

16th SESSION OF THE UNPFII. THE CASE FOR FIJI

Madam Chair,
Excellencies
Honorable members of the UNPFII
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. I join the delegates in congratulating the appointment of Madam chair.

I also congratulate the pioneers who worked relentlessly on highlighting Indigenous Issues, Indigenous nations, to reach this stage of development. I am proud of the work that you have done and look forward to contributing to the work to be completed.

Article 8 :
Implementation of Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples

I was encouraged to hear the PGA's address delivered by his assistant at the Opening Session yesterday and am hopeful that the PGA who was FIJI's ambassador to the UN will be able to play a major role in righting the wrong inflicted on the Indigenous peoples of Fiji by the government that appointed him so that his statement is not just lip service.

The reason is that The very government that appointed the PGA to be its Ambassador to the UN is VIOLATING ALL THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF INDIGENOUS FIJIANS.

So while we are celebrating the 10 years of the DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. WE THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF FIJI ARE STRUGGLING TO HAVE OUR voices heard and to get back our rights.

We are lamenting the 10 years of unfair unjust violations of FIJI INDIGENOUS PEOPLES GROUP RIGHTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, THE UNSOLVED MURDERS, AND VIOLENCE that began after the illegal overthrow of the popularly elected Qarase SDL government by the present Military leader Bainimarama who used guns to take over on Dec 5th 2006, 10 years ago.

We cannot celebrate in Fiji because there is no freedom of speech. Even in the DICTATORIAL PARLIAMENT, OUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE SHUT OUT AND EVEN STOPPED FROM BEING IN PARLIAMENT IF THEY SAY SOMETHING THAT THE GOVT PERCEIVES TO BE AGAINST IT,
Our elders continue to be arrested when they meet to discuss issues of concern to them. Like what is happening as I speak to elders from Ra province and Nadroga
So there is no one to speak out or even get their grievances heard because the institutions that were in place before like the Great Council of Chiefs have been abolished!!

There is a deliberate systematic violation and abuse of all Indigenous rights in Fiji beginning iwth

- the **illegal takeover** of an elected, legal legitimate government by a **Military coup** on Dec 5th 2006, led by Bainimarama
- the **human rights abuses** that continue
- the **burning or the people's draft Constitution** and the **imposition of the 2013 constitution on the peoples of Fiji by the illegitimate military Bainimarama/Khaiyum dictatorship**. It does not CONSTITUTE THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.
- the unilateral removal of the Great Council of Chiefs,
- the 17 initial decrees now 24 imposed by the Bainimarama/Khaiyum regime on the group rights of the Indigenous peoples of Fiji,
- identity theft in getting everyone to be called "Fijian ",
- **The 2014 farce election, which was rigged, improper, unjust and an attempt to legitimize their criminal actions.**
- **The dictatorial type of parliament where the government is bulldozing its way over issues**
- The unjust sanction on one of our chiefs Turaga na Tui Cakau from attending parliament and carrying out his responsibilities to the people,
- The land bank issue and our fishing rights abuses, **stealing of land from Bua and shipping it to China.**
- Deliberate and systematic weakening of Indigenous socio-economic-political structures

- Removing of our access to Scholarships and further education
- Interfering and meddling into Fijian Education
- Banning the use of the Fijian language (Vosa vakaviti) from parliament.

Our recommendation on how to successfully implement

It is because of our desire and passion to see justice carried out, and our deep commitment to getting back what is rightfully ours as Indigenous Fijians, to get back our group rights to our land and sea resources, our culture which includes our chants and dances our stories and songs, which define us, our traditional knowledge, languages, values and traditions which is our heritage is why we sacrifice and pay for our own fare, and come to the UN to highlight these issues and recommend strategies:

With elections being planned for 2018 next year We need UN assistance to ensure proper fair and transparent election processes to allow the people to elect who they want We need the assistance of all UN bodies like UNESCO, UNDP, WHO, UNFPA,