



## **NADI CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT ON ATROCITY PREVENTION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT**

### **CIVIL SOCIETY OUTCOME STATEMENT FROM THE 2021 INAUGURAL FIJI WORKSHOP ON ATROCITY PREVENTION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT**

Thirty Fiji civil society organisation (CSO) representatives met for the inaugural workshop on the Responsibility to Protect, co-hosted by the Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) and the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APR2P), University of Queensland, held at the Tanoa Sky Lodge Hotel in Nadi from the 3-4 November 2021.

*CSO participants agreed to:*

- Recognise the significant role that civil society and local communities play in raising awareness of, and holding governments accountable for, the protection of human rights and the prevention of atrocity crimes including genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, as per the UN principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.
- Recognise the strong link between violations of human rights and the risk of atrocity crimes and note that the Fiji Government: supports the principle of R2P; acknowledges its responsibility to protect the population from atrocity crimes; has committed to promote and implement human rights commitments and obligations as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
- Recognise that no country is immune from atrocity crime risk; that underlying and direct risk factors exist and can be monitored and addressed through early warning strategies and analysis based on the UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes.
- Affirm the benefits to Fiji's population that would arise from greater awareness, education, advocacy, socialisation and localisation of R2P and atrocity prevention principles, and support stronger partnerships and collaboration between relevant stakeholders including CSOs, faith-based organisations, cultural organisations and traditional structures, international partners, and the Fiji Government to prevent the commission of, or incitement to commit, atrocity crimes in Fiji, including via the broader protection of human rights and other early warning and risk mitigation strategies.

- Recognise and value the lived experiences, local knowledge, and expertise of local communities in atrocity prevention in developing early warning and atrocity prevention strategies and support the crucial work of human rights defenders.
- Urge all stakeholders to support effective preventative action, including through education, awareness raising, and capacity building about human rights and atrocity prevention, risk monitoring and assessment for emerging crises and ongoing atrocity situations, cross-cultural and interfaith dialogue, preventive diplomacy, and local peacebuilding.
- Call for, and work collaboratively towards, the development of mechanisms for early warning and early response at the local, national and regional levels to consolidate stakeholder efforts in upholding human rights and preventing atrocities.
- Establish a network of civil society and community advocates for R2P to empower civil society and community members to participate in atrocity prevention. Its activities will include:
  - Strengthening social media platforms and campaigns on existing human rights and humanitarian action including R2P and enhancing these with an atrocity prevention lens;
  - Exchanging and disseminating information about atrocity prevention through training and workshops;
  - Producing appropriate, simplified, user friendly and informative knowledge products and in vernacular, on the subject of atrocity crimes and R2P;
  - Holding dialogues with key government agencies on R2P;
  - Establishing partnerships with relevant organisations and networks, including the Asia Pacific Centre for R2P, and the Asia Pacific Partnership for Atrocity Prevention;
  - Providing mutual support.

## **Recommendations**

That the Fiji Government:

1. Appoint an R2P Focal Point to integrate atrocity prevention into government priorities and policies, and to consult with civil society on issues of importance.
2. Ensure that the development of national policies, legislation and other regulatory frameworks are human rights compliant and consider the prevention of atrocity crimes or their incitement.
3. Develop comprehensive policies and programs in consultation with civil society and local communities for reducing hate speech and intercommunal tensions and ensure that government policies do not further inflame historical tensions or conflicts.

4. Acknowledge the clear correlation between gender equality and the risk of atrocities, and the importance of laws and frameworks that prevent SGBV and provide accountability and survivor-centred support, in the prevention of gender based atrocity crimes, and to this end, work closely with women's rights and LGBTIQ+ organisations.
  5. Recognise that climate change may be a threat multiplier for atrocity crimes, and that Fiji is vulnerable to short and long term effects of climate change as well as other environmental destruction; and ensure human rights and atrocity prevention are considered in the development of climate change policies and frameworks.
  6. Recognise the impact of Covid-19 on human rights in Fiji and work towards upholding human rights in the context of the challenges presented by the pandemic.
  7. Commit to youth empowerment by supporting and nurturing youth leadership, and ensuring inclusive and meaningful participation in dialogues and processes of national importance;
  8. Collaborate with regional actors on human rights and atrocity prevention.
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