

**Consolidated
Review Report of
the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs
Annual Reports
2017-2018 and
2018-2019
APPENDICES**

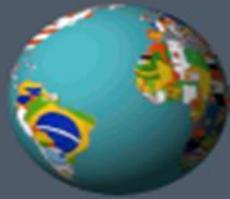
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Schedule of Submissions

Date	Time	Name of Stakeholders	Oral Submission	Written Submission
Monday 5th July,2021	9.30am	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	✓	✓

Submission by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Presentation to the Parliament Standing Committee Foreign Affairs and Defence

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
5 July 2021

CONTENT

The Presentation will focus on the following key areas:



OVERVIEW

MOFA role and establishments.



HIGHLIGHTS

Key achievements for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019



CHALLENGES

Key challenges for 2017/2028 and 2018/2019



2019 - PRESENT

Strategies and Plans since 2019 till today

MOFA AT A GLANCE



ROLE

1. Conduct Diplomacy
2. Manage Relations

Responsibilities

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for:

1. implementing Fiji's foreign policy
2. maintaining and strengthening Fiji's diplomatic relations
3. building bridges of cooperation with development partners
4. growing trade with other nations.

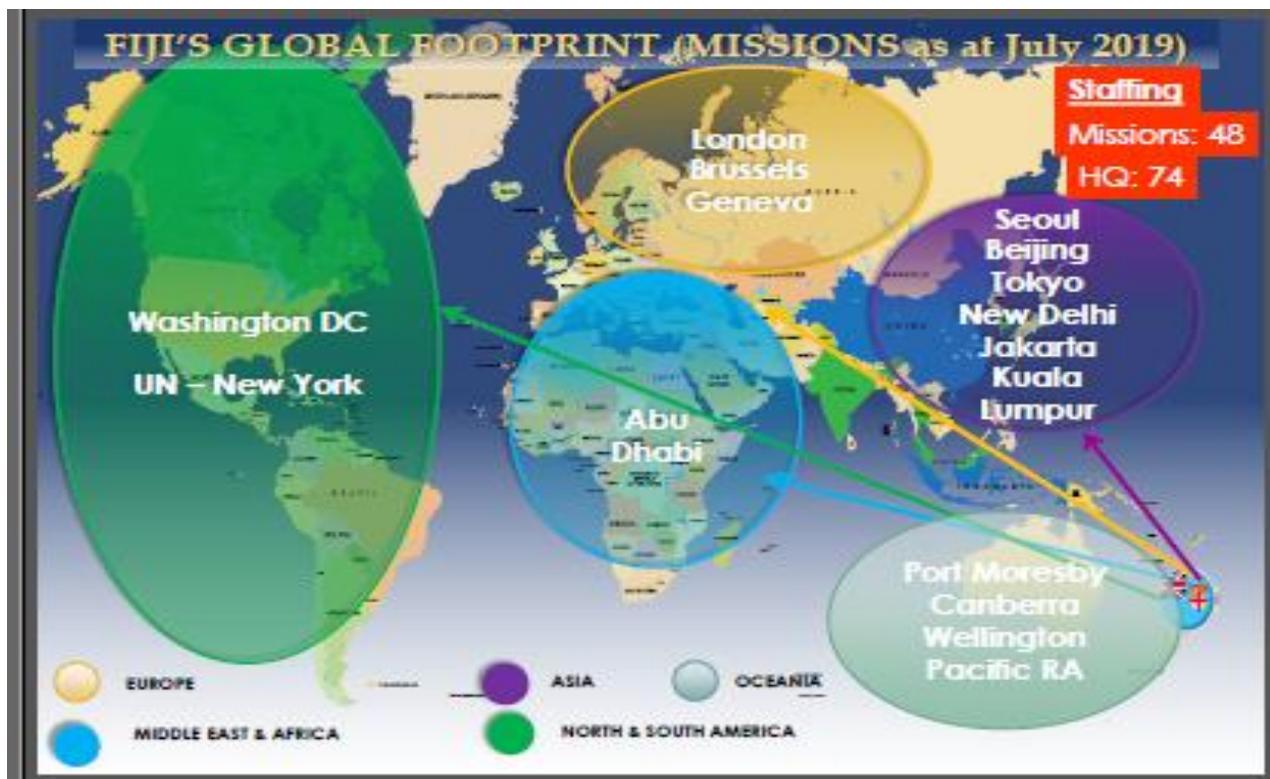
Diplomatic Relations

Fiji has established formal diplomatic relations with 182 countries and maintains 10 overseas missions (and one Roaming Ambassador Division in Fiji).



