guinea's steadfast support amidst regional challenges, particularly climate change. He highlighted the deep historical ties between their nations and noted the increasing Papua New Guinean investments in Fiji. The leaders discussed the Suva Agreement and Prime Minister Marape reiterated Papua New Guinea's commitment to regional solidarity.

Visit of the US Secretary of State

Fiji's Acting Prime Minister and Attorney General, Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, led a significant bilateral meeting in February 2022, with Secretary Blinken and the U.S. delegation, marking a pivotal moment in the relationship. The discussions focused on strengthening ties across various fronts, including addressing climate change, economic recovery, defense and security, and trade and investment opportunities. This meeting underscores a commitment to collaboration and signifies a new era of partnership between the two nations.

Expressing gratitude to Secretary Blinken for his visit to Fiji, both parties pledged to work closely together to advance opportunities not only for Fiji but also for the broader Pacific Islands region. The United States' rejoining of the Paris Agreement was applauded, highlighting shared efforts in tackling climate change. Furthermore, Fiji acknowledged and appreciated the U.S.'s support in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the provision of vaccines and humanitarian aid, both directly and through the United Nations.



US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken with the Acting Prime Minister of Fiji and Attorney General, Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum at the bilateral meeting in February 2022

State Visit by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

The first ever State visit from the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, to Fiji from 23 April 2022 was a landmark achievement in the Fiji–Australia Vuvale Partnership. The last visit by a Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia was in 1993. The State visit reinforced Fiji and Australia's commitment to regional solidarity and will unfold new opportunities for engagements in strategic cooperation in areas of climate and oceans actions, disaster resilience, economic recovery, defence and security, and socioeconomic development, amongst others.

Governor-General Hurley and Her Excellency, Mrs. Linda Hurley were formally welcomed and received by the Fijian delegation led by the Prime Minister Bainimarama, and Mrs. Mary Bainimarama.

During the State visit, Governor-General Hurley met with His Excellency, President Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere and the Hon. PM. Governor-General Hurley spoke at the opening of the newly refurbished RFNS Stanley Brown Wharf, which was supported by the Australian Government in recognition of the ongoing cooperation with Fiji and the region in defence, security, and maritime services.

President Katonivere said that Fiji is proud of this historic visit, and it signifies the strong friendship and bilateral relations between the two nations, which have continued to strengthen over the years.

Governor General David Hurley, and Mrs. Linda Hurley also honored the fallen Fijian soldiers and peacekeepers who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty for global peace at the National War Memorial site. Alongside paying tribute, they engaged with ex-servicemen and members of Fiji's disciplinary forces, fostering connections between the nations. Minister for Defence, National Security, and Policing, Hon. Inia Seruiratu, welcomed the Governor-General and Mrs. Hurley. Also present were the Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, John Feakes, and Fiji's High Commissioner to Australia, Luke Daunivalu. This commemorates the historical ties between Fiji and Australia in peacekeeping efforts, further solidifying cooperation in defense and security.



Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia David Hurley being escorted by Fijian military personnel upon his arrival into the country

Visit of the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs - Reinforced Vuvale Partnership

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Honourable Penny Wong commenced her official visit to Fiji to bolster the Vuvale Partnership between Fiji and Australia, emphasizing regional prosperity and cooperation. Her visit in May 2022, aimed to strengthen historical ties and bilateral relations, underscoring joint efforts to tackle pressing challenges such as climate action, oceans conservation, defense and security, economic resilience, and empowerment of women and youth.

During her stay, Minister Wong engaged in a series of meetings, including a courtesy call to Prime Minister Bainimarama and discussions with other senior ministers and Fijian women leaders. The visit preceded her attendance to the Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders meeting, where she met with Secretary General Henry Puna, reinforcing Australia's commitment to collaboration and support tailored to the needs of the Blue Pacific.

Minister Wong highlighted Australia's dedication to addressing regional priorities, including pandemic recovery support, enhanced defense and maritime cooperation, and opportunities for Pacific workers in Australia. These initiatives aim to strengthen economic ties, empower Pacific communities through employment opportunities, and foster stability and prosperity across the region.



Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Honourable Penny Wong during her visit to Fiji in May 2022

Visit of the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs

United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Mr. Mark Baxter Lambert visited Fiji in June 2022 and paid a courtesy call to the Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan. On behalf of Prime Minister Bainimarama, Mr. Karan formally welcomed Mr. Lambert to Fiji for his first official visit, which builds the momentum of Fiji–United States cordial relations reinforced through the visit of U.S. Secretary of State, Antony J. Blinken.

Advancing regional cooperation and Pacific solidarity is of the utmost importance for the strategic partnership between Fiji and the United States and this was emphasised during the

meeting. Mr. Karan said that Fiji looks forward to further cooperation with the United States through the Indo-Pacific Economic Partnership and Maritime Domain Awareness initiatives, partnership in the areas of humanitarian service, climate and oceans, disaster risk resilience, defence and security, trade and investment, and economic recovery, amongst others.

Both sides have agreed on continued consultations for the realisation of shared priorities in climate change and oceans, defence and security, economic prosperity, trade and investment, and building disaster risk resilience, amongst others.



Chargé d’Affaires-US Embassy, Tony Greubel, United States Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Mark Baxter Lambert with Permanent Secretary Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Yogesh Karan at the Fiji Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Commission Ceremony for Fiji’s new High Commissioner to New Zealand

President Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere of Fiji presided over the commissioning ceremony of Fiji’s new High Commissioner to New Zealand, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, at the State House on June 22nd, 2022. President Katonivere extended his congratulations to High Commissioner Kubuabola on his new diplomatic role and expressed optimism for his success. In response, Kubuabola expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent Fiji in New Zealand, highlighting the importance of fostering bilateral relations between the two countries across various sectors. He emphasized the need to expand Fiji's participation in New Zealand's Registered Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE), aiming to increase the number of Fijian laborers involved and explore new areas of employment.

High Commissioner Kubuabola underlined the significance of the Duavata Partnership signed earlier in the year, which aims to strengthen historical ties and foster growth between Fiji and New Zealand. He reaffirmed his commitment to enhancing engagement at all levels to advance both national interests and those of the broader Blue Pacific community.



President Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere of Fiji presided over the commissioning ceremony of Fiji’s new High Commissioner to New Zealand, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, at the State House

Opening of the First-Ever Cook Islands High Commission in Fiji

The opening of the Cook Islands High Commission on 06 June 2022 in Suva marked a significant milestone in the evolving diplomatic relations between Fiji and the Cook Islands, which have spanned 24 years. Prime Minister Bainimarama and Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands inaugurated this historic mission, emphasizing the importance of regional solidarity and collaboration in the Pacific. Prime Minister Bainimarama highlighted the shared challenges faced by Pacific nations, such as climate change, and stressed the potential for joint efforts in safeguarding the ocean and ensuring a sustainable future.

In his address, Prime Minister Bainimarama stated Fiji's role as a central hub for commerce, trade, and diplomacy in the Pacific region.

He expressed optimism about the future of the Fiji-Cook Islands partnership, citing the establishment of the High Commission as a foundation for deeper cooperation in various sectors, including trade, education, and regional

security. He also praised the resilience shown during the COVID-19 pandemic, noting the successful efforts to reopen borders and revive economic activities between the two nations.

Prime Minister Brown reciprocated the sentiments, acknowledging Fiji's pivotal role as a regional leader and expressing confidence in enhanced collaboration across mutual interests. He highlighted the strategic importance of the High Commission in fostering bilateral ties and supporting both countries' recovery efforts post-pandemic. Prime Minister Brown's remarks underscored the commitment to strengthening Pacific unity and leveraging opportunities for shared prosperity, reflecting a forward-looking approach to regional diplomacy and cooperation.



PM Bainimarama, PM Mark Brown and Hendry Poona, Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat at the opening of the Cook Islands High Commission in June 2022)

Opening of First Ever, Samoan High Commission in Fiji

The Samoan High Commission official opening in Suva, marked a historic achievement in the advancement of Fiji and Samoa's relations. The new High Commission premises was officially opened on 07 June 2022 by Prime Minister Bainimarama and his counterpart Prime Minister of Samoa, Honourable Fiame Naomi Mata'afa. Prime Minister Bainimarama welcomed Prime Minister Mata'afa to Fiji and congratulated her for making history as Samoa's first female Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Bainimarama emphasized the longstanding ties between the two nations, rooted in shared challenges and aspirations, particularly in areas such as climate action, ocean conservation, and food security. He highlighted the critical role of unified Pacific leadership in addressing these global issues.

Prime Minister Bainimarama also noted Fiji's strategic position as a hub for trade, telecommunications, and finance in the Pacific, underscoring its readiness to support regional initiatives in nutrition security, trade, and human capital development. He expressed optimism about enhancing bilateral cooperation under Samoa's leadership, especially as Samoa prepares to reopen its borders and normalize international travel.

Prime Minister Mata'afa echoed these sentiments, emphasizing Samoa's commitment to regional unity and cooperation through its new High Commission. She commended Fiji for its support in establishing the mission, seen as pivotal in deepening partnership and fostering development opportunities across the Pacific. Mata'afa highlighted the signing of a development cooperation Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries as a tangible step towards strengthening their collaboration. The establishment of Samoa's High Commission in Fiji signifies a strengthened commitment to regionalism and collective dialogue in the Pacific, setting the stage for enhanced diplomatic ties and shared progress in the years ahead.



