

Statement by the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission

Mr Suresh Chandra

Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Brochure Launch

Suva – 06-07-18 – 2.30pm

Fellow Electoral Commissioners,

The Supervisor of Elections,

The Director Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination
Commission,

Invited Guests,

Members of the Media.

Bula vinaka ladies and gentlemen.

The Electoral Commission is very encouraged by efforts taken by the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission to develop a brochure from the Human Rights perspective in relation to elections.

The Electoral Commission also appreciates greatly the effort by the Director Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission in availing himself to various event that the Electoral Commission and the Fijian Elections Office have organized in relation to elections.

We have also found that collaboration with the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission is at its best and of course we look forward to continuing with this excellent partnerships with the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission as we move towards the General Election.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission acts as an internal quality assurance mechanism in the country on the electoral process.

The Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission by virtue of its role will be closely monitoring of the progress of the Fijian Elections Office and the Electoral Commission in relation to our activities in realizing the rights of all Fijians.

The most important rights being the right to secrecy of the ballot and the right to vote.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is well known that the 2014 General Election was declared by the Multi-National Observer Group to be free and fair and for that reason the evolution of the election practices taken place since 2014 will be under the spotlight in the 2018 General Election and the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission will be one of the key bodies that the Electoral Commission will be looking to for their reviews and comments post-election.

An Election is another step in the path of the democratic movement of the country and that being said it is very important that in Fiji in our country, we take charge of our democratic process and take charge of the manner in which we want this process to evolve.

It is absolutely critical that the evolution of the democratic process, the electoral process in our country is taken at the hands our own people and in doing so will only be possible through the building of capacity for Fijians in terms of elections, election best practices and generally election practices.

With this brochure, that the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission has published we anticipate the capacity of Fijians is going to be increased in our area and as we gradually proceed the general capacity should be increasing as well.

The Electoral Commission once again thanks the Director of Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission and the Commission itself for their initiative and we look forward to the successful dissemination of this brochure and its impact on the lives of ordinary Fijians

Vinaka Vakalevu and Dhanyavadh.