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Degree : MA - POLITICS + INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Department/School : GOVERNMENT, DEVELOPMENT + INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Institution/University : UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
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Signed: Milika Waqainabete

Date: 13.3.13

Contact Address

Ph: 332 4114

Mobile: 9713800

Permanent Address

LOT 45 DOKANAISUVA RD,

TALIRUA HTS, SUVA

**THE ROLE OF OVERSEAS MISSIONS IN THE FOREIGN
POLICY OF FIJI:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIPLOMACY OF A SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATE.**

By

MILIKA WAQAINABETE

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of
Arts in Politics and International Affairs.

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School of Government, Development and International Affairs,
Faculty of Business and Economics
University of the South Pacific

DECLARATION

Statement by Author

I, Milika Waqainabete, declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published, or substantially overlapping with material submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the text.

Signature Milika Waqainabete Date 13.3.13

Name MILIKA WAQAINABETE

Student ID No S80033190

Statement by Supervisor

The research in this thesis was performed under my supervision and to my knowledge is the sole work of Mrs Milika Waqainabete.

Signature [Signature] Date 13/3/13

Name Dr Sandra Tarte

Director of Politics & IA Programme
(SGDIA)

Designation University of the South Pacific

Suva, Fiji Islands

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to our Lord Jesus Christ whose guidance and wisdom enabled me to persevere, husband Mosese and children Jone, Vika and Alena for their unwavering support and encouragement for its completion.

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Mr Sekove Naqiolevu	Dr Roman Grynberg	Mrs Litia Mawi
Mr Peter Donigi	Mr Jeremaia Waqanisau	Mr Naipote Katonitabua
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Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade	Mr Filimoni Jitoko	

Abstract

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in international relations are generally viewed to be weak, vulnerable and marginalised in world affairs. They also have few foreign policy instruments and limited means to exercise influence and promote their interests in the international arena. In this context overseas missions are seen to play a particularly vital role in SIDS foreign policy. At the same time, SIDS must maximize the limited diplomatic resources at their disposal and strategically manage and negotiate the challenges they confront in conducting their foreign policy. These include budget restrictions, lack of skilled expertise, institutional weaknesses and a lack of national capacity. This research focuses on a Pacific small island developing state, Fiji, and examines the role and effectiveness of its overseas missions within the context of its evolving foreign policy. A selection of Fiji's current and former diplomats was interviewed and literature from the UN, Commonwealth, Pacific Islands Forum and Fiji's Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided qualitative data for this research. Political upheavals since 1987 have led to Fiji's Look North foreign policy and the establishment of new overseas missions in Asia and further afield. In addition, diplomatic sanctions as a result of political instability have challenged the work of overseas missions. The diversification of Fiji's foreign policy is also an indication of its export oriented foreign policy in the context of globalization and the erosion of trade preferences. This research highlights the challenges faced by Fiji's overseas missions, operating on a restricted budget and with limited staff. As Fiji expands its diplomatic network, this study also underscores the importance of Fiji developing a professional diplomatic corps able to represent the state, to negotiate on its behalf, and to manage the affairs of the overseas mission effectively and efficiently.

Abbreviations

AAPP	Asian Parliaments for Peace
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
APDC	Asia Pacific Development Centre
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India and China
CABI	Commonwealth Bureau International
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CIRA	Centre for International and Regional Affairs
CPPCC	China's People's Political Consultative Conference
CSA	Commonwealth Sugar Agreement
CSR	Colonial Sugar Refinery Company
CSC	Commonwealth Science Council
CYP	Commonwealth Youth Programme
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECU	European Currency Unit
EDF	European Development Fund
EEC	European Economic Community
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EUA	European Union of Account
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
FDB	Fiji Development Bank
FESP	Fiji Education Sector Program
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FIC	Forum Island Countries
FLNKS	Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front
FRCA	Fiji Revenue Customs Authority
FSC	Fiji Sugar Cooperation
FTIB	Fiji Trades and Investment Board
FVB	Fiji Visitors Bureau
G20	Group of 20 major economies
G77	Group of 77 Developing nations

GA	General Assembly
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	General Preferential System
H.E	His Excellency
HoM	Head of Mission
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
ISO	International Sugar Organisation
JCC	US-Pacific Islands Joint Commercial Commission
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MFO	Multilateral Force and Observers
MFO	Multinational Force Organisation
MIDA	Malaysian Industry Development Authority
MIM	Mauritius International Meeting

MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
MTC	Malaysian Technical Cooperation
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NMA	National Marketing Authority
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OISCA	Organisation for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement International
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PALM	Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting
PICTA	Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement
PIC	Pacific Island Country(s)
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PIPA	Pacific Islands Producers Association
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSIDS	Pacific Small Island Developing States
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
SAP	Structural Adjustment Package
SDL	Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua
SG	Secretary General
SIDS	Small Island Developing State

SOPAC	Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission
SPARTECA	South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation
SPBD	South Pacific Business Development
SPC	South Pacific Commission
SPEC	South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation
SPNFZ	South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
STABEX	Stabilisation of Export Earnings
SVT	Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei
TCF	Textile, Clothing and Footwear
TFZ	Tax Free Zone
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNGOMAP	United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

UNIKOM	United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission
UN PBC	United Nations Peace Building Commission
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group
USA	United States of America
WCPF	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2011 and 2012 Fiji opened new embassies in South Africa, Indonesia, Brazil, Seoul and Abu Dhabi. This brought the total number of overseas missions to sixteen. The current Fiji government of Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama has made ‘enhancing global integration and international relations’ a cornerstone of its foreign policy agenda, as set out in the Strategic Framework of Change. Among its policy priorities are to enhance and ‘increase the level of Fiji’s diplomatic relations worldwide; establish relations with new regional groups in the international community and to widen Fiji’s network of friends beyond the Commonwealth and Pacific Islands Forum group; deepen the Look North policy by widening its scope to move beyond political relations and development cooperation towards trade and economic cooperation and increase regional and multilateral engagement to promote Fiji’s visibility worldwide (Mataitoga Lecture, 2011).’