PM Bainimarama with PM Mata'afa at the opening of the Samoa High Commission in June 2022

Meeting with the President of New Caledonia

The Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Prime Minister Bainimarama, met with President Louis Mapou of New Caledonia during the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Suva from 11 – 14 July 2022. Prime Minister Bainimarama warmly welcomed President

Mapou to Fiji, emphasizing the critical role of the Pacific region in addressing climate change and recovering from the pandemic's impacts. He stressed the importance of unity among Pacific nations in prioritizing the well-being of their people and highlighted the upcoming 2050 Strategy as a pivotal initiative to guide regional development and resilience over the next three decades. The leaders discussed collaborative efforts in addressing climate change, promoting economic resilience, and enhancing regional cooperation in trade and investment.

President Mapou expressed gratitude for the hospitality extended to his delegation and appreciated the opportunity to engage with Prime Minister Bainimarama and other Pacific leaders on shared priorities. The meeting underscored the mutual commitment of Fiji and New Caledonia, and by extension the broader Pacific Islands Forum, to fostering solidarity and addressing pressing regional challenges collectively.

Strategic Priority 3 - Socio Economic Development

Visit of the Deputy Assistance to the President of the US and Coordinator for Indo Pacific Affairs

Fiji and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration on key regional issues, including climate change, defense, security, and economic recovery post-COVID-19 at a meeting between Prime Minister Bainimarama and Kurt Campbell, Deputy Assistant to the President of the United States and National Security Council Indo-Pacific Coordinator. The discussion was centered on the importance of cooperation between the two nations.

Hon. Prime Minister highlighted the shared goals of regional prosperity and sustainable development, expressing admiration for Biden's leadership in climate and ocean action. Mr. Campbell expressed appreciation for the opportunity to discuss pressing global issues with Bainimarama, emphasizing the significance of U.S.-Fiji cooperation in addressing challenges such as COVID-19 recovery and climate change.

He stressed the critical role of collaboration between the two countries in promoting peace, resilience, and prosperity throughout the region, reinforcing the commitment to strategic dialogue and mutual support.

The exchange highlighted the ongoing efforts of Fiji and the United States to work together on shared priorities, reflecting a commitment to addressing challenges and advancing common goals in the Indo-Pacific region.

Phone Meeting with the US Deputy Assistant to the President and Coordinator for Indo-Pacific Affairs

The partnership between Fiji and the United States is focused on deepening regional cooperation to bolster security and economic ties. A telephone call between Dr. Kurt Campbell, the Deputy Assistant to the President and Coordinator for Indo-Pacific Affairs, and Prime Minister Bainimarama underscored this

commitment. Discussions highlighted collaborative opportunities and the positive trajectory of their relationship, which was further solidified by Dr. Campbell's visit to Fiji. Key areas of focus included climate change, defense and security, and economic recovery post-pandemic, reflecting Fiji's and the US's shared priorities. Prime Minister Bainimarama expressed gratitude to President Biden for his support in advancing Pacific prosperity.

Dr. Campbell emphasized United States' dedication to the Pacific Islands, emphasizing mutual interests and priorities. He highlighted ongoing initiatives such as enhanced maritime security cooperation and economic engagement through frameworks like the Economic Partnership of the Indo-Pacific and the Maritime Domain Awareness Program. The call affirmed a shared commitment to strengthen ties and achieve common goals in the region, reinforcing the strategic importance of US-Fiji cooperation in the Indo-Pacific context.

Humanitarian Assistance to Tonga

Fiji Mobilised Humanitarian Assistance to Tonga

The Fijian Government collaborated with the Tongan community in Fiji to provide relief supplies and humanitarian assistance to the Kingdom of Tonga after the country was devastated by the eruption of the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai underwater volcano, and subsequent tsunami.

In a virtual Donor Coordinating Meeting, the Fijian Government officials, Tongan community representatives, diplomatic missions, international organizations, and donor partners discussed ways to support Tonga. Tongan National Emergency Management Office officials briefed participants on the current situation and immediate recovery needs in Tonga. Fiji's Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs emphasized Fiji's solidarity with Tonga and thanked donors for their support, highlighting potential partnerships to enhance humanitarian assistance efforts.

Working alongside development partners and the public, the Government coordinated efforts to assist Tonga based on the needs identified by Tonga's National Emergency Management Office. Tongan officials expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage directly with Fijian officials, aiming to strengthen cooperation between the two countries and bolster support for Tonga's recovery efforts.

Local Company Donated Towards Tongan Recovery Support

Bula Outsourcing, a recently established company in Suva, Fiji, stepped up to aid Tonga in the aftermath of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and ensuing tsunami. Demonstrating the Pacific Vuvale spirit, the company made a monetary donation to assist in Tonga's recovery efforts. CEO Clive Kirkpatrick presented the donation to Fiji's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, emphasizing the importance of collective support during times of crisis and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to help.

Founded in 2021, Bula Outsourcing operates with a dual leadership structure spanning Australia and Suva, aiming to provide services across New Zealand and Australia while reinvesting in communities and fostering the Bula culture. The collaboration between Bula Outsourcing, the Fijian government, and the Tongan community in Fiji highlights regional solidarity in facing challenges and rebuilding stronger together, as noted by Permanent Secretary Yogesh Karan of Fiji's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



PS Foreign Affairs Yogesh Karan receiving donations from CEO Bula Outsourcing Mr. Clive Kirkpatrick

Fiji High Commission in Collaboration with Fijians in Canberra Mobilised Additional Support for Tonga

The Fiji High Commission in Canberra, Australia, through the support of Fijians in Canberra, mobilised humanitarian assistance provided to the Tongan High Commission in Canberra. The initiative complements the Fijian Government's support to Tonga in its recovery efforts from the devastating impacts of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and subsequent tsunami.

At a handing over ceremony in Canberra, the High Commissioner of Fiji to Australia, Luke Daunivalu presented the humanitarian relief items to the High Commissioner of Tonga, H.R.H Princess Angelika Latufiipeka Tuku'aho.

High Commissioner Daunivalu acknowledged the resilience of the Tongan people in the face of adversity and expressed his hope that the donation would help the Tongan Government deliver the necessary humanitarian support and services to its people.

As part of its disaster relief drive and outreach, the Fiji High Commission had sourced the donated items from hospitals, schools, and government agencies in Canberra. The assistance to the Tongan High Commission is essential and timely as it coincides with the priority needs of the Tongan Government. The donation comprises of emergency hospital beds, hand sanitisers, new clothing, and school furniture.

In receiving the donation, High Commissioner Tuku'aho conveyed the appreciation and gratitude of the Tongan Government for the generous support rendered by Fijians in Canberra to the Kingdom of Tonga and her people.



(Fiji High Commissioner to Canberra Mr. Daunivalu during the handing over of humanitarian assistance to the Tonga High Commissioner HRH Princess Angelika Latufuipeka Tuku'aho)

COVID-19 Assistance

Fiji extended appreciation to Donor Agencies

The support provided by Fiji's development partners to the fight against COVID-19 was acknowledged at a Donor Coordinating Committee Meeting held virtually between the Fijian Government officials and the Heads of Diplomatic Missions, International Organisations and Donor Partner representatives.

At the meeting, the officials exchanged firsthand information on Fiji's current COVID-19 response, with an overview on health protocols and mitigation strategies and updates on the utilisation of donor development assistance and discussions on potential areas of collaboration to win the battle against COVID-19.

The Permanent Secretary Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan expressed the Fijian Government's appreciation to all the donor agencies and development

partners for their tremendous support rendered to Fiji. He said working in solidarity remains crucial in mobilising the resources and assistance for Fiji's health sector and supporting the work of Fiji's frontline workers.

The development partners reaffirmed their commitment to Fiji's overall response through provisions of Technical and Capacity Building assistance with the additional Budget Support required. Diplomatic partners that were present pledged greater collaboration to further complement Fiji's continued efforts to building back better for economic recovery and the wellbeing of Fijian families. Development partners and donor agencies also conveyed their appreciation to the Fijian Government for the opportunity to engage and collaborate.

Visit of the President of Federated States of Micronesia

Prime Minister Bainimarama on 06 June 2022, met with the President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), His Excellency David W. Panuelo, during his official visit to Fiji.

The Prime Minister formally welcomed and thanked President Panuelo for his visit to Fiji, which signifies the two nations' collaboration as Pacific Vuvale. He said that as a unified region, the enduring partnership is of great importance in achieving socioeconomic recovery and building resilience from climate change and the pandemic. Hon. Prime Minister reaffirmed the Fijian Government's commitment to work closely with the FSM Embassy in Suva to strengthen relations at all levels. He acknowledged the Pacific Vuvale for their recent collaborative effort and call for action at the regional meeting on "Our Oceans Conference" successfully hosted by Palau.

The Prime Minister assured President Panuelo of his continued friendship and future collaboration between the two nations.

In his capacity as the Pacific Islands Forum Chair, Hon. Prime Minister called for FSM's continued support as Fiji works towards revisiting and strengthening climate pledges by the end of 2022. This is in accordance with the priorities of the Small Islands States and their call for enhanced

accessibility to Climate Financing for climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

President Panuelo thanked Prime Minister Bainimarama for the kind hospitality accorded to him during his visit to Fiji. He expressed his appreciation to Prime Minister Bainimarama for the talanoa session on regional prosperity and in advancing shared aspirations.

