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Media Release

We support the Chief Justice's call in asking that all Travel Bans – pertaining to members of Fiji's Judiciary and their families – should end.

For the sake of every citizen and commercial enterprise living and/or trying to do business in Fiji – we support any initiatives which will strengthen our Judiciary and the rule of law. Fiji must have an effective judiciary, which is allowed to operate independently and free of outside interference.

These Travel bans are affecting the caliber of judges Fiji is able to attract which at the end of the day will affect the level of professional service our judiciary is able to deliver

Since the abrogation of our constitution and the resignation of many of our judges – our Courts have been struggling to manage the overwhelming number of outstanding and new cases. This is affecting everyone in Fiji – the average citizen, the businessman and the investor, who all demand and expect an efficient and effective legal framework.

The situation in our Court system has started to improve and will improve even more once the newly appointed judges arrive and take up their respective positions.

We question the motive of overseas Governments for placing members of our judiciary and their families on their "Travel Ban" list. We have been told in the past these Travel Bans were in place only for senior ranking military officers – who were involved with the events of December 2006.

Fiji has enough challenges to handle, in our endeavours to get our economy back on its feet and we must do everything we can to help raise the level of confidence in society and our business community.

An effective, independent judiciary would go a long way to helping with this cause, so we ask the Governments of New Zealand and Australia to re-consider their stand on Travel Bans to whom these should, might be, and are to be applied.

D.Aidney

Dave Aidney
Chairperson
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Transparency International is a not for profit, non-government organization, which aims to counter corruption in international and national business transactions and government decision-making.

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