

H.E's speech after Commander hands back executive authority to H.E

Good citizens of our beloved Fiji Islands.

I know that the events of the past few weeks have been trying on all of us.

In particular in early December we were at cross roads at which hard and decisive decisions needed to be made.

I was as has been noted by the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces unable to fully perform my duties as I was prevented from doing so. I do not wish to elaborate further on this point but I can state that they were predominantly cultural.

In any case given the circumstances I would have done exactly what the Commander of the RFMF, Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama did since it was necessary to do so at that time.

These actions were also valid in law.

Therefore, I fully endorse the actions of the Commander of the RFMF and the RFMF in acting in the interest of the nation and most importantly in upholding the Constitution.

I thank him and his men and women for having the courage to step in.

I also thank him and the RFMF for handing back all my executive powers.

I thank the civil service, the Police, the Judiciary and other governmental institutions in remaining faithfully at their posts.

I thank the good citizens of this beloved country of ours who have gone about their ordinary business.

It is now necessary to move on, look ahead and to take steps to enforce a genuine democracy.

I look forward to working with the overseas governments, international organizations and our regional neighbours and appeal to them all to recognize our need to find a Fiji based solution whilst upholding the Constitution.

I am therefore going shortly after consultation with capable people announce a ~~Caretaker~~ Government to take us smoothly to the next elections.

The mandate of the ~~Caretaker~~ Government will be as follows:

interim

- To continue to uphold the Constitution;
- Where necessary facilitate all legal protection and immunity, both criminal and civil, to the Commander, Officers and all members of the RFMF;
- Give effect to the actions of the RFMF including the respective suspensions, dismissals and temporary removal from office of civil servants, CEO's, those appointed by the Judicial Services and Constitutional Services Commissions, the Judiciary and Government appointed Board members;
- Steady our economy through sustained economic growth and correct the economic mismanagement of the past 6 years;
- Lift up the living standards of the growing poor and underprivileged of our country;
- Restructure the NLTB to ensure more benefits flow to the ordinary indigenous Fijians;
- Eradicate systemic corruption by including the setting up of an anti-corruption unit through the Attorney General's Office and set new standards of Governmental and institutional transparency;
- Improve our relations with our neighbors and the international community;
- Take our country to democratic elections after an advanced electoral office and systems are in place and the political and economic conditions are conducive to the holding of such elections;
- Immediately as practicable introduce a Code of Conduct and Freedom of Information provisions; and
- Give paramountcy to national security and territorial integrity of Fiji;

I thank each and every one of you for your patience and forbearing. I urge all to strive for a better Fiji.

God bless Fiji