



Speech by the Speaker the Hon. Filimone Jitoko
On the Occasion of the General Debate of the 152nd IPU Assembly

15 – 19 April, 2026
Istanbul, TURKIYE

“Nurturing hope, securing peace and ensuring justice for future generations”

- Honourable Chair, President of the Grand National Assembly of Turkiye and President of the 152nd Assembly;
- Honourable President of the IPU;
- Secretary-General of the IPU;
- Honourable Speakers and Members of Parliament;
- Distinguished Guests.

I first acknowledge and thank through the Government and people of Turkiye for your very warm hospitality.

It is my great honour and a privilege to address this Assembly on a theme that resonates with our shared responsibility as leaders: *“Nurturing hope, securing peace, and ensuring justice for future generations”*.

Rather than just talking of general principles and high ideals that we aspire to, I would like to talk about actions: How we in Fiji, and the Fiji Parliament are taking concrete actions and steps to put into practice these aspirations.

At a time of global uncertainty marked by inequality, climate risks, technological upheaval, and waning trust in institutions, small island developing states like Fiji face these challenges directly. Parliament stands at the heart of our democratic response, turning citizens' aspirations into action through law-making, oversight, representation, and budget scrutiny.

A central priority for Fiji is keeping Parliament open and accessible. Ongoing civic initiatives such as Open Days, school outreach, and guided tours foster engagement, especially among youth. Since January, our outreach has reached 37 secondary schools nationwide, strengthening awareness and participation in the democratic process.

Fiji continues to strengthen democratic participation by investing in ICT and broadcasting infrastructure, ensuring parliamentary sittings and committee inquiries are accessible through live streaming and free-to-air broadcasts. Last year in September, a Youth Mock Parliament brought together 58 young participants,

equally men and women, culminating in live-broadcast proceedings from the Chambers. This initiative, alongside regular committee consultations with youth and civil society, underscores that young people are not passive recipients of policy but active partners in shaping it. Such inclusive engagement enhances transparency, legitimacy, and trust in public institutions while empowering future leaders to take ownership of national development.

Equally, the Fijian Parliament continues to champion gender equality and inclusive representation. We acknowledge that sustainable peace and justice cannot be achieved without the full and meaningful participation of women. In July 2024, the Parliament hosted a Women's Mock Parliament, which brought together 56 women for a three-day workshop, culminating in a live, televised debate in the Chambers. Such initiatives are vital in breaking barriers and fostering a more inclusive political landscape.

For Pacific nations, climate change is the most urgent threat to peace, security, and prosperity. Fiji has long championed strong global action, with Parliament advancing laws and budgets that build resilience, strengthen disaster preparedness, and promote sustainable development, issues of survival and fairness across generations.

As delegates meet at the 152nd IPU Assembly, Fiji is once again facing the devastation of a severe tropical cyclone, TC Vaianu. Another one is on the horizon. This stark reality highlights the escalating risks our people endure daily and reinforces the call for stronger global commitment and collective action.

Parliamentary diplomacy remains central to Fiji's global engagement, reaffirming our commitment to multilateralism, dialogue, and co-operation through active participation in forums like the IPU. In a divided world, Parliaments serve as bridges, building solidarity and advancing collective action.

Sustaining hope depends on institutions that act with integrity, foresight, and accountability. It requires leaders to rise above short-term interests, safeguard rights and dignity, and ensure opportunities for future generations. Transparency, responsible stewardship of resources, and unwavering respect for the rule of law are the foundations of this trust.

As parliamentarians, we must continually ask ourselves: are we legislating for today alone, or for the generations yet to come? In Fiji, we are striving to embed long-term thinking into our legislative and policy processes, ensuring that every decision made today is guided not only by present needs, but by future consequences.

Let us remember that hope is not something we inherit, it is something we create. Peace is not something we assume, it is something we build. Justice is not something we declare, it is something we uphold every day, through our actions.

The future is watching. Let us act with unity and purpose to ensure that the generations that follow inherit a world defined not by uncertainty, but by opportunity, dignity, and lasting peace.

Vinaka vakalevu – Thank you!

-ENDS-