UNIQUENESS OF MOFA

1. Onshore and offshore component (Representation)
2. Workforce (Young, Vibrant, Competent and Experienced);
3. Largest Ministry (22 Divisions and 16 Cost Centres);
4. Window to the World;
5. Consular Services
6. Logistical & Protocol Support for visits, conferences, etc.



2017/2018 OVERVIEW

1. DISEMIT
2. USA's foreign policy shifts 'America first' - withdrawal from Paris Agreement
3. North & South Korea dispute / India / China dispute on Himalayas
4. China's Belt and Road Initiative
5. Regional solidarity required for voicing PSDS on global stage

MULTILATERAL

1. UNFOOC COP 23 Presidency
2. Co-chairing of the first UN Oceans Conference with Sweden

POLITICAL

1. Fiji and Argentina sign Diplomatic Visa Waiver Agreement
2. Bilateral with His Royal Highness, Prince Henry; Her Royal Highness, Princess Anna of Edinburgh; and HPM with Canadian PM and Min for Climate Change
3. POC to African Union
4. High level visit by HPM to China, Japan and Kazakhstan
5. HEP visited to Australia to attend the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games
6. Official Visit by HPM of PNG

SOCIO-ECONOMIC

1. Resumption of direct flights to Japan
2. MOUs established on Sports (China & Japan); Cancer, Renewable energy & Hydrography (S/Korea); Policing (PNG) ; and PVS (Hawaii)
3. Launch of Fijian Made products in Shanghai, Dalian and Guangzhou
4. ODA – \$204.1m

MINISTRY RESTRUCTURE

1. Implementation of Government Reforms – JER, OMRG, PMF
2. Establishment of Oceania Bureau to oversee regional relations

BUDGET: - F\$43.8m

2018/2019 OVERVIEW

1. USA withdrawal from the UNHRC and UNHRCO
2. Developments in USA and North Korea relations
3. China / USA trade war
4. NZ 'Pacific Reset' and Australia's 'Pacific Step-Up' policies

MULTILATERAL

1. First PSDS to become a member and vice-president of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)
2. Co-chaired with UK, the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States (CMMSS) at the 2018 CHOGM in London
3. 3rd Fiji-European Union Enhanced Political Dialogue in Suva
4. Biodiversity beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) negotiations
5. ROK – POCs SOM and ISA Assembly

POLITICAL

1. Special by the UNSG and visit by SG of the IMO
2. Royal Visits by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and the Crown Prince of Norway
3. Official visits by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of New Zealand, the Prime Minister of Samoa, and the Prime Minister of PNG and the Estonian President
4. Signing of HCA between Fiji and SPC

SOCIO-ECONOMIC

1. Chairmanship of the World Bank Small States Forum
2. Establishment of World Bank Group Pacific Office – Suva
3. MOUs established on Defense (UK & USA); Ship-riser agreement (USA); and Pacific Labour Scheme (Australia)
4. ODA – \$123.1m

MINISTRY RESTRUCTURE

1. Implementation of Government Reforms – transition period

BUDGET: - F\$46.8m

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES – 2017 to 2019

OPERATIONAL

Shifting priorities

Managing change – on going reforms

Resourcing & staff turnover

FOREIGN POLICY

Geopolitical Shifts

Developments in Regional and International Relations

Managing Country To Country Relations

2019 to Present

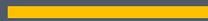
Strategic Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Alignment of Corporate Plans to NDP▪ Leadership – Global & Regional▪ HUB Status▪ Return on Investment & Tangible Outputs Focus▪ Review of foreign policy priorities
Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Core - Regional Strategies▪ Operations - Civil Service Reforms, Review of Civil Service (Diplomatic and Consular Services) Regulation 2006 (FOSR), Policies on Operational and Financial guidelines – internal
Systems & processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Quest For Excellence▪ Re-engineering of processes and systems▪ Better engagement with stakeholders

“Fiji citizens are citizens of the world and Fiji is today an influential country in world affairs which I would say an impact that is out of proportion with the dimension of the country or the number of citizens of its population.”



