



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI



Address by the Speaker the Hon. Filimone Jitoko
On the Occasion of the 6th World Conference of Speakers
29 – 31 July 2025
Geneva, SWITZERLAND

***“A world in turmoil: Parliamentary cooperation and
multilateralism for peace, justice and prosperity for all”***

- Honourable Chair and President of the 6th World Conference of Speakers
- Hon. Madam President of the IPU and Secretary-General of the IPU
- Honourable Speakers of Parliament
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Bula Vinaka and warm greetings from the Republic of Fiji!

It is my great honour to speak before you today on the theme, *“A World in Turmoil: Parliamentary Cooperation and Multilateralism for Peace, Justice and Prosperity for All.”*

We come together at a time when the world is grappling with mounting pressures—entrenched geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, the relentless advance of climate change, widening social divides, and the corrosive spread of disinformation.

This theme speaks powerfully to our current moment. As legislators and representatives of the people, we are confronted with converging global crises—climate emergencies, humanitarian disasters, deepening political divides, and escalating threats to democratic norms.

In the midst of this turbulence, one truth stands firm: no nation, no community, and no parliament can tackle these challenges alone. That is why parliamentary cooperation and multilateralism are not mere options—they are vital. These are not luxuries, but strategic instruments for driving meaningful progress.

As a small island developing state in the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean, Fiji knows adversity intimately. Alongside our Pacific neighbours, we stand on the frontlines of climate change facing the rising challenges imposed by the adverse impacts of climate change, with rising temperatures and sea levels. We continue to chart paths through political reform, economic rebuilding, and the lingering effects of a global pandemic. Yet through it all, our people remain hopeful, resilient, and deeply rooted in the values of democracy.

As Speakers, we serve as stewards of democracy, defenders of human rights, and trusted voices of the people. Our responsibility is to ensure that governments remain accountable, policies are inclusive, and national development aligns not only with domestic priorities but also with the broader interests of the global community.

This duty also calls us to rigorously strengthen our democratic institutions, uphold the principles of good governance, and foster a culture of transparency and accountability at every level.

In Fiji, we are deeply committed to upholding these principles. The Fijian Parliament has actively participated in both regional and international forums—advocating for peace, justice, climate action, and sustainable development. We have worked to strengthen our institutions, promote good governance, and ensure greater transparency and accountability.

In the spirit of regional cooperation, I am pleased to announce that the Fijian Parliament will host the 5th Pacific Islands Parliamentary Group (PIPG) Conference this August 2025.

This gathering marks a pivotal moment for Pacific parliaments to unite—sharing priorities, exchanging valuable insights, and reinforcing our collective commitment to inter-parliamentary collaboration across the region.

But the PIPG is more than an assembly. It stands as a powerful emblem of Pacific solidarity. It reflects our unwavering belief that enduring peace, meaningful justice, and shared prosperity are only possible when we come together through open dialogue, mutual respect, and purposeful cooperation.

Fiji views the upcoming 5th PIPG meeting as a vital regional platform for collective action. It is an opportunity to rally our voices around key issues that define our shared future –

- Building climate resilience and preparing for natural disasters;
- Safeguarding and deepening democratic institutions;
- Advancing gender equality and empowering youth; and
- Strengthening regional peace, stability, and sustainable development.

Our discussions will confront the growing vulnerabilities facing Pacific Island communities—pressures from global trade disruptions, rising protectionism, and economic slowdowns that affect us disproportionately.

As small island developing states, our power lies not in isolation, but in unity.

The Fijian Parliament continues to work hand-in-hand with international partners—such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the United Nations Development Programme, and others—to uphold global frameworks that protect democracy, foster peace, and defend human dignity.

Parliaments must remain at the helm of this response—crafting legislation that upholds human rights, reinforces the rule of law, ensures inclusive access to public services, and keeps governments accountable, always centering the voices and needs of the people.

Let us not be torn apart by global crises. Instead, let us turn this moment into a renewed commitment to multilateralism, principled diplomacy, and inclusive governance.

By hosting the PIPG, the Fijian Parliament aims to demonstrate that even small nations can lead boldly. We lead not by competing, but by connecting. Not by standing alone, but by standing together.

Through solidarity and parliamentary cooperation, we can build a world that is more peaceful, more just, and more hopeful—for everyone.

Vinaka vakalevu. Thank you.

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