Meeting with Australian Minister for Environment and Water in Lisbon, Portugal

Prime Minister Bainimarama and Australian Minister for Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, met on the sidelines of the UN Ocean High-Level Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. PM Bainimarama congratulated Hon. Plibersek on her new ministerial role and reaffirmed Fiji's dedication to collaborating closely with Australia on shared priorities such as climate action, ocean conservation, and sustainable development. He highlighted the ongoing strengthening of bilateral engagement through the Fiji-Australia Vuvale Partnership, emphasizing recent high-level visits as testament to the robust friendship between their nations.

Prime Minister Bainimarama outlined Fiji's key objectives at the UN Ocean Conference, focusing on leveraging the ocean's role in climate mitigation and adaptation, promoting sustainable shipping practices, combating illegal fishing, and fostering partnerships across sectors, including with the private sector. He expressed Fiji's expectation of Australia's support in achieving these goals, particularly in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and the upcoming COP-27 climate conference.

In his capacity as Chair of the Pacific Island Forum, Bainimarama updated Plibersek on the forthcoming PIF Leaders Meeting in Suva, where regional solidarity and pressing regional issues will be addressed. Plibersek praised Bainimarama's leadership on global climate and ocean issues and reiterated Australia's solidarity with Fiji and the broader Pacific region. She affirmed Australia's commitment to the Vuvale Partnership to collectively tackle challenges like climate change and pandemic impacts, stressing

the importance of dialogue and cooperation in addressing these shared concerns.

Fiji worked with its Development Partners for the Safe Reopening of Borders

Fiji engaged with local and international partners to facilitate a safe reopening of its borders, promoting collaboration for a resilient economic recovery. During a virtual meeting led by Fiji's Permanent Secretary for the Office of the Prime Minister and Sugar Industry and Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr. Yogesh Karan, with Honorary Consuls from the USA and Canada, discussions centered on bolstering partnerships ahead of Fiji's forthcoming border reopening. Mr. Karan highlighted Fiji's concerted efforts to implement safety protocols and revive its tourism sector, expressing gratitude for the support received from development partners. He emphasised Fiji's aim to leverage increased collaboration for enhanced investment, trade, and tourism opportunities, underscoring ongoing discussions between the governments of Fiji, the USA, and Canada to deepen economic and political cooperation.

In acknowledgment of Fiji's warm relations with the USA and Canada, Mr. Karan highlighted ongoing dialogues to strengthen engagement in various sectors. He recognised the vital role played by Fiji's Honorary Consuls in providing timely support during natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Honorary Consuls reciprocated appreciation for the insightful discussions and reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Fiji's economic recovery, particularly in tourism and investment. This exchange underscores Fiji's proactive approach to fostering international collaboration and its gratitude for the continued assistance from its partners during challenging times.

PIF Chair and Prime Minister Bainimarama becomes Pacific's Regional Champion for Early Childhood Development Programme

Prime Minister Bainimarama on 18 July 2022, was honored as the Pacific Regional Champion for Early Childhood Development (ECD) by the Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood Development (PRC4ECD).

This recognition came during the launch of the "Our Children Today, Our Leaders Tomorrow" program at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Suva. Prime Ministers Bainimarama and Fiame Naomi Mata'afa of Samoa officiated the event, highlighting the importance of early childhood development in the Pacific region's future.

The program launch aligned with the broader 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, emphasizing children as pivotal to future leadership and resilience. Prime Minister Bainimarama underscored the significance of the newly launched PRC4ECD website in facilitating information exchange and coordinating investment priorities across Pacific nations. He expressed gratitude to development partners like UNICEF and the World Bank, as well as to regional allies Australia and New Zealand, for their support in advancing early childhood development initiatives. Prime Minister Mata'afa of Samoa echoed the sentiment, advocating for a comprehensive, cross-generational approach to secure a prosperous future for Pacific children.

United States Pledges \$60 Million Assistance to Pacific over the next 10 Years

The United States reaffirmed its commitment to Fiji and the wider Pacific region by announcing a substantial aid package totaling \$60 million over the next decade. This commitment was made during the Fiji and United States Tuna Treaty Agreement package announcement at the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Suva. Vice President Kamala Harris, participating virtually, emphasized America's readiness to deepen its engagement with the Pacific Islands, highlighting initiatives such as establishing new embassies, appointing a special envoy, and increasing funding for economic development and ocean resilience. The pledge aims to enhance regional security, promote sustainable fisheries management, and bolster economic cooperation, reflecting a renewed focus on strengthening ties with Pacific nations.

Prime Minister Bainimarama welcomed the U.S. commitment, praising it as a significant milestone in Pacific-U.S. relations. He expressed optimism

about the opportunities the treaty offers for mutual cooperation in fisheries management and economic development, emphasizing the potential benefits of the \$60 million annual economic assistance package. Vice President Harris reiterated President Biden's commitment to elevate diplomatic engagement with the Pacific Islands, promising increased attention and support after acknowledging historical underrepresentation. Her remarks underscored a strategic shift towards deeper collaboration on climate resilience, marine conservation, and maritime security, signaling a proactive approach to addressing shared challenges and advancing mutual interests in the Pacific islands.

Fiji – Aotearoa New Zealand signs Duavata Partnership

Prime Minister Bainimarama and New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nanaia Mahuta, marked a significant moment in bilateral relations by signing the Duavata Partnership in Suva. This expanded Statement of Partnership signifies a deepening collaboration between Fiji and New Zealand, reflecting their shared commitment to regional solidarity and addressing shared interests and challenges. Prime Minister Bainimarama praised the strong partnership, emphasizing New Zealand's vital support during challenging times such as climate impacts and the COVID-19 pandemic. Prime Minister Bainimarama further thanked Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern for her leadership in fostering this alliance.



PM Bainimarama with Minister for Foreign Affairs, New Zealand Nanaia Mahuta after the signing of the Duavata Partnership

The signing of the Duavata Partnership is a culmination of months of consultations amongst Fiji and New Zealand senior officials on the current and new areas of cooperation between Fiji and New Zealand. The Duavata Partnership highlights joint ambitions to strengthen ties and work together on key issues like climate change, security, and economic recovery. Minister Mahuta highlighted New Zealand's commitment to supporting Fiji and the broader Pacific region, aiming for resilient recovery and the well-being of Pacific peoples. The Leaders' discussions prior to the signing covered various topics, including climate cooperation and responses to COVID-19 outbreaks, affirming their dedication to Pacific regionalism and mutual support.

Strategic Priority 4 - Public Diplomacy

Investiture Ceremony in Canberra

High Commissioner Luke Daunivalu represented Fiji's President at the investiture ceremony for Fiji's 50th Anniversary of Independence commemorative medals, awarding exceptional Fijians for their service and contributions to the nation.

1. Dr. Swaran Lata Naidu
2. Dr. Bijend Prasad Ram
3. Mr. Atma Maharaj
4. Mr. Bhavesh Kumar,
5. Mrs. Nicolette Yoshida
6. Mr. Robert Lyon - Officer of the Order of Fiji
7. Dr. Jagdishwar Singh
8. Mr. Gregory Yee
9. Mr. Mohammed Yunus
10. Mr. Dean Noor Rahmat
11. Ms. Patricia Anne Cummins

It was a moment of pride for the honorees and their loved ones, gathering at the High Commission in Canberra to celebrate their achievements. It symbolized the Fijian government's commitment to acknowledging and rewarding individuals who contribute selflessly to nation-building, emphasizing a culture of appreciation for their invaluable service and support over the years.



Dr Swaran Lata Naidu (left) and Dr Bijend Prasad Ram (right) after receiving their Fiji's 50th Anniversary of Independence commemorative medal from High Commissioner Luke Daunivalu

Blue Pacific Village Showcased Regional Resilience and Solidarity

The 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting featured a significant event known as the Blue Pacific Village, hosted by Fiji at Thurston Gardens in Suva from the 11th – 14th July, 2022. The village celebrated the strength and resilience of the Blue Pacific region, emphasizing regional solidarity and cultural diversity. Commemorating 50 years since the inception of the Pacific Islands Forum, the event highlighted themes such as climate and oceans, regionalism, early childhood development, and women's empowerment in the Pacific.

The Village exhibited Pacific artifacts, cultural performances, and traditional arts, alongside educational displays from Pacific missions.

The Blue Pacific Village served as a platform for Pacific women and youth entrepreneurs to showcase their talents and products, fostering dialogue on critical issues affecting the region. It featured public talanoa sessions, cultural performances, food stalls, and opportunities for dialogue on the future of the resilient Blue Pacific.

Strategic Priority 5 - Peace and Security

Security Dialogue with High-level US delegation

The Permanent Secretary for the Office of the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yogesh Karan, chaired a security dialogue with a high-level United States delegation led by Mr. Kurt Campbell, the Deputy Assistant to the President and the United States National Security Council Indo-Pacific Coordinator. Held on April 20, 2022, the dialogue primarily focused on cooperation in defence and security, emphasizing platforms to deepen engagement for regional peace and unity. Mr. Campbell acknowledged Fiji's hospitality and expressed a commitment to strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation with Fiji and the Pacific, highlighting increased dialogue with Pacific Leaders.

During the meeting, discussions covered various common issues, including the geopolitical situation between Russia and Ukraine, Indo-Pacific affairs, and assistance in technology, education, and COVID-19 response. The U.S. assured Fiji of its support for national security matters and pledged increased engagement with Fiji's defence forces. In response, Fiji sought assistance from the U.S. in information-sharing to combat narcotics movement in its economic exclusive zone (EEZ), aiming to strengthen this area with international cooperation. Fiji also appreciated U.S. support through funding access provided to institutions like the World Bank and ADB post-COVID-19, with plans for collaboration on green climate funding for the Pacific region. Both parties agreed to hold a second round of dialogue later in the year in Fiji.