[Excerpt from the UNSG remarks at the Official Dinner Reception, Fiji – May 2019]

VINAKA VAKALEVU



[VERBATIM REPORT]

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE**

ANNUAL REPORTS

- 1. 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT**
- 2. 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

INSTITUTION: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
VENUE: Big Committee Room (East Wing)
[Virtual Meeting]
DATE: Monday, 5th July, 2021

**VERBATIM NOTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE HELD AT BIG COMMITTEE ROOM,
PARLIAMENT PRECINCTS, GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, SUVA, ON MONDAY , 5TH
JULY, 2021, AT 9.00 A.M.**

Submittee:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

In Attendance:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| (1) Mr. Esala Nayasi - | Deputy Secretary |
| (2) Mr. Jiko Rasoqosoqo - | Chief of Protocol |
| (3) Mr. Apolosi Lewaqai - | Director Asia |
| (4) Mr. Jonetani Tagivetaua - | Director Oceania |
| (5) Mr. Antonio Ravai - | Counsellor - Roving Ambassador's Division |
| (6) Mr. Josefa Tuima - | Director Finance |
| (7) Ms. Manjula Shah - | Director Human Resources |
| (8) Ms. Keleni Seruvatu - | Principal Foreign Service Officer - Multilateral Bureau |
| (9) Mr. Gene Bai - | Principal Foreign Service Officer - Multilateral Bureau |
| (10) Ms. Karyn Gibson - | Principal Foreign Service Officer - Multilateral Bureau |
| (11) Ms. Melania Baba - | Principal Foreign Service Officer - Oceania Bureau |
| (12) Ms Anshoo Mala Chandra - | Manager Media, Communications and IT |
| (13) Mr. Joreti Dakuwaqa - | Principal Foreign Service Officer - Asia Bureau |
| (14) Ms. Ashwini Singh - | Principal Foreign Service Officer - Asia Bureau |
| (15) Ms Alanieta Blakelock - | Principal Foreign Officer - Policy Research Division |
| (16) Mr. Paulo Daurewa - | Principal Protocol Officer |
| (17) Ms. Nikita Bali - | Manager Human Resources |
| (18) Ms. Merini Cama - | Manager Finance |
| (19) Ms. Rosa Dalituicama - | Manager Executive Support |
| (20) Ms. Sherleen Lal - | Manager Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation |

(Welcome – Mr. Chairman)

MR. E. NAYASI.- ...We are most appreciative too of the opportunity to attend, so with your indulgence, Mr. Chairman and the Honourable Members of the Committee, I would now invite Sherleen to take us through the few slides that we have prepared for you this morning.

MS. S. LAL.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members. My presentation today is that, I will give an overview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 Annual Reports, key challenges that we have faced and our plans and strategies.

On the outset, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducts diplomacy and manages relations through the implementation of Fiji's Foreign Policy, maintaining and strengthening Fiji's diplomatic relationship and building co-operation with development partners and growing trade with other nations.

In terms of the uniqueness of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other than the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Tourism, which has the smaller part, which is(technical glitch with virtual connection). We have ...as well....in Suva...the various Ministries that we work with, but also the various Missions abroad.

For the reporting period, we have 15 Missions across the Pacific and in the different regions, with the Roving Ambassador based at Suva Headquarters that looks after Polynesia and Micronesia. There are also various Divisions within the Headquarters that were responsible for the different Missions and provide support and guidance to our Missions out there in terms of implementing Fiji's Foreign Policy.

We also are the largest Ministry in the context of the different

(Technical glitch experienced through virtual connection)

MR. E. NAYASI.- Sorry, Ms. Sherleen, I can see Mr. Chairman raising his hand, so if you could just await the guidance from the secretariat.

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Your microphone, Mr. Chairman is muted. It is a really bad reception.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Lean your laptop cover closer to your microphone. You can carry on, Sherleen. Thank you.

MS. S. LAL.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members, my apologies. I was saying that we have the largest Ministry in the context of the different Divisions and the Missions that we work in. We are regarded as the window to the world.

One of the major activities that we do with the Ministry that no other ministry does, is in regards to the consular services and protocol facilitation which takes a big chunk or a big part of our day to day operations, in terms of our reports on an annual basis given the high turnover of engagements we have in terms of the community at large.

Moving on to our Missions, this slide show the global footprints that we had during the reporting period. Note that we had the American Region based in Washington DC that has served the UN. In the Europe, we have London, Brussels and Geneva. Looking after the Middle East and Africa, we have the Mission in Abu Dhabi, a bulk of the Missions are concentrated in Asia, given the potential and opportunities that we have from the region. We have Seoul, Beijing, Tokyo, New Delhi, Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur. Coming down to Oceania, we have Missions in Port Moresby, Canberra, Wellington, and the Pacific Roving Ambassador that serves Polynesia and Micronesia. Please also note, as part of Fiji's decision in the 2020-2021 financial year, it was ...

