

PRESS RELEASE



UN Deputy Regional Director Expresses Support for Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Work



From left: Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission Commissioner Ana Laqeretabua with Thomas Hunecke, the outgoing Deputy Regional Representative for the Pacific at UN Human Rights at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at the FTRC office in Suva on Tuesday June 10, 2025. **Photo: Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission.**

Tuesday, 10 June 2025: Today, the Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission met with Thomas Hunecke, the outgoing Deputy Regional Representative for the Pacific at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Commissioner Ana Laqeretabua led the discussions held at the Commission's office in Suva. She expressed sincere gratitude to Mr Hunecke for dedicating his limited remaining time in Fiji to advise and support the Commission.

During the session, Mr Hunecke shared expert guidance on best practices for interviewing individuals who have experienced human rights abuses and violations, helping to equip the Commission for the critical tasks ahead in the coming months.

Impressed by the Commission's professional setup as an independent entity, Mr Hunecke emphasised the crucial role the Commission plays in fostering social cohesion in Fiji. He reminded the staff that their legislated mandate not only grants legitimacy but also places high expectations on them to thoroughly investigate past political upheavals and recommend pragmatic, actionable steps for the nation's future.

Highlighting the United Nations' broader support, Mr Hunecke affirmed his belief that the Commission's mission closely aligns with the human rights work undertaken by his agency, which aims to create meaningful changes in people's lives across the Pacific.

Commissioner Laqeretabua said: "We've been very fortunate to have Thomas join us in the office today to share his insights on effective interview and debrief techniques.

"He also offered valuable perspectives on inclusive practice, encouraging us to be mindful of gender, providing access to individuals living with disabilities, and prioritising mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, both within our team and for those who seek support from the Commission.

"His contribution helps ensure we're providing the right kind of support in a thoughtful, respectful, and informed way," she said.

Before departing, Mr Hunecke wished the team well as they embarked on this significant journey of truth telling, healing and reconciliation.

About FTRC:

The FTRC is an independent entity set up for truth-telling, reconciliation, and national healing. The mandate of the FTRC is to examine past political upheavals and their impact on people's lives. The Commission is looking at the physical and emotional harm, loss of life and property, and systemic injustices on people.

The purpose of this work is to foster unity and social cohesion in a society where everyone feels safe, equal, included and able to thrive. The Commission seeks to honour the lived experiences of survivors by providing a platform for voices to be heard, validated, and acknowledged.

The Commission emphasises that truth-telling is not about retribution. It is about recognition, healing, to ensure that history is not repeated. Through reconciliation, the Commission aims to build a stronger, more just, and peaceful Fiji for future generations.

Note: The Commission welcomes engagement from members of the public on any of the matters outlined above.

We invite you to connect with us via phone, email, our official website or Facebook page:

Phone: 9909003

Email: info@fijitrc.org or comms@fijitrc.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FijiTRC>

Website: <https://fijitrc.org>

Source: Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Media Queries Contact:

Maria Vula

Communications Specialist

Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission

M: +679 9909003