Working Together to Strengthen Regional Security Preparedness at Blackrock Camp

Prime Minister Bainimarama and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison jointly inaugurated the revamped Blackrock Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Camp in Nadi on 14 March 2022.

Prime Minister Morrison said that Australia was proud to call Fiji a partner, a friend, and family, and that Blackrock stood as a testament to the

strength of the bilateral relationship. The occasion emphasized the collaborative effort between the armed forces and officials of both countries in upgrading the facility. The state-of-the-art camp is poised to bolster Fiji's capabilities in peacekeeping and disaster response, reflecting the commitment to regional security and cooperation.

Prime Minister Bainimarama stated that the world-class training centre will ensure that Fijian peacekeepers are trained and equipped to uphold Fiji's 47-year legacy of defending the defenceless in the world's conflict-ridden regions. He further expressed gratitude for Australia's support in enhancing Fiji's defense infrastructure, highlighting the significance of Blackrock Camp in preparing Fijian peacekeepers and facilitating joint deployments, particularly in tackling climate-related crises.



PM Bainimarama and Australian Prime Minister Morrison jointly inaugurated the revamped Blackrock Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Camp in Nadi

The investment in Blackrock sets a precedent for further security collaborations, exemplified by ongoing projects such as the upgrade of the Republic of Fiji Navy's Stanley Brown Wharf. Additionally, the joint efforts accentuate the collective commitment of Australia and Fiji to advancing a secure and resilient Pacific region, evident through their coordinated operations in various territories and ongoing partnerships within the Pacific family.

32 RFMF Personnel Dispatched to Tonga

32 Republic of Fiji Military Force personnel were dispatched to Tonga to aid the Tongan people in the aftermath of the Hunga Tonga volcano eruption and subsequent tsunami.

During their quarantine period in Australia, the troops worked closely with the Australian Defence Force in Brisbane to strengthen their preparedness for the humanitarian and disaster relief mission to Tonga.

Fiji's High Commissioner to Australia, Luke Daunivalu, farewelled the troops in Brisbane and conveyed the Fijian Government's and nation's well wishes for the important rehabilitation and recovery task in Tonga. He also expressed gratitude to the Australian Government for facilitating and enabling Fiji's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief contribution.



Member of the RFMF personnel ready to leave Australia for Tonga

Enhancing Fiji's Maritime Domain Awareness

Fijian Prime Minister Bainimarama and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese MP, on 14 July 2022, jointly announced the commencement of a substantial infrastructure initiative aimed at bolstering Fiji's maritime capabilities. The project, an integral component of the enduring Vuvale Partnership between Fiji and Australia, involves the construction of the Maritime Essential Services Centre (MESC) in Lami, Fiji. Valued at \$83 million AUD (approximately \$124 million FJD), the MESC will serve as the headquarters for the Republic of Fiji Navy, Suva Radio Coastal Station, Fiji Maritime Surveillance Coordination Centre, and Fiji Hydrographic Office.

Scheduled for completion in 2024 and overseen by Icon, the project is expected to provide significant employment opportunities for Fijian construction firms and local workers, thereby aiding Fiji's economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.

Beyond enhancing Fiji's capacity in disaster response and safeguarding its fishing industries, the MESC will bolster naval operations and coastal rescue capabilities, underlining its strategic importance in maritime security across the region.

Meeting with New Zealand's Minister for Disarmament Affairs in Vienna, Austria

Prime Minister Bainimarama had a bilateral meeting with New Zealand's Minister for Disarmament Affairs, Honourable Phil Twyford, on the sidelines of the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna, Austria from 21 – 23 June 2022. Prime Minister Bainimarama expressed a strong commitment to collaborate closely with New Zealand in the global effort towards nuclear disarmament and emphasized the regional significance of nuclear disarmament. He further highlighted Fiji's intent to engage in joint advocacy efforts alongside partners like New Zealand on this critical issue.

Beyond nuclear disarmament, the meeting underscored the enduring partnership between Fiji and New Zealand, rooted in over 50 years of historical ties and shared values within the Pacific region. Prime Minister Bainimarama acknowledged New Zealand's role as an original party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and thanked them for their commitment to the Treaty of Rarotonga. The discussion also touched upon the broader scope of their bilateral relations, spanning areas such as trade, investment, defense, climate change resilience, and humanitarian assistance under the Duavata Partnership.

The dialogue encompassed mutual support during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Bainimarama expressing gratitude to New Zealand for their assistance in Fiji's vaccination campaign and recovery efforts. Looking forward, Bainimarama highlighted Fiji's focus on private sector-led growth to stimulate economic opportunities, particularly in tourism, trade, investment, and agriculture sectors.

He also emphasized the upcoming Pacific Islands Leaders Forum as a pivotal platform to strengthen regional solidarity amidst geopolitical challenges, the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, and the ongoing climate crisis.

Strategic Priority 6 - Human Rights and Democratic Values

Promotion of Fiji globally as a modern democratic society.

The United States of America (U.S) convened a Summit for Democracy on the 9 – 10 December, 2021. The Summit was held virtually and was an opportunity for Leaders from around the world to discuss how Governments and Non-Government actors can strengthen their commitment to democratic principles and practices. The Summit was organized around three main themes: (i) strengthening democracy and defending against authoritarianism; (ii) addressing and fighting corruption; and (iii) advancing respect for human rights. Topics for discussion included the role of women and youth, empowering human rights defenders, countering corruption and building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. Fiji was represented by the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum.

The Bureau worked closely with the Attorney General's office to coordinate Fiji's participation and effective representation. The Attorney General highlighted Fiji's ongoing democratic journey and the importance of having equal opportunity

4.0 Protocol & Consular Division

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Protocol and Consular Division plays a crucial role in the administration of all provisions of the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations to ensure that all Diplomatic Missions, Consulates, and their members within the country function efficiently

Additionally, the Division has been responsible for and manages the appointment of Fiji diplomatic and consular representatives overseas, as well as Fiji representatives to Inter-Governmental Organizations. This includes planning conferences and meetings hosted by the Ministry, as well as executing official visits at the Ministerial level.

The Division represented Fiji on the Inter-Agency Committees to plan and execute State, Official, and Working visits to Fiji, along with State and Official funerals and other ceremonies for the State.

Furthermore, the Division provided support to the Office of the ministry leaders in planning and executing state and national ceremonial events. It managed the process of acquiring visas for officials traveling on government business and provided protocol guidance and assistance to Fiji's Missions, Ministries, Departments, and Agencies.

The Division also handled the notification process for courtesies and overlooked the high -level officials that travelled in an official capacity, as well as processed requests for the landing of state aircraft and the entry of vessels in Fiji's waters for research, maintenance, replenish of supplies, training, or for humanitarian purposes.

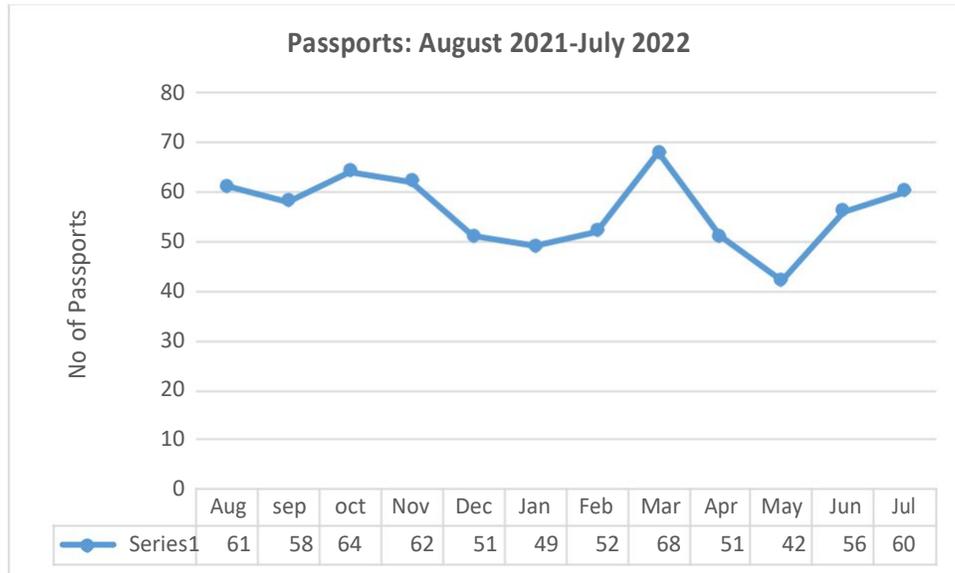
Moreover, it continues to plan and coordinate the execution of incoming correspondence to pertinent Departments and other Ministries, and processes requests for the loan of flags of foreign countries while provided guidance on the use and display.

