

Constitution Consultation

The Non-Negotiable Issues

The Constitution must be premised on the fundamental values and principles set out in the Peoples Charter for Change Peace and Progress which Government is advocating and implementing now.

These principles and values are universally recognized and aspired to. Therefore, these principles and values are non-negotiable. They are:

- One person, one vote, one value;
- A common and equal citizenry;
- The elimination of ethnic voting;
- A secular state;
- The removal of systemic corruption;
- An independent judiciary;
- Elimination of discrimination;
- Proportional representation; and
- A voting age of 18.
- Good and transparent governance;

What is the process and how long it will take?

Overall the entire process should take 12 months. Government intends to have a new Constitution by March 2013.

- May-July 2012- Civic Education (by Government, NGOs, CSOs etc.)
- July-Sept 2012- Consultations with the Constitutional Commission
- Oct-Dec 2012- Draft Constitution from the Constitutional Commission and submitted to the Constituent Assembly

- Jan-Mar 2013- Constituent Assembly to review the draft, make amendments and approve the final copy of the constitution
- March 2013- His Excellency the President will assent the new Constitution

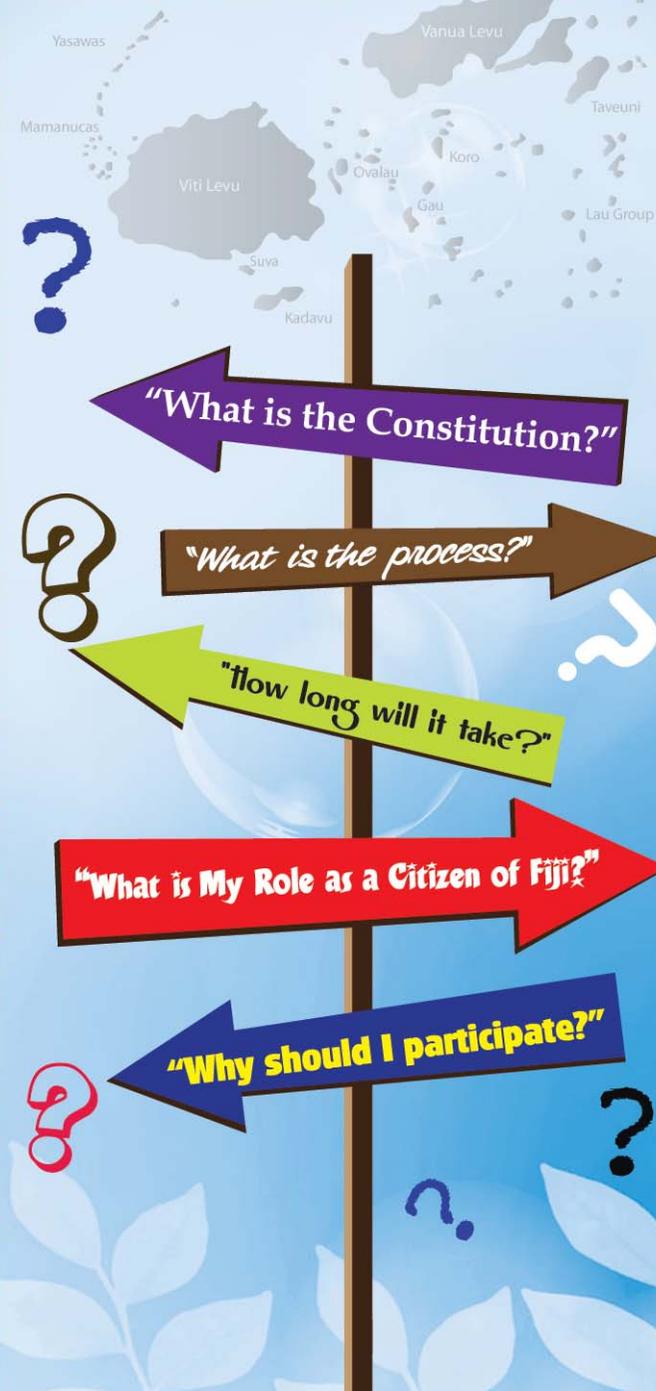
Thank you

Let's Work Together to Build a Better Fiji

For more information please get a copy of the People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress.



The Constitution Consultation Process



Constitution Consultation

The following aims to assist and ensure that all Fijians understand their role and exercise their rights by openly and freely participating in formulating a new constitution that will best serve the people of Fiji.

In any process, and more so one as important as this, we need to understand the key aspects of WHAT the constitution is, what it will INCLUDE, what is OUR ROLE and how WE can PARTICIPATE.

What is a Constitution?

- A Constitution is a legal document that is endorsed by Government that outlines the principles and policies on the way the country is to be governed.
- It is a document that considers the interests of ALL equally, identifies the roles and responsibilities of those who will lead the nation and engages the framework that guides their decisions.
- The constitution realizes the needs of the people and ensures that policies account for our shared values, vision, principles and the common good.
- The constitution is the supreme law of our country and provides a framework for the conduct of government and the people.

The constitution best represents our commitment to rebuilding a Better Fiji for ALL.

What will be INCLUDED in the Constitution?

The constitution sets a clearly defined platform of how government will operate and the processes that will need to be put in place to ensure that its functions represent the values and standards which are the basis of the common good;

- Equality and dignity of all citizens,
- Respect for the diverse cultural, religious and philosophical beliefs,
- Unity among people driven by a common purpose and citizenship,
- Good and Just governance,
- Sustainable economic growth
- Social and Economic justice
- Equitable access to benefits of development including access to basic needs and services and
- Merit-based equality of opportunities for all

How can I participate or contribute to the constitution formulation?

It is important that we all participate in the constitutional consultation so that our issues and concerns are heard and addressed. But firstly you should know the kinds of issues we can contribute to the formulation of our Constitution. We must attend the consultation and civic education forums that are being held within our communities and voice our contributions.

We can contribute in a variety of ways;

- as an individual in the forums, so that we can voice our individual issues
- collectively in a political party, that will be submitted as a mandate that will include the entire party's interests
- Through a Non-government Organization or Civil Society Organization i.e. FWRM, CCF, PCPB etc. who will in-turn submit to the Constitutional Commission
- Through the Prime Minister's Office (SFCCO) who will in-turn submit to the Constitutional Commission
- And by writing or seeking an audience with the Constitutional Commission

What is the Constitutional Commission?

The Constitutional Commission is made up of 5 members (local and international experts) who will collate all the public submissions (including yours) and based on the "guiding principles", as outlined in the People's Charter For Change, Peace and Progress", will draft the new Constitution.

What sorts of issues should I submit during the consultations?

It is your right as a citizen of Fiji to submit your issues to ensure that the constitution best represents your interest. It is important that when you read the new constitution that you will be able to relate to it.

The kinds of issues that you should consider but are not limited to, can include the following;

- Do we want economic and social rights included in the Bill of Rights or otherwise, should there be the right to basic housing, to clean drinking water, to basic health etc.?
- What should be the size of Parliament?
- How do we attract better quality candidates to Parliament?
- Should we have a Senate and if so how should we elect the members?

Why should I care? OR Why should I participate?

As a citizen of Fiji it is in YOUR BEST INTEREST and YOUR CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY to participate in the process.

This is your opportunity to constructively contribute to making a change by developing a constitution that is for you and will work for your interest ALL the time.

This Constitution will shape Fiji's future, the Government's future and most importantly You and Your family's future.