(Technical glitch experienced through virtual connection)

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Mr. Chairman, my apology, Madam. I can barely hear anything. It is just waves of distortions. I do not know if the others are hearing the same though. Perhaps, if we could all turn our microphones off, if some of us having our microphones on, it could help, but the voice is deteriorating at this stage.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- All microphones are off, it is controlled and when you want to speak, then you would be able to put it on. I am not too sure about the officers who are waiting at the wing, I hope their microphones are off as well.

Just a question, Sherleen, you are making references, but we are still on your first slide. Are you flicking through your slides, because we are still on the front page on the screen?

MS. S. LAL.- Yes, Mr. Chairman. I am flicking through my slides. I am actually on the slide on 'Fiji's Global Footprint'.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Unfortunately, the front page of your slide is still on that screen. That is better now. You have jumped to Fiji's global footprint. Perhaps, you can take us back to your second slide.

MS. S. LAL.- Sure, Mr. Chairman. My apologies for that. My second slide was basically detailing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in terms of conducting policy and managing relations internationally, talking about the responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in terms of..... Missions and the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Tourism worklocally as well.

Being the largest Ministry in terms of the work we do, given the Diplomatic Missions that we work with, we are considering, and one of the major activities you would note that the Ministry does is in terms of Consular Services, Protocols Support for visitations, which takes up a big part of our work on a daily basis, given the high turnover of engagements we have with the community at large. That, Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members, was basically the summary of the second slide.

Going onto the next slide, it actually calls Fiji's global footprint as at the end of the two reporting periods. So at that time, we had 15 Missions and they were located in all different regions. You will note that we had Missions in Washington DC and New York; in Europe, we had London, Brussels and Geneva; for Missions in the Middle East and Africa, we had Abu Dhabi; but we had more Missions in the Asia region, given the potential and opportunity that we had. Coming to Oceania region, we had Missions in Port Moresby, Canberra and Wellington, and also the Roving Ambassador based at Headquarters, looking after Polynesia and Micronesia.

In terms of the staff in the Ministry, we had 48 Mission staff and 74 officers in Headquarters to provide support and guidance to the Diplomats who are posted abroad. This statistics is as at the end of July 2019.

The first thing on the statistics is that, due to the potential and opportunity, it led to the closure of five Missions, namely, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Port Moresby and Washington. However, closures do not affect Fiji's relations with those countries as existing Fiji Missions, have taken upon responsibility for managing its relations through their entry to accreditation. And additional support is also provided by the Headquarters through the engagement of Resident Missions based in Suva.

Mr. Chairman, in terms of the highlights or overview for the reporting period 2017/2018, we were working BREXIT, the USA's foreign policy shift which is the critical decision made by USA to withdraw from the Paris Agreement; the ongoing dispute that is going on between India and North and South Korea, the dispute on the Himalayas; also the dispute in terms of China's Belt and Road Initiative and it wasregional solidarity required for voicing the Pacific's Small Islands Development States (PSIDS) on global stage now more than ever, even with this policy decision we are taking.

So, in terms of the things highlighted by the Ministry, at multilateral level, Fiji's Presidency of COP 23, it was the that have taken the initiative. It was an opportunity for us to raise the issues we are facing as the Pacific Island Country of climate change.

As COP 23 Presidency, Fiji hosted this Talanoa Dialogue to allow for dialogue and creating a safe space rather than round the table discussions. The Dialogue allowed everyone to come together in a common space and urge the formation of a grand coalition of nations, religion cities and towns, civil society groups, labour, the private sector, women, youth and communities of all kinds, State parties to work together in combatting climate change.

Also coming out from this Presidency is the co-chairing of the UN Oceans Conference that Fiji collaborates with Sweden. At the critical level in identifying diplomacy

There was bilateral agreement between the Honourable Prime Minister and His Royal Highness, Prince Henry, and also Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne of Edinburgh. Fiji also presented its credentials to the European Union.

There was a high level visit by the Honourable Prime Minister to China for ...Forum, Japan to assisting the farms in Fiji, and also to Kazakhstan to take part in the Kazakhstan Expo.

His Excellency the President also visited Australia in terms of attending the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games. There was also an official visit by the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

On the socio-economic front, there were discussions for the resumption of direct flights to Japan. Mr. Chairman, MOUs were established on sports with China and Japan and also in terms of renewable energy and hydrography with South Korea and volunteer services with Nauru.

The launch of Fijian Made products were also done in the three provinces of China, being Shanghai, Dalian and Guangzhou, and Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) at \$204.1 million with the Ministry of Economy

In terms of the Ministry's restructure, it was the implementation of government reforms which was going on in terms of the implementation of the Job Evaluation Reforms Guideline, the Open Merit Recruitment and Selection Guideline and Performance Management Guideline. So, it was getting our staff to be able to refer to these Guidelines effectively.