The primary roles revolved in the timely provision of Protocol and Consular Services to all Fiji missions abroad, all resident and non- resident diplomatic missions and Honorary Consuls accredited to Fiji which entails:

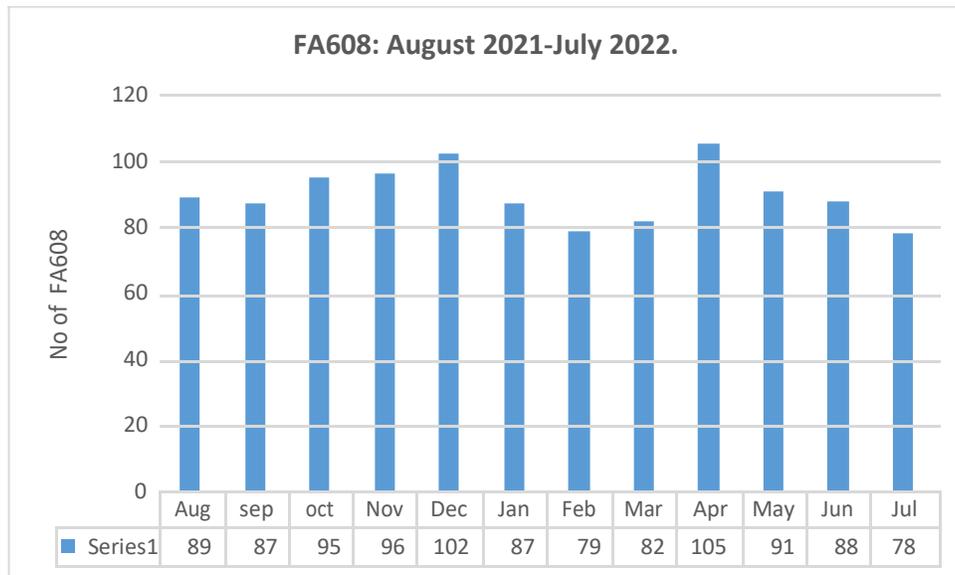
- 11 Fiji Missions Abroad;
- 22 Diplomatic Missions in Suva;
- 20 Regional & International Organizations in Suva; and
- 18 Honorary Consuls based in Suva.

In addition, the Division provides support to the Israeli and Singapore Ambassadors both operating from their respective capitals.

ADMINISTERING OF CONSULAR PRIVILEGES & IMMUNITIES



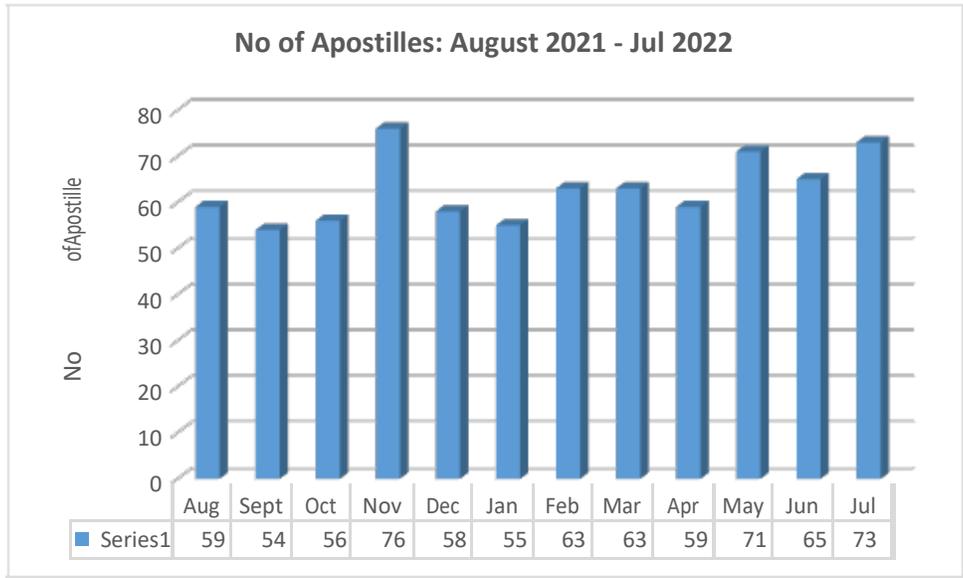
This graph indicates the slow increase in travel and arrival into Fiji by Diplomats who had returned home during the lockdown plus those new appointments made when borders re -opened. A slight increase from last year and a boost to economic activity post lockdown.



The request for Duty Free purchases through the FA 608 forms by the Diplomatic corps increased by 28% from last year. The Division continues to thoroughly assess and scrutinize all duty -free requests in close collaboration with Fiji Customs and Revenue Services. Missions had certain quotas for each quarter and are guided by the Division in terms of their requests.



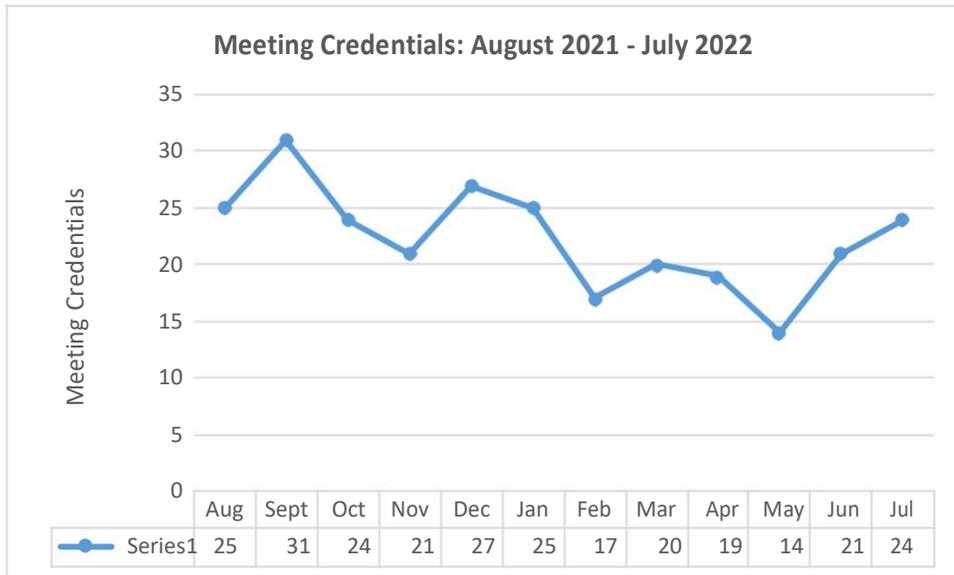
The request for ID cards was regarded as residence permits for the respective holders. The card was presented upon request whilst diplomats are in country and must be returned to MFA by the embassy on final departure from the Republic of Fiji. Members of Diplomatic, Consular Missions, and Office of International Organizations were required to apply for an ID with the MOFA no more than two weeks after they have taken up their posts in the country.



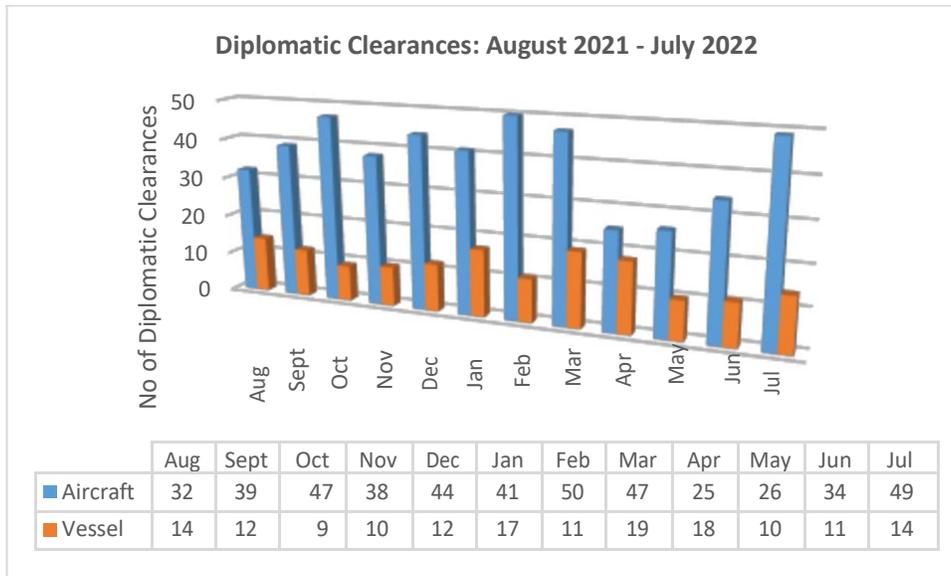
An apostille certified a document so countries in the 1961 Hague Convention could recognize it. The team is committed to providing this service to all intending to travel abroad or need to submit their documents abroad for education, employment or legal reasons. The process of legalizing and authenticating public documents through an apostille is a function that only MOFA is mandated by law to provide. The Division has been responsible for the issuance of apostille stamps both to local and overseas applications provided the document originates from institutions and organisations in Fiji



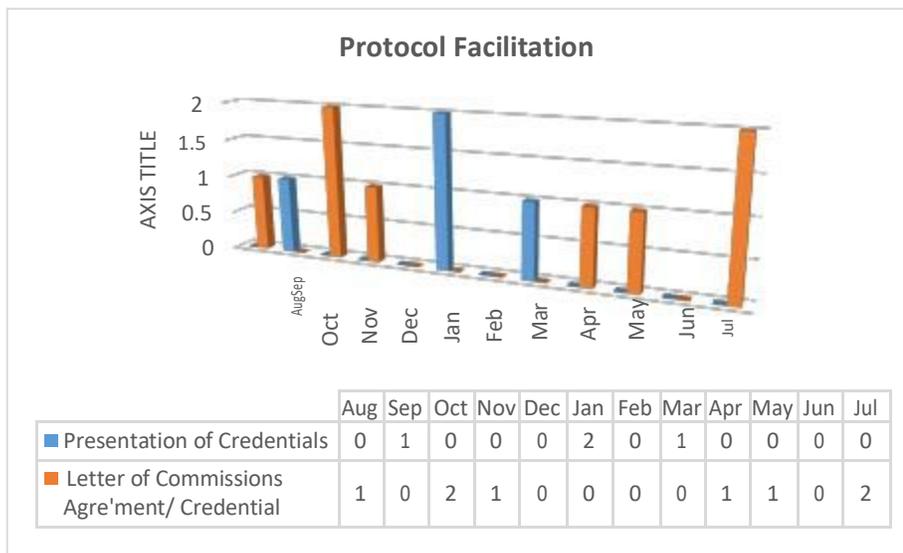
One – Way entry permit is issued to Diplomats who are arriving to undertake paid employment in Fiji. These are fixed term positions that require the prior approval of the Ministry. At the end of their tenure, the diplomat organizes his exit and the permit together with the appropriate visa is rescinded upon departure.



