



Fiji Police Attack Union Members on May Day

The IEUA stands in solidarity with FTU and FTA members and all other union members in Fiji as they face a further attack on their human rights, their working rights and their rights to union association.

Background

On International May Day, union members rallied outside the Water Authority Depot, in support of sacked water department workers. Police arrived to inform the group that they could not gather without a permit.

Consequently the protest group moved to the Fiji Trade Union Congress grounds and were joined by other union members.

Police then entered onto the Fiji Trade Union Congress private grounds and disrupted the rally, removed the rally tent, and detained various union officials and water department workers.

Fijian Teachers Association General Secretary Paula Manumanunitoga, Fiji Nursing Association General Secretary Salanieta Matiavi and Fiji Trades Union Congress official, Shiu Lingam and Fiji Trade Union Congress National Secretary were detained for questioning by the police.

To date, Felix Anthony, National Secretary of Fiji Trade Union Congress has not been released.

It has been reported that union lawyers have been denied access to those unionists being questioned by police.

Intimidation Will Not Be Tolerated

The IEUA condemns the outrageous actions of the Fiji Police in intimidating workers from a peaceful protest.

The freedom of assembly and freedom of speech are cornerstones of a democratic society. The Fiji 2013 Constitution, which was fought for by union members, gives Fiji citizens the right to assemble.

These rights and freedoms have been denied and the intimidation of workers and their union representatives is an attack on all unions globally.

For this to occur on International May Day – the day where workers acknowledge their rights – is absolutely outrageous.

The IEUA is appalled by the detention of the Trade Union Congress National Secretary, Mr Felix Anthony and has sought immediate discussions with the Australian Council of Unions on these matters.

The IEUA joins with the ACTU and other unions and calls upon the Fijian government to cease harassment and release Felix Anthony National Secretary of Fiji Trade Union Congress from detention.