



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

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## **Decisions made at the 14<sup>th</sup> Cabinet Meeting held on 27 August 2024**

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The Peoples' Coalition Cabinet held its 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of 2024 on Tuesday 13 August 2024. The meeting was chaired by the Acting Prime Minister, Hon. Manoa Kamikamica.

The decisions of Cabinet include the following:

**1. Air Transport Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Fiji**

Cabinet approved the Air Transport Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Fiji on bilateral open skies arrangement.

This is the first Air Transport Agreement on open skies to be negotiated by Fiji in consultation with Fiji Airways.

The Agreement follows the liberalisation of Fiji's Aviation Policy to allow for the evaluation of potential for bilateral and multilateral open skies arrangements on a case-by-case basis to ensure the viability of the routes, maintain trade, investment and the sustainability of Fiji's tourism industry.

**2. Regulations to Support Ease of Doing Business Project**

Cabinet endorsed amendments to the Food Safety Regulation 2009, the Health and Safety at Work (Administration) Regulations 1997, and the drafting of the National Fire Service (Fire Safety Compliance Certificate) Regulations 2024.

The amended and new regulations are to enable the following:

- (i) streamline, define and publish the payment structure for National Fire Authority (NFA), National Occupational Health and Safety Services (NOHSS) and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services in terms of upfront payment collection;
- (ii) acceptance of digitally generated outputs for NFA, NOHSS and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, such as compliance reports, letters and certificates which may have e-signatures; and
- (iii) revise the current renewal period to make it cyclic.

The regulations are in line with the Starting a Business Subsystem (SABs) which is the first component of the BusinessNOW Fiji Project to integrate relevant e-services, from more than 16 government agencies on a single digital platform.

### **3. 12 – Month Waiver of Interest of all State Lease Rentals**

Cabinet approved a 12 – month Waiver of Interest for state lease arrears effective from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025.

During the waiver period, lessees are expected to clear their (rent) arrears in full without having to pay accumulated interest on these arrears.

The three previous Waiver of Interest were in 2014 – 2014, 2018 and 2020-2021.

### **4. 2025 Public Holiday Dates**

Cabinet endorsed the 2025 public holiday dates.

The following dates will be published in the Gazette as the approved Public Holidays for the year 2025:

(i)	New Year’s Day	-	Wednesday 1 January;
(ii)	Good Friday	-	Friday 18 April;
(iii)	Easter Saturday	-	Saturday 19 April;
(iv)	Easter Monday	-	Monday 21 April;
(v)	Girmit Day	-	Monday 12 May;
(vi)	Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna Day	-	Friday 30 May;
(viii)	Prophet Mohammed’s Birthday	-	Monday 8 September;
(vii)	Fiji Day	-	Friday 10 October;
(ix)	Diwali	-	Tuesday 21 October;
(x)	Christmas Day	-	Thursday 25 December; and
(xi)	Boxing Day	-	Friday 26 December;

### **5. Fiji – Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project**

Cabinet approved Fiji’s contribution to the Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships project through loan financing of USD9.0 million (equivalent to FJD 20.6 million) from the International Development Association (IDA) credit facility with the World Bank Group.

The objective of the regional project is to enable continuous access to correspondent banking services in the participating Pacific Island countries. The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) will be the key implementing agency.

The total financing package for the Project is USD77.0 million comprising USD18.0 million concessional loan and USD59.0 million grant financing.

## **6. Government Guarantee for the Fiji Sugar Corporation Limited**

Cabinet endorsed that an increase in the Government guarantee limit for the Fiji Sugar Corporation's domestic borrowings of \$95.0 million for the period 1 August 2022 to 31 May 2028 (Guarantee Period), by \$105.0 million to \$200.0 million, be tabled in Parliament.

Government has been guaranteeing FSC's domestic and off-shore borrowings with the most recent domestic guarantee approved by Parliament on 28 July 2022, covering \$75 million for the period from 1 August 2022 to 31 May 2028. This guarantee limit was later increased by \$20.0 million to \$95.0 million on 23 May 2024.

The additional domestic borrowing guarantee cover will allow FSC to access significantly cheaper local financing, thereby reducing financial strain and contributing positively to the domestic economic landscape.

## **7. Redeployment of Funds from within the 2023-2024 Budget**

Cabinet approved the second redeployment of funds within the approved 2023- 2024 Budget to cater for the regularisation of over-expenditure incurred within the Ministry of Education and Fiji Police Force.

A total FJ\$7,936,665.94 (VIP) will be redeployed from within the approved 2023-2024 Budget to regularise over-expenditure by the two agencies.

The first redeployment was approved in July this year to meet additional expenditure demands of FJ\$105,185,000.00(VIP) for various agencies and projects.

The redeployment exercise is in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Management Act.

## **8. Fiji to Host the Third Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting**

Cabinet agreed that Fiji host the Third Regional Aviation Ministers Meeting (RAMM) in 2025.

RAMM is the high-level political body for aviation matters in the region with the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) as its coordinating body.

RAMM consists of Aviation Ministers from the 18 countries that are members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) that consist of Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

The first two meetings of the RAMM were convened in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

**9. Letter Of Agreement with United Nations Development Programme on the Implementation of Governance for Resilient Development in the Pacific Project**

Cabinet approved the execution of a Letter of Agreement between the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation and the United Nations Development Programme's Governance for Resilient Development in the Pacific Project (Gov4Res).

The UNDP through the Gov4Res project will provide human resource support to the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation to assist in the implementation of key programmes such as the Vanua Levu Tourism Development Programme and the Pilot Tourism Micro and Small Enterprises Fund.

**10. Hosting of the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Regional Codex Committee Meeting for North America and Southwest Pacific**

Cabinet agreed that Fiji host the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee for the North America and South West Pacific (CCNASWP) Regional Meeting in 2025.

CCNASWP is part of the Codex Alimentarius Commission which was founded by the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to safeguard consumer health and advance fair, safe, and high-quality practices in the global food trade.

Currently Fiji, through the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture and Waterways, holds the Regional Coordinator's position for the second time since its nomination in 2020 by the members of the CCNASWP group.

**-Ends-**