Preparing of meeting credentials is another function that is entrusted to the Protocol Division. The meeting credential continues to be prepared, endorsed by the government leader and conveyed to the meeting organisers. This endorsement provided the delegation with the mandate to negotiate, decided and endorsed issues on behalf of the Government during the meeting.



This type of clearance ensured that the aircraft or marine vessel can pass through foreign airspace or territorial waters without encountering diplomatic or political obstacles. The process of obtaining diplomatic clearance involved communication and coordination with the diplomatic missions or embassies of the countries in question. In this case, missions approached the Division to facilitate such requests.



Fiji noticed a significant drop in presentation of credentials due to the restrictions and this resulted in only 4 recorded for this reporting period. Acknowledging a new ambassador with credentials is a significant formal and substantive ceremony for the Head of State of a nation. It was only after this ceremony that a new ambassador is acknowledged as the official representative of their country. The ceremony fully validates the authority of the new ambassador and affirmed recognition of the country and government that was represented. As a result, the presentation of credentials by an ambassador was the same as the formation, maintenance, and fortification of a diplomatic alliance between two nations. The protocol surrounding the ceremony has great symbolic and practical significance.

5.0 Human Resources Division

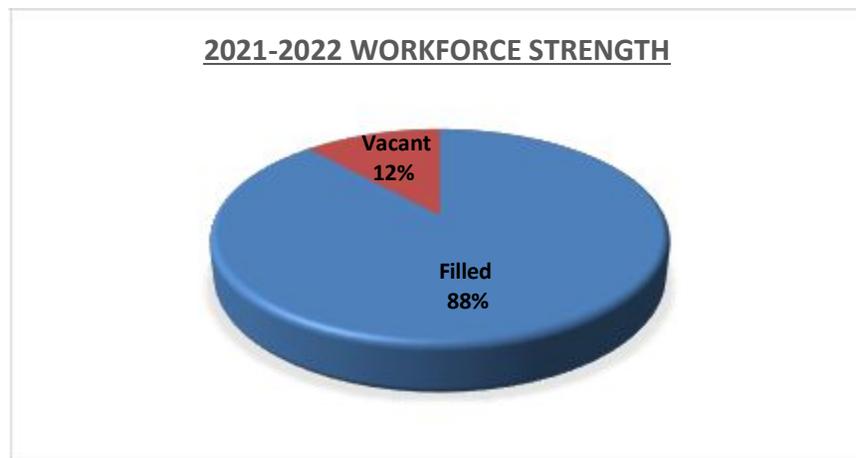
The Division is responsible for facilitating key human resource management activities that involve HR planning, recruitment and selection, contract management, reward and recognition, Occupational Health and Safety, Corporate Social Responsibility, training and development, and performance management. The Human Resources Division was an internal support service managing resources for the achievement of the Ministry's strategies, ensuring compliance with several governance obligations and improving corporate policies, procedures and outcomes.

Some of the major activities for the 2021/2022 fiscal year included the implementation of the Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure Manual as the first customized Manual for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The manual provided a framework of principles, policies, procedures, guidelines, tools and templates to serve as a practical guide to HR management at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry appreciated the impact that human resource management policies had on the productivity and professionalism of its workforce and continuous policy development and reviewed in line with environmental and institutional changes as well as best practices.

Furthermore, the Ministry also undertook the operationalization of the Fijian Civil Service Customer Service Guideline, which outlined the overarching process standards and behaviour required from all staff (inclusive of salaried officers, wage earners, temporary, project staff, volunteers and those undergoing work attachment) when dealing with both internal and external customers. A Government Feedback Call Centre was set up for customers to provide customer service experiences. The Ministry had a customer service charter to reflect the principles of the Customer Service Guideline. Additionally, the Ministry proactively updated and regularly maintains website information and updated comprehensive and easily accessible Ministry Directories on the digital FIJI website and mobile application to ensure that the public have access to accurate and relevant information.

Workforce Strength

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had approved establishment of 119 of which 105 positions were substantively filled and 14 positions (Missions and HQ) vacant. The graph below illustrates the workforce strength for the Ministry during the year.



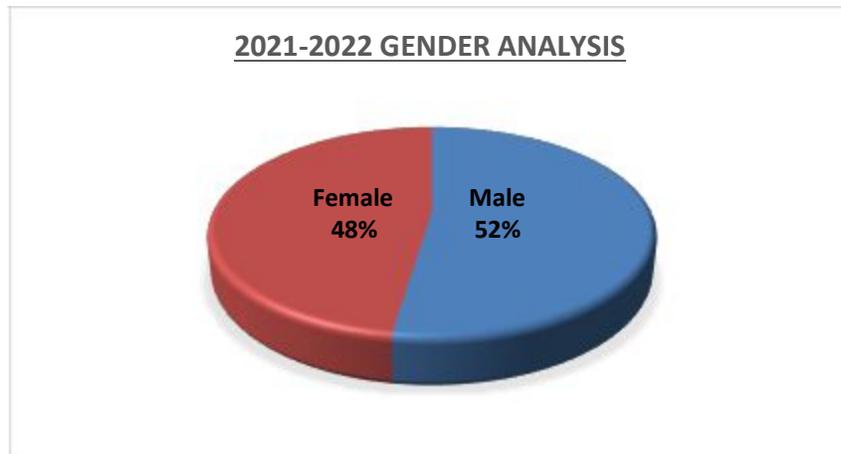
Out of its total establishment, 12% of the positions remained vacant in the 2021 -2022 financial year.

The Ministry strategized to ensure that the service delivery to our diverse customers is not disrupted or compromised due to Staff attrition that is often faced in a typical workplace whilst ensuring continuity of service where possible.

The table below illustrates the total number of staff employed by the Ministry at the end of the 2021-2022 Financial Year:

Headquarters/Mission Establishment	Gender		Vacant	Filled	Grand Total
	Female	Male			
Headquarters Establishment					
Executive Support Unit	4	1	1	5	6
Media & Communication Unit	1	2	1	3	4
Policy Research & Development Division	0	2	1	2	3
Protocol & Consular Division	4	5	1	9	10
Human Resources Division	8	4	0	12	12
Finance Division	7	5	0	12	12
Multilateral Division	8	2	1	10	11
Asia Division	2	3	4	5	9
Oceania Division	2	1	2	3	5
Roving Ambassador	2	1	1	3	4
Government Wage Earners	1	8	1	9	10
Total in HQ	39	34	13	73	86
Missions Establishment					
Abu Dhabi Mission	0	3	0	3	3
Beijing Mission	1	2	0	3	3
Canberra	2	0	1	2	3
Geneva	1	4	0	5	5
Jakarta	1	2	0	3	3
London	2	1	0	3	3
New Delhi	0	3	0	3	3
New York	2	1	0	3	3
Tokyo	1	2	0	3	3
Washington	0	1	0	1	1
Wellington	1	2	0	3	3
Total in Mission	11	21	1	32	33
GRAND TOTAL	50	55	14	105	119

Of the 105 filled positions, the Ministry had a workforce that had been male dominated with 52% Males to 48% Females. The Ministry was an equal opportunity employer and committed to ensuring that initiatives and activities implemented have a good representation of both genders in the processing of vacant positions in future.



Recruitment & Selection

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs used a fair and effective recruitment process governed by the principles set out in the Open Merit Recruitment and Selection (OMRS) Guideline to employ the right people with the required skillset for each of its job vacancies.

The table below illustrates the different recruitment and selection activities undertaken throughout the financial year:

No	Types of Appointment	Total
1	Acting Appointment	10
2	Extension of Acting Appointment	0
3	New Appointment	7
4	Renewal of Contracts	22
5	Extension of Contract	1
6	End of Contract	1
7	Deemed Resignation	0
8	Resignation	10
9	End of Diplomatic Posting	2
10	Leave without pay	0
11	Retirement	3
12	Termination	0
13	Sideways Transfer	2
14	Secondment on Leave Without Pay	1
15	Rescindment of Posting	1
16	Extension of Secondment	2
Total		62

In this financial year, it was noted that the Ministry made a very high number of renewals of contract appointments during the 2021/2022 financial year in line with the performance management framework for on-going performance requirements for contract renewals according to operational plan outcomes.

Training & Development

Training and development is an essential component of any organization. It focused on capacity building of employees and contribution in enhancing performance, efficiency, and effectiveness in service delivery. There were 50 learning and development opportunities availed to staff including both local and overseas trainings. There was a high growth and adoption of virtual online learning which has given a rise to future training opportunities for staff.

The Ministry had an ongoing commitment towards providing a range of shorter-term learning and development opportunities which were focused on specific capability development needs. The table below shows the types of training against the number of staff attending.

