



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Fiji

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For immediate release

New EU Ambassador to Fiji Meets Acting Prime Minister

Suva, Fiji- The upcoming 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the 2018 general elections and international cooperation and development between Fiji and the European Union (EU) were top of the bilateral meeting held on Wednesday 01/11/17 between the Acting Prime Minister and Attorney-General, Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications, Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum and the new European Union Ambassador to Fiji, His Excellency Julian Wilson.

Ambassador Wilson, who had presented his credentials to the President Major-General (Ret'd) Jioji Konusi Konrote in October, wished Fiji well for the Presidency of COP23 and reiterated that Fiji can bank on the strong support from the EU in this crucial role.

"Fiji knows first-hand the effects of climate change and we look forward to its leadership as Presidency of COP23. At COP23, the international community will need to demonstrate its continued commitment to the Paris Agreement and make substantive progress on the implementation of the work programme", Ambassador Wilson told Hon. Sayed-Khaiyum.

The EU has provided Fiji FJD 6.5 million (EUR 3 million) to support preparations of COP23, which will be hosted in Bonn, Germany from 6 to 17 of November.

Ambassador Wilson said the EU sees Fiji also as an important trading partner in the region. The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and Fiji will contribute directly to advancing the development aspirations of Fiji.

Ambassador Wilson updated the Acting Prime Minister of EU's current development cooperation and upcoming support for Fiji.

"The EU funded Programme "Fiji Access to Justice" was launched by the Government of Fiji in August last year. The project, which is being implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will enhance the justice system in Fiji and provide more access to justice for underprivileged and vulnerable groups. For the future, the 11th European Development Fund foresees an envelope of FJD 45 million (EUR 20 million) to support the agriculture sector and the sugar subsector reform in Fiji. The preparation of the latter programme is ongoing in close cooperation with the government."

In total, the EU will provide more than FJD 90 million (EUR 40 million) in financial assistance to Fiji during the period 2014-2020. This is in addition to almost FJD 110 million (EUR 50 million) worth of ongoing EU-funded projects.

(ENDS)

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"The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".