



Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka, OBE, MSD, OStJ
Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Climate Change and Environment, Civil Service,
Information and Public Enterprises

DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET IN JULY 2024

Suva,
Fiji

15 July 2024
4.30pm

The Prime Minister, Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka issued this statement on Decisions taken by Cabinet in its 11th and 12th meetings held on 2nd July and 15th July 2024.

1. Grant Funding from Japan International Cooperation Agency for Fiji Airports

Cabinet approved the Exchange of Notes with the Government of Japan and Grant Funding Agreement with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for grant funding of JPY1.29 billion (FJ\$15 million) to Airports Fiji Pte Limited.

Airports Fiji Pte Limited, trading as Fiji Airports (FA), is a Public Enterprise established on 12 April 1999. It operates the Nadi International Airport, Nausori Airport and 13 other outer island airports.

Under the Grant Funding Agreement, JICA will:

- procure and install aircraft surveillance systems at the Nadi International Airport and Labasa Airport;
- procure and deliver five fire trucks for Nausori, Labasa, Savusavu and Matei Airports;
- procure and deliver three rescue boats for Nadi International Airport; and
- provide consultancy services for improving aviation safety.

2. Public Service Broadcasting Grant

Cabinet agreed to open up the Public Service Broadcasting grant to other media organisations from the next financial year.

In the past, Government had exclusively engaged Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) to provide public service broadcasting through radio and TV.

To ensure fairness and a level playing field in the media industry, the People's Coalition Government intends to engage other service providers ensure a wider reach on issues of public interest and fair competition in the media industry.

3. Memorandum of Understanding with International Peace Institute

Cabinet endorsed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of Fiji and the International Peace Institute (IPI).

The MOU will bolster Fiji's preparations for COP29 through capacity building in negotiations.

IPI is a non-profit think tank closely associated with the United Nations. It focuses on issues of peace and security, and also assists Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the climate change space.

4. Financial Services Ombudsman

Cabinet endorsed the establishment of a Financial Services Ombudsman (FSO) within the Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF).

The establishment of the FSO in RBF is expected to elevate the existing complaints management function undertaken by the RBF.

The purpose of the FSO is to resolve complaints brought by consumers against banks, insurers and/or other financial service providers. The FSO will provide an accessible and impartial platform for dispute resolution, with a specific mandate to investigate, mediate, and deliver fair resolutions tailored to the unique challenges faced by consumers.

The effectiveness of the FSO within RBF will be assessed after two years.

5. Stand-by Loan for Disaster Recovery And Rehabilitation-Phase 2

Cabinet endorsed the Exchange of Notes and Record of Discussion with the Government of Japan for the provision of a 5 billion Japanese Yen (approximately FJD 72 million) Stand-by Loan for Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation - Phase 2 through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The Stand-by Loan facility is provided with the view of promoting economic stabilisation and development efforts, in particular enhancing the capacity of disaster risk management.

6. Fiji's Participation in the Pacific Island Network of Competition, Consumer and Economic Regulators

Cabinet's endorsed Fiji's participation in the Pacific Island Network of Competition, Consumer and Economic Regulators (PINCCER).

Cabinet also agreed that the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) be Fiji's representative to PINCCER and be authorised to act on behalf of Fiji with respect to any PINCCER-related matters.

PINCCER has been established to facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing and capacity building among member economies to address pressing issues pertaining to economic regulations, including policies related to price control and the oversight of natural monopolies.

The inaugural PINCCER conference will be held on 22 July 2024 at the Sofitel Resort and Spa in Denarau, Nadi.

7. Fiji To Co-Host Indo-Pacific Environmental Security Forum

Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the US Department of Defence (US INDOPACOM) to formalise the annual Indo-Pacific Environmental Security Forum (IPESF 24) co-hosting arrangements.

IPESF 24 will take place in Natadola from 6 to 9 August 2024.

IPESF is an annual conference that forms the foundation of INDOPACOM's Environmental Security Programme and, together with the Indo-Pacific Environmental Security Partnership (IPESP), brings Indo-Pacific militaries and civilian agencies together to discuss and advance shared environmental obligations.

Fiji has sent representatives to IPESF since its inception in 2011.