No	Type of Appointment	Total
1	Overseas	3
2	Local	31
3	Civil Service Trainings	16
Total		50

Fiji National University (NTPC) Levy and Grants Compliance

In compliance with the FNU Amendment Act 2010 and FNU Levy Order, all employers in Fiji were required to register with Fiji National University Levy Department and facilitate the payment of the bi - annual levy.

The 1 % Levy imposed on Gross Emoluments for all staff were paid bi-annually to Fiji National University Levy and Grants Department. The assessments were done annually to determine the points and refunds if the Ministry is fully compliance with the training assessment criteria.

Summarized below is the assessment point of the Ministry for the year 2021.

Year	Points
2021	68

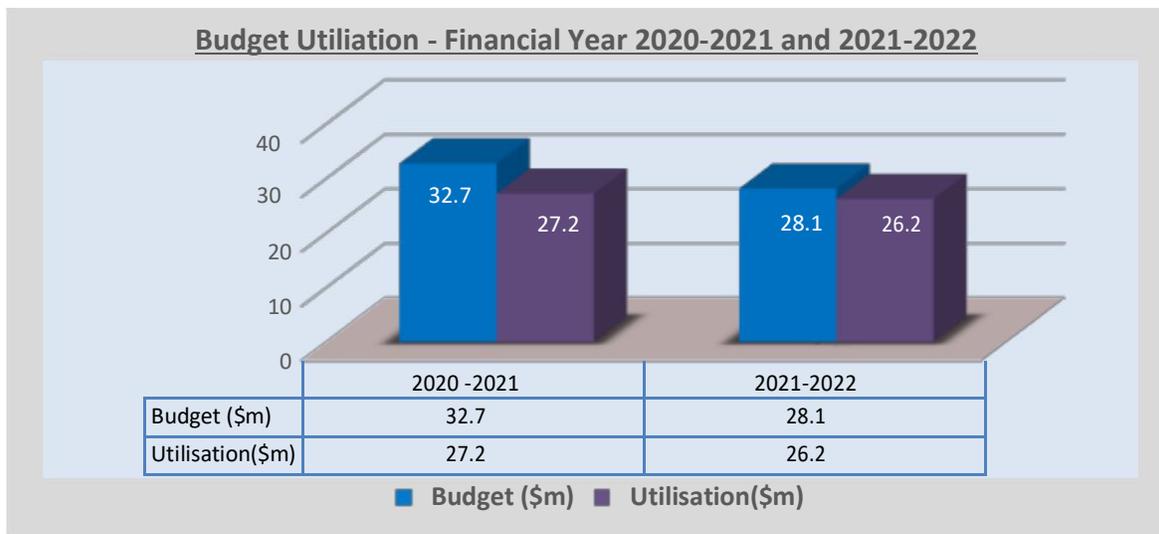
Ministry encouraged staff to attend training programs that address competency gaps to ensure that they performed to the optimum. The workforce learning and growth showed the commitment of the Ministry towards its workforce investment which led to high performance rate.

6.0 Finance Division

The Division provides prudent management of financial resources and ensures that all expenditure and revenue collections are in compliance with the relevant provisions outlined under the Finance Instructions, Finance Manual (2019), and the Fiji Overseas Service Regulations (FOSR). The Division also undertakes the efficient and effective updating of all transactions into the Financial Management Information System (FMIS) for Government.

Budget Overview for Financial Year 2021-2022

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs received a total budget of \$28.1 million for the 2021-2022 financial year compared to \$32.7 million for the 2020-2021 financial year. The total budget utilization for the year ended 31st July 2021 was at 83% while for year ended 31st July 2022 was 93%. The Charts below illustrates the financial expenditure summary for 2021/2022 fiscal year:



Approximately 72 per cent of the Ministry’s budget is allocated towards its ‘off-shore’ operations through the Overseas Missions and the remaining 28 per cent is for its on -shore operation or Headquarters.

Asset Management

Annual Board of Survey (BOS)

The BOS for the financial year 2021-2022 was conducted at Headquarters and at the Fiji Diplomatic Missions abroad. The following locations were surveyed:

1. Abu Dhabi
2. Beijing
3. Canberra
4. Geneva
5. Jakarta
6. London
7. New Delhi
8. New York
9. Tokyo
10. Wellington
11. Headquarters-Suva and Nadi office.

The 2021-2022 BOS Report was approved and received by the Ministry of Finance within its financial year. The items written off had a total value of \$63,172.82.

Vehicle and Transport

A total of 11 vehicles were engaged to facilitate the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the 2021-2022 financial year. A vehicle was designated for the Deputy Secretary and the remaining ten (10) were used for Ministry staff and VIP operation(s).

The total fuel consumption for the 2021-2022 financial year was \$57,446 and repair and maintenance cost was \$38,774 which totals \$96,220.

Closed Diplomatic Missions

Board of Survey (5 Closed Missions)

Following the closure of the Washington, Seoul, Kula Lumpur, Port Moresby and Brussels Diplomatic Missions, the assets were boarded accordingly and assigned under 3 categories namely, to be disposed of, returned to HQ in Suva, donated to non-charitable organisations or transferred to another Mission. This was based on the assessments undertaken on the items subject to their date of purchase and physical condition. All items shipped to HQ arrived in Suva between March and July 2021. The items were stored at the Fiji Procurement Office and disbursed either through auctions, assigned and utilized at HQ or donated to other Government Organizations.

The details are as follows:

DIPLOMATIC MISSION	ESTIMATED VALUE OF ASSETS (F\$) <i>(Furniture, Electrical Items, Computers, Cutleries and Crockeries</i>
Port Moresby	14,566.00
Kula Lumpur	4,554.00
Seoul	17,600.00
Brussels	75,812.00
Washington	6,980.00
Total	\$119,512.00

The details of Vehicles from the Closed Diplomatic Missions are as follows:

Mission	Vehicle Type	Value	Remarks
Port Moresby	1. Toyota Prado Reg No. KR961	\$177,898.00	Transferred to OPM on 24.8.21
	2. Kia Sorrento Reg No. GS321	\$74,974.00	Retained at HQ Pool
Kuala Lumpur	BMW Limousine car	\$141,790.00	Transferred to OPM on 20.09.21
	The 2 vehicles were sold at post: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1x Toyota Camry @ \$5,081.30 ▪ 1x Hyundai Starex @ \$12,703.25 		
Seoul	The 2 vehicles were sold at post: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1x Hyundai Equss (flag vehicle) @ \$106,368.66 ▪ 1x Hyundai Starex (admin vehicle) @ \$14,245.81 		
Brussels	The 2 vehicles were sold at post: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1x BMW 730D (flag vehicle) @ \$76,441.10 ▪ 1x Skoda Fabia Combi (admin vehicle) @ \$14,536.34 		
Washington	Since the Mission was partially closed, the vehicle is still at post.		

Mission: Estimated Value of Assets (F\$)

A major challenge for the Ministry is the management of its off-shore (Overseas Missions) component of the budget, which accounts for over 72% of the Ministry's budget. Ensuring better and efficient financial practices and overall compliance remains a challenge in the effort to achieve prudent management of all financial resources allocated to the Ministry.

Way Forward

It will be vital that coordination is enhanced between Headquarters and each of the diplomatic Missions abroad to ensure the effective management of the Ministry's financial resources. The Finance team is further exploring the adoption of electronic platforms as a practical means of doing business. In addition, the team considered strengthening internal audit mechanisms to improve compliance and adherence to financial policies and regulations.

Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 July, 2022



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Suva, Fiji



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Website: www.oag.gov.fj



File: 347

08 August 2023

The Honourable Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka
Prime Minister, Minister for Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Foreign Affairs
New Wing Government Buildings
SUVA

Dear Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - 31 JULY 2022

The audited financial statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the year ended 31 July 2022 together with my audit report on them are enclosed.

Particulars of the errors and omission arising from the audit have been forwarded to the Management of the Ministry for necessary actions.

Yours sincerely

Sairusi Dukino
ACTING AUDITOR-GENERAL

✓ cc: Lesikimacuata Korovavala, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Suva

Encl.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022

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OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Promoting Public Sector Accountability and Sustainability through our Audits



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*the Ministry*) which comprises the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure, Appropriation Statement, Statement of Losses, for the financial year ended 31 July 2022, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, except for the matter discussed in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the accompanying financial statements of the Ministry are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Financial Management Act 2004 and Finance Instructions 2010.

Basis for Opinion

An unreconciled variance of \$1,668,879 exists between the FMIS general ledger Overseas Bank balance of \$3,726,613 and the accumulated Overseas Mission's bank reconciliation statement balance of \$2,057,734. As such, I was unable to determine the accuracy of the total expenditure and total revenue amounting \$26,704,002 and \$506,511 respectively reflected in the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ended 31 July 2022.

I have conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Ministry in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Fiji and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of Matter:

I draw attention to the following matters:

- Internal controls were generally found to be weak for the Wellington Mission with respect to the non-submission of acquittals to the Ministry, payment vouchers and supporting documentations and receipts for certain months were not provided for audit. In addition, the bank reconciliation statements were not prepared for the months of November 2021 to July 2022. These internal control weaknesses, if not addressed promptly, may result in material misstatement and possible financial losses in the future.
- Bank audit certificates for the London, New York and Delhi Missions were not provided for audit verification.

My opinion is not modified in respect of these matters.

