



**RULE OF LAW CRUCIAL TO BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT CONFIDENCE**

The Australia Fiji Business Council condemns the actions of Fiji government officials who ignored a High Court order and forced the deportation of Fiji Times publisher, Evan Hannah.

Setting aside the merits of the decision taken in the first place to deport Hannah, the ignoring by officials of an order by the High Court that he not be deported but be brought before the court for a hearing brings into serious question the effectiveness of the rule of law in Fiji.

The actions taken, and the resulting negative publicity Fiji is receiving internationally, will add further difficulty for Fiji in attracting tourists and investment to redress the current serious economic downturn.

Business requires a stable and certain rule of law, and if officials of the State can with impunity ignore orders of the High Court then it causes business and investor uncertainty, and will lead to further economic hardships for Fiji.

The Interim Government should now show that it respects and upholds the rule of law in Fiji, and allow Hannah to return to Fiji and have the matter heard by the High Court in accordance with the laws of Fiji. It should also take appropriate action under the law against those who have broken Fiji laws in arranging the deportation of Hannah in direct violation of a court order.

**BRISBANE**

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