8. Amendment One to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Fiji on Defence Facilities and Infrastructure Activities

Cabinet approved Amendment One to the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Fiji on Defence Facilities and Infrastructure Activities (Infrastructure MOU).

The Infrastructure MOU supports construction activities for the upgrade at the Stanley Brown Naval Base and the construction of the Fiji Maritime Essential Services Centre (MESCC) in Lami.

Once completed, MESCC will house critical components such as the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC FIJI), the Joint Maritime Fusion Centre, the Fiji Hydrographic Office, the Suva Coastal Radio Station, and Navy administrative support functions, all of which are vital for Fiji's defence.

Amendment One extends the Infrastructure MOU to allow for the provision of maintenance and sustainment services to support MESCC for a period of 20 years. During this period, the RFMF is gradually expected to enhance its maintenance and facility management capabilities to assume this vital role.

9. Memorandum of Understanding between Fiji and Australia on a Defence Pacific Air Programme

Cabinet endorsed the Defence Pacific Air Programme Memorandum of Understanding (DPAP MOU) between the Government of Fiji and the Government of Australia.

The DPAP MOU provides the overarching governance for the operation of the C27J aircraft in Fiji.

In September 2023, Australia offered Fiji the use of C27J on a regular rotational basis. The C27J is a versatile aircraft adept at humanitarian assistance, air transport, and aerial surveillance missions due to its ability to operate with limited support from unsurfaced airstrips.

The first rotation of the aircraft was from 19 February to 1 March 2024 under an Exchange of Letters. The DPAP MOU will enable the smooth facilitation of future rotations.

10. Memorandum of Understanding Between Peace Corps and the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management

Cabinet endorsed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Peace Corps Fiji and the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management.

The MOU is for the engagement of Peace Corps volunteers to assist in the Community Economic Empowerment Programme.

Peace Corps Fiji is expected to support the Ministry in Project Management Training, Income Generation, Financial Literacy, and Personal Money Management through this partnership.

11. The 65th Session of the Asian Productivity Organization Workshop Meeting of Heads Of National Productivity Organisation, 2024

Cabinet endorsed Fiji's hosting of the 65th Session of Asian Productivity Organisation's (APO) Workshop Meeting of Heads (WSM).

The 65th session of the APO WSM is expected to be held for three days at the Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa from the 23rd to the 25th of October 2024.

APO is a regional inter-governmental non-political, non-profit, and non-discriminatory organization that was established on 11 May 1961 to contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development of Asia and the Pacific through enhancing productivity.

Fiji joined the APO in 1984.

12. National Disaster Management Office Partnership With Japan, Quasi-Zenith Satellite System For Early Warning System

Cabinet endorsed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Government of Japan to explore the use of Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS) in Fiji.

QZSS is a satellite positioning system developed and managed by the Japanese Government as an early warning satellite system (EWS) during the occurrence of earthquake or tsunami.

The collaboration on the use of QZSS is expected to enhance tsunami information dissemination in Fiji.

The MoC is expected to be signed on the margins of the PALM conference in Japan from the 16 – 19 July 2024.

13. Establishment of the United States Agency for International Development Office in Suva

Cabinet endorsed the execution of the Bilateral Framework Agreement for Technical and Economic Cooperation with the Government of the United States of America, for the establishment of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Pacific Regional Office in Suva.

USAID is an independent agency of the US federal government primarily responsible for administering civilian foreign aid and development assistance. It has ongoing engagements with various Government agencies and local partners in Fiji.

The Pacific Regional Office will serve Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and Palau.

14. Review of the 2018–2022 National Employment Policy

Cabinet approved the review of the 2018-2022 National Employment Policy (NEP 2018).

The review will focus on supporting economic diversification and environmental sustainability to address climate change, disaster management and resilience.

Technical assistance will be provided by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the review.

15. Fiji – Sustainable and Resilient Growth Programme – Subprogramme 1

Cabinet endorsed the execution of necessary loan agreement and any relevant documents for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) loan facility under the ‘Fiji – Sustainable and Resilient Growth Programme – Subprogramme 1’ (Programme) for budget support financing of USD 70.0 million (approximately FJD 158.1 million).

The Programme is a first ever concessional facility received from the ADB through a joint budget support operation.

The broad objectives of the ADB programmatic approach are to implement improved frameworks for sustainable and resilient growth.

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