

THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

REPUBLIC OF FIJI

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Ref: Election Mode Meeting Number 03/22

Decision Number 26/22

Appeal No: A06,07,08,09/22

The Electoral Commission has received Appeals against the decision of the Supervisor of Elections [“SoE”] to disqualify the nominations of the following persons:

- a. Naomi Navoce;
- b. Marama Korina Waibuta;
- c. Salacieli Taubera Gasara; and
- d. Vetaia Vuinakelo.

The Appellants assert that they are duly qualified to be nominated under the Electoral Act 2014 [“Act”].

The Electoral Commission noted that, in order to qualify for nomination, a candidate must meet the requirements of section 23 of the Electoral Act, 2014 which states the following;

23.— (1) A person is not eligible to be elected as a member of Parliament unless duly nominated as a candidate in the election.

(2) A candidate for election to Parliament may be nominated by a registered political party or nominated as an independent candidate in accordance with the procedures prescribed in this Act.

(3) A person is not eligible to be nominated as a candidate unless he or she is a registered voter, and a person who has been disqualified from voting by an order of a court under section 151 shall for this purpose be regarded as not registered to vote.

(4) A person is eligible to be nominated as a candidate for election to Parliament only if the person—

(a) is a citizen of Fiji, and does not hold citizenship of any other country;

(b) is registered in the Register of Voters;

(c) is ordinarily resident in Fiji for at least 2 years immediately before being nominated;

(d) is not an undischarged bankrupt;

(e) is not a member of the Electoral Commission, and has not been a member of that Commission at any time during the 4 years immediately before being nominated;

(f) is not subject to a sentence of imprisonment when nominated;

(g) has not, at any time during the 8 years immediately before being nominated, been convicted of any offence under any law for which the maximum penalty is a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more; and

(h) has not been guilty of any offence under a law relating to elections, registration of political parties or registration of voters, including any offence prescribed under this Act.

(5) For the purposes of subsection (4) (c), a person shall only qualify to be ordinarily resident in Fiji for at least 2 years immediately before being nominated, if that person has been present and living in Fiji for an aggregate period of not less than 18 months out of the 2 years immediately before being nominated; and

(6) Notwithstanding anything contained in subsection (5), any person who has been out of Fiji for official Government business or duties or has been holding an official Government position in any other country, shall be deemed to be ordinarily resident in Fiji for the purposes of subsection (4) (c).

(7) For the purpose of verification, the Supervisor may make enquiries and, where necessary, require the person to provide the necessary authorisations and declarations to the relevant authorities to assist with the enquiries.

The Electoral Commission, upon receipt of the Appeals, required the SoE to provide all the documents that were obtained by him during the verification process of the nomination of the Appellants. These documents and the evidence provided by the Appellants were carefully scrutinized to determine if the Appellants have met the requirements set out in section 23.

In our findings, the Electoral Commission notes that the Appellants did not file with the Supervisor of Elections their nominations and the Unity Fiji [**'Party'**] actually took it back

with them. The Party did not also pay any fees for the nominations and as such the Party cannot claim that the nominations were accepted and then rejected.

By not paying the fee, the Party failed to carry out the actual process for nomination as required under the Electoral Act, 2014. Therefore, the Electoral Commission has decided that the Appeals are dismissed.

Dated this 15th day of November 2022



MUKESH NAND

Chairperson of the Electoral Commission