



Hon. Laisenia Qarase
Prime Minister of the Republic of the Fiji Islands

**Address to the 59th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly**

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Mr President, I extend to this august assembly the warm greetings and well wishes of the Government and people of the Republic of the Fiji Islands.

I warmly congratulate you, Mr President, on your election to the presidency of the 59th Session. I pledge to you our support and co-operation. This reflects our respect for your country with which we have enjoyed close relations through our common membership of the African, Caribbean and Pacific partnership with the European Union.

I also express Fiji's warm thanks to His Excellency Mr Julian Hunte of Saint Lucia for his very able leadership of the 58th Session.

Fiji and other small Island nations of the Pacific region applaud the fine example set by the CARICOM countries in their shared approach to managing the responsibilities of this high office.

Mr President, today we are confronted by events which cast a shadow over humankind and the United Nation's vision of peace. The humanitarian crisis in Sudan continues. As relief efforts proceed, our thoughts are with the refugees of Dafur. We urge the Government of Sudan to do everything in its power to bring this tragedy to an end.

We think of those whose lives have been devastated by the destructive fury of hurricanes in the Caribbean and on the US Atlantic coast. We extend to them our deepest sympathies for the loss of lives, property and possessions. The perpetrators of the slaughter of the innocents in Russia gave a new dimension to wickedness.

They defeated their own cause through the ruthless and indiscriminate

Peacekeeping personnel from Fiji are working in Liberia, Sinai, Kosovo, Timor Leste, Solomon Islands, and Bougainville in Papua New Guinea. NOW, my Government is giving careful consideration to requests from the United Nations to assist it with security personnel in Iraq.

I take this opportunity to express to the United Nations, and to those countries Which have assisted Fiji on a bilateral basis, our gratitude for their help in making it p

will lead on to more substantive progress in the re-unification of the Korean people.

We are glad to see the People's Republic of China growing in stature and developing so quickly. Fiji enjoys steadily strengthening relations with China and wants to see these expanded further. It is committed to its diplomatic recognition and official relations with the People's Republic Of China. At the same time, Fiji values its trade and economic ties with Taiwan. It is our fervent hope that their people will resolve their future peacefully through dialogue and consensus.

Mr President, for the past twenty-nine years, close to eighty countries of the African, the Caribbean and the Pacific Group have been the beneficiaries of a historic development partnership with the European Union. I pay tribute to the leaders of Europe and the ACP, who pioneered that unique international North-South arrangement. Generous assistance in trade, aid, and investment has contributed in very significant ways to the

My Government commends the initiative taken by the international Labour Organization in its World Commission Report on the Social Dimension of Globalization. It is the international community's responsibility to ensure

candidates from other communities. It is just that they find security and comfort in choosing representatives from their own community.

Since my Government came to office in 2001, we have been engaged in a