



PRESS RELEASE

Substantial dialogue in 2023 and wider consultation in 2025

Monday 27th October 2025

“The Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) General Secretary Mr Felix Anthony’s comments that the amendments to the Employment Relations Act were developed through 15 years of debate and discussion among the Tripartite Partners is very misleading”, said Mr Edward Bernard, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of FCEF.

While the need to review the Employment Relations Act (ERA) was first raised over 15 years ago, the substantive and structured review process only commenced in 2023, following the reconstitution of the Employment Relations Advisory Board (ERAB). This reconstitution was a crucial step to bring Fiji into compliance with ILO Convention 144 on Tripartite Consultation.

Mr. Bernard noted that it was only after 2023 that **meaningful and formal discussions** on the ERA review began, under the re-established tripartite framework. “The Federation acknowledges and appreciates the Coalition Government and the Minister for Employment, Hon. Agni Deo Singh, for restoring tripartism and social dialogue through the proper and legal functioning of ERAB — aligning Fiji with recommendations by the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR),” he said.

Mr. Bernard explained that early in the process, ERAB members were forced to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), which restricted Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation’s (FCEF) ability to consult and lobby its membership during the initial stages of the review. “The NDA limited open engagement with our members, but once this was lifted, FCEF immediately began extensive consultations with employers across the private sector to ensure their views were accurately represented,” he said.

In January 2025, FCEF successfully lobbied for the draft Bill to be made public prior to the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations’ public consultations. This allowed the Federation to meaningfully engage its members, gather feedback, and advocate for fair, transparent, and modern legislative reforms within ERAB.

“As a membership-based organisation, consulting our members is at the heart of what we do,” said Mr. Bernard. “Our positions at ERAB are always informed by robust engagement with our members — something that was only fully possible once the NDA was lifted earlier this year.”

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