



# International Anti-Corruption Day IACD 2023



## Address by the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption, Acting Deputy Commissioner - Francis Puleiwai

*International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD), observed annually on December 9th, serves as a reminder of the global commitment to eradicating corruption in all its forms. The theme of the 2023 IACD is **UNCAC at 20: Uniting the World Against Corruption**. This theme commemorates the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and highlights the crucial role of the UNCAC in uniting the world against corruption.*

Today, we mark this significant occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, we find ourselves at a critical juncture in the history of our nation and the global community. It is an opportune moment to reflect upon the menace of corruption that undermines the very fabric of our society, impedes economic growth, and erodes the trust between citizens and the government. It is an opportune moment as well to work together to create our nation and a world free from corruption.

Corruption is a serious global problem that undermines the rule of law, erodes trusts in institutions, and hampers economic development. It is estimated that corruption costs the global economy over \$2.6 trillion each year.

The fight against corruption demands a united front. It requires the collaboration of citizens, businesses, civil society, and the government. We must recognise that corruption is not an isolated issue but a shared challenge that affects us all. It is our collective responsibility to foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity. United we stand against corruption, and united we shall prevail.

The 2023 IACD theme calls for renewed global commitment to implementing the UNCAC and achieving its goals. It also emphasises the need for cooperation and collaboration among all stakeholders, including the government, civil society, the private sector, and the media.

Anti-corruption agencies and officers play a pivotal role in this battle. They are the guardians of justice, tasked with investigating, prosecuting, and preventing corruption. Their role extends beyond enforcing the law; they are the custodians of public trust. The efforts of these dedicated individuals are instrumental in upholding the rule of law and ensuring that the corrupt face the consequences of their actions. However, the fight against corrup-

tion is not solely the responsibility of law enforcement agencies; it requires the active participation of every member of society.

As we acknowledge the significance of International Anti-Corruption Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to fostering a culture of integrity. It is incumbent upon us to promote ethical behaviour in our daily lives, to resist the allure of corruption, and to hold ourselves and others accountable. By doing so, we contribute to the creation of a society that values honesty and fairness, where opportunities are accessible to all, irrespective of their background or connections.

Moreover, we must recognize the interconnectedness of the global community in the fight against corruption. Corruption knows no borders, and its effects are felt far beyond the immediate perpetrators. It weakens institutions, undermines economic stability, and erodes the trust between nations. Therefore, as responsible global citizens, we must collaborate with the international community to share best practices, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and collectively strive for a world free from the shackles of corruption.

Let us use this International Anti-Corruption Day as a catalyst for change. It is a call to action for each one of us to contribute to the building of a nation where integrity prevails, and corruption finds no sanctuary. By standing united against corruption, we pave the way for a brighter, more just future for ourselves and generations to come.

Remember, the fight against corruption is not a choice; it is an obligation we owe to our nation, our people, and the world.

Together we can unite to build our country and a world free from corruption and where everyone can enjoy a better life.

I wish you all a happy International Anti-Corruption Day.