



UPR 20, October 29, 2014
Recommendations by Canada for Fiji's UPR

Question

During its UPR in 2010, Fiji agreed to establish the conditions that allow for freedom of expression, assembly and democratic dialogue. The 2013 Constitution provides broad grounds for possible limitations, including to freedoms of expression and opinion, association and assembly. What steps is the Government of Fiji taking to ensure that these rights are fully protected?

Recommendations

Canada recommends that Fiji:

1. Demonstrate its commitment toward protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms by acceding to, without delay, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).
2. Ensure respect for freedom of expression and the protection of journalists by reforming the Media Industry Development Decree 2010 and introducing freedom of information legislation that accords with international human rights standards.
3. Amend the legislative and constitutional framework to maintain the separation of powers and cease any executive interference with the independence of the judiciary and lawyers, and ensure that the processes governing the qualification and discipline of lawyers and judges are free from political interference.

Observations (if time allows):

We commend Fiji for holding its first democratic elections since 2006, and we are pleased that the Multilateral Observer Group found that the conditions were in place for Fijians to exercise their right to vote freely.

We welcome the news that 16 percent of Fiji's new parliament is made up of women, a 45 percent increase from 2006, and commend the election of Fiji's first female speaker.