Another development was the establishment of the Oceania Bureau to oversee the regional relation as mentioned, which now ...in terms of regional relation

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Moving on to the 2018/2019 overview, the USA's Foreign Policy changes was also affecting us. It led to withdrawal from the United Nations Human Rights Council and UNESCO. There were developments in relation to USA and North Korea in terms of the de-nuclearisation programme on North Korea. The China and USA trade war has started and in the Pacific, New Zealand was talking about Pacific Reset and Australia's Pacific Step Up policies in terms of ...to the Pacific.

Moving on to the achievements of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs, Fiji became the first Pacific Island Development State to be a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council and also became the Vice-President of the Council.

Fiji co-chaired the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States (CMMSS) at the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London.

We had the 3rd Fiji-European Union Enhanced Political Dialogue in Suva, the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) negotiations in New York and all other meetings took place, while the Republic of Korea and Pacific Island Countries and the International Solar Alliance Assembly (ISA).

On the political front, we had the visit by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary for the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) also paid a visit to Fiji. We had two royal visits, by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and the Crown Prince of Norway.

There were a number of official visits as well by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of New Zealand, the Prime Minister of Samoa and the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, and the Estonian President. And there was the signing of the Host Country Agreement (HCA) between Fiji and SPC.

On the socio-economic front, Fiji took the chairmanship of the World Bank Small States Forum and there was the establishment of the World Bank Group Pacific Office in Suva. Some MOUs were established on Defence Ship-rider Agreement and the Pacific Labour Scheme with Australia, and the ODA at \$122.1 million. The Ministry restructure internally was taking place and referred to as transition period. To continue the implementation of the restructure reform, our budget was \$46.5 million in this financial year.

Moving on, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the challenges during those years, on the operational side, we are looking at the Ministry operationally and the Foreign Policy. So operationally, it was in terms of shifting priorities, managing change on ongoing reforms and resourcing and staff turnover. Shifting priorities in terms of for a number of activities that ..., and there were visits that we hosted with the Honourable Prime Minister.....to... as well, managing the ...in terms of that. It was the shifting priorities in managingensuring that staffs who werein order to ...government structure and resourcing ... At times theand which we have the structure in terms of the

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On Foreign Policy, in terms of the challenges, there was geopolitical shifts that have been taking place with the various policy changes. Developments in regional and international relations and managing country to country relations and the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In terms of plans from the last reporting period to now, as per strategic direction, we continue to improve our alignment of the corporate plans to the National Development Plan, we continue to build the momentum of Fiji's leadership at the global and regional level and we are working to reaffirm our HUB status. It is now more on ...and return on investment and we are working towards the review our

foreign policy priorities to align with our more current challenge, that is COVID-19, and the proposed

On the policies front, the criticalwe work on regional strategies on how we engage with the countries and development partners Taking the collaborative advantage that

On the operational front, the civil service reform implementation continues. The review of Foreign Service Regulation continues internally to ensure operational and financial guidelines are relevant and be in compliant with our frameworks.

Coming to the systems and processes, we continue toin our questto deliver best services to our stakeholders; working on re-engineering our systems and processes to ensure development and effectiveness in the work we do; and better engagement with stakeholders on both in terms of our engagements with the line Ministries and agencies and departments locally in Fiji and our development partners. So we are takingwith other Ministries and Departments to have a better understanding of their needs and priorities in how they would like to bein the country. Also, engaging development partners actively to understand their approach in Fiji Thisenhancement is to engage in a more smarter way and strategic with our development partners aligning to the development and what the development partners have to offer so that we can decide strategically and engage.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members, I would like to quote what the UN Secretary-General made, I quote:

“Fiji citizens are citizens of the world and Fiji is today an influential country in world affairs which I would say an impact that is out of proportion with the dimension of the country or the number of citizens of its population.”

This is to show that Fiji continues to punch above its weight, and work towards getting into more horizons, placesfor our foreign policy work, and your Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to work towards the dream of getting Thank you very much and vinaka vakalevu.

MR. E. NAYASI.- Mr. Chairman and the Honourable Members, let me just conclude by saying that 2017 was an interesting year for us and I believe within the reporting period that we had presented, it has been the most challenging time in multilateralism, given the withdrawal of the US in relation to some of the key multilateral fora that they have been part of and this has meant for us that we needed to re-strategise. But it has impacted our role in a lot of these multilateral work that we do, for which Fiji has been playing a leading role, as we have heard from Sherleen today. It had also impacted our bilateral relations, not only with the US, but the relation to the geopolitics in the region. You would note, during this year, from 2017 to 2019, there was a great influence of China in the region, given the strategy by the US for it to look at its own national interest first. This also meant the need for US’s allies in the region, including Australia and New Zealand, to relook at their strategy and revamp in the way they engage within the region.

