



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

2 May 2017

Suva, Fiji

### **PILOT OF THE FIRST HOUR PROCEDURE AND VIDEO RECORDED INTERVIEWS**

Today, interested parties met to review the progress of the Pilot of the First Hour Procedure and Video Recorded Interviews and decide on the way forward.

On 1 November 2016 the independent institutions of the Judicial Department, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, Fiji Police Force, Legal Aid Commission and Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission agreed to undertake a Pilot of the First Hour Procedure and Video Recorded Interviews. The key objectives of the Pilot are to support the reform of police procedures and practices following Fiji's March 2016 ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness of the justice sector to deliver access to justice. The Pilot addresses two key priority areas related to early access to justice; the rights of a person when arrested or detained by the police ('First Hour Procedure'); and the processes and rights during the interview by the police ('Video Recorded Interviews'). The Pilot was undertaken in Suva at Totogo Police Stations and the Criminal Investigations Division.

At the meeting today the interested parties; including the Judicial Department, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, Fiji Police Force, Legal Aid Commission, Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission and United Nations Development Programme; noted the solid progress of the Pilot and the continued strong demonstrated commitment of all those involved to the objectives of the Pilot. In order to continue with the ongoing reforms it was agreed:

- Continuation of the Pilot of the First Hour Procedure and Video Recorded Interviews for a further 12 months, until 30 April 2018.
- In the coming months expansion of the Pilot to other Police Stations across Fiji, including Labasa and Lautoka.
- To meet as a group every three months to review the progress of the Pilot.
- To continue to engage with partners, including the United Nations Development Programme, European Union, British High Commission and the Association for

the Prevention of Torture for training and institutional strengthening opportunities.

***NB: Pictures attached***



*Representatives from the Judicial Department, the Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, the Fiji Police Force, the Legal Aid Commission, the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission and the United Nations Development Programme during the review of the Pilot project on the First Hour Procedure and Video Recording Interviews. **Photos:** Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.*