Other Matters

- I was not provided with all the approved management meeting minutes for 2022. Consequently, decisions made pertaining to the operations of the Ministry could not be verified.
- Operating trust amounting to \$1,029,931 or 64% of the total operating trust have been carried forward from the previous year without any movement.

Responsibilities of the Management and Those Charged with Governance for Financial Statements

The Management are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Financial Management Act 2004 and Finance Instructions 2010, and for such internal control as the Management determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Ministry's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISA will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISA, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ministry's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the management of Ministry.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



Sairusi Dukuna
ACTING AUDITOR-GENERAL

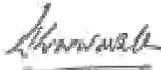


Suva, Fiji
08 August 2023

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022**

We certify that these financial statements:

- (a) fairly reflect the financial operations and performance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the year ended 31 July 2022; and
- (b) have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Management Act 2004 and Finance Instructions 2010.



Dr Lesikimacuata Korovavala
Permanent Secretary

Date: 07/8/2023



Mr Luke Ravusoni
Acting Principal Accounts Officer

Date: 04/8/2023

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022

	Notes	2022 (\$)	2021 (\$)
RECEIPTS			
State Revenue			
Operating Revenue		1,578	686
Total State Revenue		<u>1,578</u>	<u>686</u>
Agency Revenue			
Miscellaneous Revenue		297,710	619,755
Revenue-Admin Fees		207,223	197,502
Total Agency Revenue		<u>504,933</u>	<u>817,257</u>
TOTAL RECEIPTS	3 (a)	<u>506,511</u>	<u>817,943</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Operating Expenditure			
Established Staff		9,303,064	10,182,980
Government Wage Earners		2,205,241	2,477,708
Travel & Communication	3 (b)	1,252,687	765,347
Maintenance & Operations		7,851,084	7,616,148
Purchase of Goods & Services		1,011,784	856,953
Operating Grants & Transfers		4,566,342	3,733,908
Special Expenditure	3 (c)	439,421	2,247,462
Total Operating Expenditure		<u>26,629,623</u>	<u>27,880,506</u>
Capital Expenditure			
Capital Construction	3 (d)	4,069	57,320
Total Capital Expenditure		<u>4,069</u>	<u>57,320</u>
Value Added Tax		70,310	116,688
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>26,704,002</u>	<u>28,054,514</u>

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
APPROPRIATION STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022**

SEG	Item	Budget Estimate (\$)	Appropriation Changes (\$) Note 5	Revised Estimate (\$) a	Actual Expenditure (\$) b	Carry Over (\$)	Lapsed Appropriation (\$) Note 4 (a-b)
	<i>Operating Expenditure</i>						
1	Established Staff	10,834,481	(1,363,910)	9,470,571	9,319,064	—	152,507
2	Government Wage Earners	2,819,243	(495,891)	2,323,352	2,209,241	—	114,111
3	Travel & Communication	967,162	441,194	1,408,356	1,252,687	—	155,669
4	Maintenance & Operations	6,227,274	1,770,172	7,997,446	7,851,084	—	146,362
5	Purchase of Goods & Services	788,275	358,347	1,146,622	1,021,784	—	124,838
6	Operating Grants & Transfers	5,814,083	(710,412)	4,603,671	4,566,342	—	37,329
7	Special Expenditure	440,000	500	440,500	439,421	—	1,079
	Total Operating Expenditure	27,390,518	—	27,390,518	26,629,623	—	760,895
	<i>Capital Expenditure</i>						
8	Capital Construction	100,000	—	100,000	4,069	—	95,931
9	Capital Purchase	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	Capital Grants & Transfer	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total Capital Expenditure	100,000	—	100,000	4,069	—	95,931
13	Value Added Tax	767,000	—	767,000	70,510	—	696,490
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	28,257,518	—	28,257,518	26,704,002	—	1,553,516

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
STATEMENT OF LOSSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022

Loss of Money

There was no loss of money recorded for the year ended 31 July 2022.

Loss of Revenue

There was no loss of revenue recorded for the year ended 31 July 2022.

Loss of Fixed Assets

For the Financial Year ending 31 July 2022, there was no loss of Fixed Assets recorded however, below are the Items that have been written off following the Ministry's Board of Survey for the total sum of \$63,173.

Mission/ Headquarters	Amount (\$)
Fiji Mission Geneva	2,520
Fiji Embassy Tokyo	17,892
Headquarters Suva	42,761
Total	63,173

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022**

NOTE 1: REPORTING ENTITY

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs promotes *Fijian* interests in other nations and on the world stage. This includes a broad range of activities from providing consular services to *Fijians* living overseas to organising high level visits to *Fiji*.

The Ministry develops and carries out *Fiji's* foreign policy and manages *Fiji's* relationships with other nations and with multi-national and sub-regional organizations like the United Nations and the Melanesian Spearhead Group. The Ministry is focused on securing the maximum benefits for *Fiji* from these relationships.

NOTE 2: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of Accounting/Presentation

In accordance with Government accounting policies, the financial statements of the Ministry is prepared under the cash basis of accounting. All payments related to purchases of fixed assets have been expensed.

The financial statements are presented in accordance with the Financial Management Act 2004 and the requirements of Section 71(1) of the Finance Instructions 2010. The preparation and presentation of a Statement of Assets and Liabilities is not required under the current Government policies.

(b) Accounting for Value Added Tax (VAT)

All expenses and revenue are VAT exclusive. The Ministry on a monthly basis takes out VAT output on total money received for expenditure from Ministry of Economy. VAT input on the other hand is claimed on payments made to the suppliers and sub-contractors for expenses incurred.

The VAT payment as per the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures relates to VAT input claimed on payments made to the suppliers and sub-contractors for expenses incurred and VAT payments to FRCS. Actual amount paid to FRCS during the year represent the difference between VAT Output and VAT Input.

(c) Comparative Figures

Where necessary, amounts relating to prior years have been reclassified to facilitate comparison and achieve consistency in disclosure with current year amounts.

(d) Revenue Recognition

Revenue is recognised when cash is actually received by the Ministry.

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022**

NOTE 3: SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS

- (a) The Total Revenue collected decreased by \$311,432 or 38% in the year 2022 when compared to 2021. The decrease was mainly due to the decrease in revenue collected during the year due to the closure of five (5) missions. The five (5) closed Missions are Fiji Embassy Brussels, Fiji High Commission Papua New Guinea, Fiji High Commission Kuala Lumpur, Fiji Embassy Washington and Fiji Embassy Seoul.
- (b) Travel & Communications increased by \$487,340 or 64% in the year 2022 compared to 2021. This increase was mainly due to the opening of the international borders and increase in engagements and meetings in HQ and the Missions.
- (c) Special Expenditure decreased by \$1,808,041 or 80% in the year 2022 compared to 2021. This decrease was mainly due to the closure of the 5 Overseas Missions Fiji Embassy Brussels, Fiji High Commission Papua New Guinea, Fiji High Commission Kuala Lumpur, Fiji Embassy Washington and Fiji Embassy Seoul.
- (d) Capital Constructions decreased by \$53,251 or 93% in the year 2022 compared to 2021. The Capital construction budget provisions is provided to accommodate all Overseas Missions capital needs. However, for financial year 2021/2022, the capital construction budget was only utilised by FHC Canberra.

NOTE 4: SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS

Significant savings for the financial year ended 31 July 2022 are as follows:

	Expenditure	Revised Budget (\$)	Actual Expenditure (\$)	Savings (\$)	Percentage Savings (%)
(a)	Capital Construction	100,000	4,069	95,931	96%
(b)	Value Added Tax	767,000	70,310	696,690	91%

- a) The savings of \$95,931 in Capital Construction was mainly due to the unutilised provisions under SEG 8. The Capital Construction budget provisions is provided to accommodate all Overseas Missions capital needs. However, for financial year 2021/2022 the budget was only utilised by FHC Canberra.
- b) The savings of \$696,690 for Value Added Tax (VAT) was due to the nature of overseas missions expenditures. VAT is not applicable for expenditures incurred in foreign countries.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2022

NOTE 5: APPROPRIATION CHANGES

There were no redeployments of the Ministry's funds during the year. In 2021/2022, the following virements were processed as follows:

Virement Number	From	Amount (\$)	To	Amount (\$)	Approved by
V08001/22	FNPF Geneva	755,567	Post All-Geneva	755,567	PS Economy
MoFA 3/22	Various	1,033,000	Various	1,033,000	PS Foreign Affairs
MoFA 4/22	Various	118,354	Various	118,354	PS Economy
MoFA 5/22	Various	1,566,163	Various	1,566,163	PS Foreign Affairs
MoFA 6/22	Various	640,079	Various	640,079	PS Foreign Affairs
MoFA 7/22	Various	296,950	Various	296,950	PS Economy

NOTE 6: BANK ACCOUNTS MAINTAINED BY MISSION

For the year ending 31 July 2022, there was altogether 13 overseas bank accounts for the ten (10) existing Fiji Missions overseas. From these 10 Missions, seven (7) have one (1) bank accounts each and these are for Fiji Embassy Abu Dhabi, Fiji High Commission Canberra, Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations (PRUN)- New York, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United and Other International Organisation (PRUNOG)- Geneva, Fiji Embassy of Tokyo, Fiji High Commission London and Fiji High Commission Wellington. The remaining three (3) Missions have two (2) bank accounts each and these are Fiji Embassy Jakarta, Fiji Embassy Beijing and Fiji High Commission New Delhi.

A total of \$6,648,846 was recorded in the FMIS General Ledger under SAC 51 for the year ending 31 July 2022.