From 2017 to 2019, was an interesting year for us, particularly in our work, as we try and continue our leadership programme globally, even though the USA’s withdrawal in Geneva. There were a number

of UN Agencies and Treaties that they have signed, including the Paris Agreement, which also meant that we had to relook at the way we engage with them with the work in the region, given the great influence of China and the need for us to understand to mitigate the geopolitics and the external forces within the work that we do here, given our leadership role in the region.

Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members, that is the brief presentation from us. My apologies, if it was not clear, but we stand ready to answer any questions that you may have.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Mr. Nayasi. Yes, we pretty much heard what you were saying but the audio was distorted. I guess it was just a walk through and if we could possibly arrange to have the copy of your PowerPoint forwarded to the secretariat, it will give us a better view. We thank Sherleen, again, for her presentation this morning.

Honourable Members, do you have any questions with regards to the PowerPoint presentation, before we move onto the questions proper or answering that we had furnished the Ministry with? Honourable Dr. Govind?

HON. DR. S.R. GOVIND.- I think the question we wanted to ask is very well answered in the written submission. I had one question about the Talanoa Sessions at COP 23 and that was very well answered. So, I have no questions to ask now. I would like to thank the team for giving very systematic answers to our questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you. Honourable Tikoduadua, do you have any comments?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- No, Mr. Chairman. I think I got about 60 percent of what was being said by Sherleen. I have read through all the answers that the Ministry gave and I am quite satisfied with those.

At this point I am not asking for any further clarification, except that I thank Mr. Nayasi for reminding us that, that reporting period was perhaps, one of the toughest. Perhaps, may be one question, I am not sure whether that was raised in this Committee or whether that was in Parliament. Our foreign relations suffered much under Donald Trump. Biden is here and people have mixed feelings about Biden, but has the Biden Presidency actually improved anything? If it had, can you tell us if it is worth re-establishing the Mission in Washington?

If you see that at all a feasible thing to do in the immediate future, and some people might believe that, that would be building bridges and I know it is not that simple, so New York is the centre of the United Nations and it is not a very favourable place, that big tall white building in the UN next to Trump Tower is not a very popular building for the UN in Washington for many reasons. My question is just that. Yes, that period had lot of issues, what have you done, with the Biden administration now, and what are some measures you are taking, particularly now that the climate change agenda has now come fairly square centred in the Biden administration? Could Fiji take advantage of that? It is a long question, but I want to thank you for making the statement, but that is my question to you now.

MR. E. NAYASI.- Thank you, Honourable Tikoduadua, for that very good question. For us and even within the few months that Biden has come into the fore, we are able to see the shift in relation to the policies that they have put in place. The way that they are now re-engaging and they are also making a mark and making a turnaround across not only the multilateral forum, but also in relation to US's relations in the region.

We are seeing this in relation to improved engagement. For us at the moment, we are a member of the Human Rights Council and we are seeing within the last month, particularly in relation to status on human rights globally, US is now reengaging. When Trump was in power, he had withdrawn US from the Human Rights Council, but now they have re-engaged fully. Recently, there is now a great move against China on its human rights abuse and it is something that we are seeing that the US is now pushing though.

Likewise, in the climate change arena, you would note when President Biden came into power, that was one of the propositions that he made, for them to come and remove their withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. So, for us, not only are we seeing the change in the dynamics, the policies and the leadership role globally, we are also seeing the manifestation of that in the region through that engagement. In the last few months alone, we have seen the US engaging with the region, at least, three times and this was at the Leaders' level and the Minister for Foreign Affairs' level.

During the Trump Administration, there was no engagement at all with the region, and we also saw this with the reduced assistance that the US had for the region. In fact, during the Trump Administration, they did not even allow any programmes on climate change in the region whether at regional level or at bilateral level, given their position. But we have seen now the shift in relation to the US's assistance, especially with programme problematic areas within regional organisations and also at the bilateral level, the opening up with that area of assistance which had not been approved by the Trump Administration.

Another good example, Mr. Chairman, is the issue of COVID-19. It is quite a change that we are seeing now with the shift in the US's approach globally and also in the region. One thing they would not have expected from the Trump Administration is the assistance to countries on this part of the globe. We are seeing that change, even as recently as Friday, the US is now committing 250,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to us in the region. So, we are beginning to see the shift.

