



AUSTRALIA FIJI BUSINESS COUNCIL

AUSTRALIA AND FIJI: GOVERNMENTS BEHAVING BADLY

The deterioration of the bilateral relationship between Australia and Fiji which has led to the expulsion of each others' senior diplomats does no credit to either government.

This Council has for almost three years been urging these governments to set aside their differences enough to be able to engage in dialogue.

Governments do not own the relationship. It belongs to the people who have nurtured it over generations and will continue long after the current governments have been consigned to the dust of history.

The role of governments is to nurture and protect the relationship, not rend it asunder in pursuit of their own objectives.

The actions of both governments are continuing to damage both countries' interests.

For Fiji, it further alienates it from the international community which, like it or not, it desperately needs, and projects an image of volatility and unpredictability which will discourage the credible foreign investors who are needed for Fiji's economic future.

For Australia, it further destabilises the region and places at risk billions of dollars of investment by Australian businesses built up over more than a century. Nor is it in Australia's interests to see the Fiji economy decline further and its people suffer increasing deprivation and hardship.

This Council calls on both governments to engage in serious and genuine dialogue to contain the damage being caused to their own country's interests and start to rebuild their relationship.

The relationship between the people and business will continue, and the people and business expect their governments to behave in their interests.

BRISBANE
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Media enquiries can be directed to Brian Anderson, President, Australia Fiji Business Council (Tel 0408 484 870) or Frank Youn, Executive Director, Australia Fiji Business Council (Tel 0412 608 195).

P O Box 422, WYNNUM, QLD 4178

Tel 07 3348 5142 Fax 07 3348 5172 Mobile 0412 608 195

E-mail: info@afbc.org.au

www.afbc.org.au

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