

HRC29: WILPF Statement on Fiji UPR

10 June 2015

Co-signed – Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom Pacific Concerns Resource Centre

Mr. Chairperson,

We note with appreciation the recommendations made during the UPR we reiterate the recognition of the need for the return to democracy and constitutional rule, the end of media censorship, and the end to intimidation and persecution of critics of the interim government.

The people of Fiji have paid a high social, human, and economic price of successive military coups evident in the removal of the Bill of Rights, abuse and deaths of civilians who oppose the regime, the militarization of the civil service, increasing inflation, and the lack of private investments due to the political instability.

We note the efforts towards reducing violence against women under the domestic violence law promulgated by decree; however, such reforms must take place within a democratic process¹.

We are extremely concerned at Fiji’s failure to respond towards repeated calls for the end to human rights violations, and promises of election. In light of previous broken assurances of elections and national dialogues, there is lack of confidence that the 2014 national elections will take place. We call on Fiji to take immediate and credible steps towards an open, democratic, and genuine national dialogue without predetermined outcomes leading to early and credible elections, and the return to democracy.

We unanimously call on governments to maintain their targeted sanctions which prevent the recruitment of Fiji’s soldiers to peacekeeping missions. In addition, we call on governments to maintain their targeted sanctions against individuals who are the architectures of human right abuses . These individuals should be recognized, by the international community, as party to an unlawful regime and a military dictatorship that are collaborating to maintain its tyrannical rule over this country, deterring Fiji’s progress in the implementation of the UPR recommendations, in particular the restoration of the rule of law and the early return to elections and parliamentary rule in Fiji.

We call on Fiji for the removal of the Public Emergency Regulation as it restricts the freedom of assembly and expression, and permits disciplined personnel to use arms to disperse any assembly without being liable in criminal or civil proceedings for causing any harm or death for having used such force”².

Finally, we call on Fiji for the restoration of the Bill of Rights that guarantees protection of human rights as current protection of human rights is inadequate.

Thank you Mr. President