Of course, it is also influenced by the anti-China influence at regional level but if we are talking about US's relation and US's engagement and co-operation with us, there is a huge change, which leads me to the second part of Honourable Tikoduadua's question in relation to our Embassy in the US.

Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members, for us, as your Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we are also looking forward to the Budget announcement this year, hoping that we could also see the policy that we will adopt going into the next financial year as it concerns our relations with the US. But I can say for sure that there are ongoing discussions on this issue, as raised by Honourable Tikoduadua. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Mr. Nayasi. I think that was well explained and we thank you for that.

Honourable Members, do you have any other questions. I guess the questions have been answered. However, we as a Committee, will go through that and should we have any other pressing questions, Mr. Nayasi, we will certainly get through to you via email. Honourable Adi Litia, do you have something?

HON. ADI L. QIONIBARAVI.- I wish to echo my appreciation for the response by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, even though I was not able to really get anything after the presentation this morning from your senior official, Sherleen's presentation, but I could hear Mr. Nayasi's presentation clearly.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Secretary, for the change in the format of the operational plan from 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019. There are good changes there and it provides more information, in particular the inclusion of budgetary provisions for each of the strategies that is set out in the Operational Plan, working on the 5-year Strategic Plan for the Ministry. So, I would like to thank them for that change and look forward to receiving the target of achievements in some format in the next annual report, Mr. Chairman.

I could not hear any of the responses, I hope that our question on the error on the printing of Prince Harry's name, on page 14, his name is mentioned there as Prince Henry whereas he is Prince Harry, and the reference to the Duke of Sussex. You would note that reference to the Duke of Sussex is correctly stated in the bottom right picture of this particular page in the report. I am of the view –that since the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is one of the senior Ministries in Fiji, you cannot afford to have these kind of mistakes in your annual report and for that matter, I hope that the annual report has not been sent to the various Diplomatic Missions in Fiji or abroad, and that this mistake has been corrected before it was sent. This mistake should never have happened, given as I said earlier in our meeting, the special relationship between the House of Windsor and the Bose Levu Vakaturaga (BLV). The BLV is not here but it remains an important forum in this country.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Madam. Mr. Nayasi, do you have any comments?

MR. E. NAYASI.- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like to take this time to thank Honourable Qionibaravi for the comment that she has made. We apologise for the inconsistencies in the use of title in our report that she had mentioned. But, if I could just also point out that Prince Harry of Wales, is his official title, whilst the Duke of Sussex is a substantive title that is bestowed by the Queen. So, both titles are used interchangeably, but we note the comment and we acknowledge that it is a point of inconsistency which we will rectify.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Mr. Nayasi. Honourable Members, do you any further comments or questions?

HON. ADI L. QIONIBARAVI.- Mr. Chairman, I just would like to know, using the word 'interchangeably', why is that so? Why was not the Prince of Wales included in that photograph? Is the Prince of Wales reference to the two Princes only for a particular audience? Is it interchangeably at any occasion? Vinaka.

MR. E. NAYASI.- Thank you, Honourable Qionibaravi. My apologies, it is Prince Henry of Wales.

HON. ADI L. QIONIBARAVI.- Yes, that is my question. You said that it is used interchangeably, is it only for a certain audience, the use of Prince of Wales title is used, or anyone can change the titles as anyone pleases?

MR. E. NAYASI.- Mr. Chairman, if I may, I believe for the title that we used for his visit to Fiji was the Duke of Sussex, and you are correct, when you pointed that out. I believe the Prince Henry of Wales is something that we have also accorded in terms of the title.

In terms of the protocol of the use of names, I can come back to the Committee to correct and address the specific point that Honourable Qionibaravi had pointed out. But for us, at this stage, we could just say that both these titles – one is bestowed by the by the Queen, and it is also the name and the title that we use during his visit here in Fiji. I can come back and clarify that point specifically on the question that was raised by Honourable Qionibaravi, and I thank you for pointing that out.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Mr. Nayasi. I think you have spelt it out properly in your answers to the questions on page 6 of your reply. Nonetheless, there is benefit of the doubt there, so if there is any, then we will have your correction forthcoming. Honourable Tikoduadua?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- Mr, Chairman, I am just going through the report, I am trying to find that question, perhaps you could point that out to me. This is the question relating to the different departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs...

