



## 16th SESSION OF THE UNPFII. THE CASE FOR FIJI

Speaker- Jitoko Vosaniveibuli

Madam Chair,  
Excellencies

Honorable members of the UNPFII

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on Agenda item 4 which is the implementation of the 6 mandated areas with reference to the UN Declaration of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

I represent the Fiji Indigenous Peoples Foundation and we support all the recommendations from our Pacific brothers and sister.

One of the reasons we were formed is to get back our Indigenous rights which have been taken away from us.

We are the voice of the voiceless

The Fiji Government under the Dictatorial leadership of Bainimarama and Khaiyum continue to violate the rights of Indigenous Fijians.

They started off with the imposition of their constitution on the people of Fiji.

FIPF will continue to highlight that the 2013 Constitution was forced on the Peoples of Fiji because it does not CONSTITUTE the will of the people.

A glaring example of lack of respect of the people. NO FREE PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT.

We have evidence that the 2014 elections was unfair, unjust . It was rigged and the government won under devious and corrupt means.

Even though we have a "Parliament" the opposition are always shouted down when trying to fight for our rights.

On a number of occasions opposition members have been disallowed from the Parliamentary sessions.

The presently are taking away our sense of Dignity. Deliberately oppressing us Even in the DICTATORIAL PARLIAMENT, OUR REPRESENTATIVES ARE SHUT OUT AND EVEN STOPPED FROM BEING IN PARLIAMENT IF THEY SAY SOMETHING THAT THE GOVT PERCIEVES 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 .

So we call on

- 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,

FIPF

FII INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FOUNDATION..