MR. CHAIRMAN.- The Bureaus?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA - ...and how they have noted all the meetings how they have noted in the reports over the three years? In which part of the report is that mentioned where we have asked and we wanted some further clarifications on the outcomes. I think Honourable Dr. Govind had raised that issue specifically, something that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could factor into their reports in the future. I am not sure which question is that, I cannot read properly on the screen.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Honourable Tikoduadua, are you making reference to the various Bureaus, we have got the Asia Bureau, we have AAMEER which is Africa, Americas, Middle East, Europe and Russia Bureau and the new Bureau that had just been added is the Oceania Bureau. Is that what you are referring to, similar to what Honourable Dr. Govind raised on the Talanoa Session? I think what you are driving at is that. In those reports, we have a brief, is that what you are driving at?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA.- I am just look for it in the answers that they returned to us, maybe I will just raise this with Mr. Nayasi. We discussed and this was an issue. I see Honourable Dr. Govind is raising his hand, are you going to raise the same issue because if you are, then I will give it to you because this was an issue you raised. But can I just ask that first, Mr. Chairman, to Honourable Dr. Govind?

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Yes, Honourable Dr. Govind?

HON. DR. S.R. GOVIND.- Yes, Mr. Chairman. If you would remember, in the highlight section under each Bureau, the highlights were on that particular Bureau but the outcomes of the highlights were not

very clearly written. So, what we were thinking was that if the outcome should be emphasised for each highlight, then it will be more meaningful. It was highlighted that someone attended a meeting or international convention but we were looking at what were the outcomes of those. That is what we were referring to.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- If I may add to that, Mr. Nayasi, I guess what the Committee is looking at is, through the different bureaus within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the highlights that are being explained, perhaps I think it is some other meetings we go to, et cetera, you have like communiqué, it is sort of the outcome. The outcome is, sort of, addressed in the communiqué, or something along those lines, if that could be included in the actual annual report. Is that where we are going gentlemen?

HON. LT. COL. P. TIKODUADUA - Yes, that is right, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, through you, Mr. Nayasi, something just to tell the Committee about the different Bureaus, for example, if so and so went to Sydney for something. I am just using that as an example. But the report only tells us the event, it did not say in the report what the outcome from the Sydney trip was, the effects on Fiji and what are some of the things the Ministry is doing about it for the purpose of what they went to Sydney for. So, may be a little bit, just one or two lines, to say, 'we got this from there and this is what we are following through.' It just gives some credibility to the different meetings.

Mr. Chairman, I gave an example about International Renewable Energy Agency (IREA) in Abu Dhabi. The Committee recommended to Parliament to accede to this Convention or something about solar energy. I know that would have been part of that trip, but there was no correlation whatsoever. We, the Committee, would just like to ask and also it would benefit Parliament that we know there has been some outcome of all those trips that everyone is taking. Otherwise, you will tell us that 10 trips by one Division, but we all are wondering if Fiji ever got anything out of that or it is just per diem and duty free in Nadi when you return. That is an extreme example. I think that was the point we were trying to make.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Mr. Nayasi?

MR. E. NAYASI.- Mr. Chairman, that is noted and is something that we can also endeavour to do. The only issue that we have in relation to such information is just the confidentiality in our part. So whether it is something that we can include in the annual report which will be made public, or if we can present to you as an annex to the report.

I believe what Honourable Tikoduadua is referring to is basically the return on investment. That is also an issue that we have been discussing comprehensively as a Ministry and also in our response to the budget process. It is also an issue that has been brought up in light of the closure of some of our Missions that you have seen in the last year. We can begin to note that in the report, but if I could just also ask that you also understand the confidentiality of some of the information, given that it now can also point to our foreign policy direction and strategic interest for us and, therefore, it is one that may need to be managed. But of course, to the Committee and in Parliament, it is something that we should be accountable for and it is one that we can present to you as well.

The second part to that discussion relates to sectoral agencies. There really has to be an alignment from us. There are lot of issues that we represent or issues that our foreign policy represent that concerns sectoral agencies. It might also be in the reports or it is the one that we will need to work with them to be able to report to you as well. But I take note of Honourable Tikoduadua's point, it is something that we can look into as we move forward.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, Mr. Nayasi. I think that is very, very important. We all understand the confidentiality phrase that must be observed at all times.

With those few words, Mr. Nayasi, if you have any departing comments. I thank you and the team again for your presence.

MR. E. NAYASI.- Mr. Chairman, I would just like to say 'thank you so much' for the learnings that we have learnt in the last reports. We thank you for your representation in Parliament. We are improving and we see ourselves as a learning organisation too, so your comments and all the issues that you have raised continue to help and assist us in improving our work and also doing things better as your Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Vinaka vakalevu.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much again, Mr. Nayasi and the team. You all have a blessed day, vinaka vakalevu, from the Committee.

The Committee Meeting adjourned at 10.24 a.m.