Fiji’s overseas missions have increased over time with London, New York and Canberra established in 1970, Brussels in 1973, Tokyo in 1981, Wellington in 1978, Washington in 1984, Kuala Lumpur in 1988, Port Moresby in 1993, Beijing in 2001, and New Delhi in 2005. In addition, Fiji has a Roving ambassador for the Pacific region based at the headquarters. Fiji’s overseas missions now total sixteen and therefore Fiji has the most number of overseas missions of an island state in the Pacific apart from Papua New Guinea¹. Guyana a similar small island developing state in South America with a population of 705,803 also has 16 overseas missions². This compares with Guinea-Bissau in Western Africa, with a population of 1,388, 363, which has twelve overseas missions while Mauritius in Eastern Africa with a population of 1,220,481 has a total of 20 overseas missions³.

Mohammed writing on the diplomacy of small states argues that despite the technological advances and speed of communication, the overseas mission is still the ‘ideal instrument for safeguarding and promoting national interests (2002: 30).’ This is because small island

¹ Papua New Guinea has a total of 19 overseas missions but it is a geographically larger state than Fiji, with a population of 6 million.

² www.minfor.gov.gy accessed 23rd February, 2012.

³ www.gov.mu accessed 23rd February, 2012.

developing states lack the ‘material or political power’ that larger states have in diplomacy (Mohamed, 2002: 26). Therefore diplomats at small island developing states overseas missions are their ‘first line of defense’ as they attempt to promote their country’s national interest and issues which are important for their security (Commonwealth Report, 1985: 68).

Fiji’s overseas missions have been important for establishing trade links and for securing preferential trade agreements. They continue to promote tourism and investment opportunities, and acquire valuable overseas development assistance. They have also been crucial for Fiji to establish itself as an international actor, concerned for international law such as the Law of the Sea, human rights and upholding peace at various UN peacekeeping operations. These overseas missions have also been crucial in providing consular services for visitors and the Fijian diaspora which has also accounted for significant remittances. In the post-2006 era these missions have been particularly important for clarifying the government’s intentions for Fiji’s roadmap to democracy. As Fiji’s ‘first line of defense’ it has been particularly crucial for Fiji’s overseas missions to defend Fiji when faced with diplomatic sanctions following the political crises of 1987, 2000 and 2006 (Commonwealth Report, 1985: 68).

Overseas missions are important for portraying a country’s identity to the international community. The overseas missions help to maintain communication links with their host government and international organisations showing that they are part of the ‘international discourse’ and by their very presence are able to deal with bilateral and multilateral issues (Barston, 2006). According to Berridge, overseas missions are important for representation, promoting friendly relations, negotiations, lobbying, clarifying intentions, information gathering or political reporting, policy advice, consular services, commercial diplomacy and for overseas development assistance (2005: 120 – 129).

It has been argued that small island developing states establish their overseas missions within their immediate geographical region, with their major trade partners, at the UN headquarters in New York and with their former colonial power (Sutton, 1987; Mohammed, 2002; Rana, 2007). The establishment of an overseas mission at the UN headquarters is particularly important for small island developing states as it serves to establish bilateral links with other member states. Similarly, African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Small Island developing

states establish an overseas mission at Brussels as it serves a multilateral trade partnership with the EU, and bilateral partnership with EU member states (Rana in Mataitoga, 2012).

The role of small island developing states overseas missions is demanding as these states are seen to be weak internationally and unable to exert power on other states (Harden, 1985; Maass, 2009). It has also been argued that the concerns and issues of small island developing states tend to be marginalised in global politics (Tarte, 2008). Small island developing states foreign policy has given rise to a particular agenda, one that upholds international principles, advocates the protection of its environment and seeks economic gains through trade and aid (Charles et al, 1997; Hey, 2003; Sutton, 1987). Because of the diplomatic challenges facing small island developing states, they have resorted to group diplomacy with similar sized countries, having common foreign policy concerns (Henrikson, 2007; Commonwealth Report, 1985 & 1997). Such groups as the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), or the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) are examples of group diplomacy as member states uphold common positions and thereby have a greater voice at the global level. Group diplomacy is also ideal for lobbying and swaying votes at multilateral fora.

Fiji, as a small island developing state, has a relatively high level of overseas representation and thus presents a good case study for considering these arguments and questions. Fiji's central geographic location in the Pacific and regional hub status has seen the establishment of international and regional offices in Suva. As a small island developing state it has relied heavily on a single export commodity, sugar and on the preferential trade terms it acquired from the UK and the European Union. It is constrained by a narrow export base and geographical distance from its market. Following trade liberalisation, Fiji's export industries have had to adjust to a competitive level playing field adding to financial constraints. Similar to other small island developing states, Fiji relies on overseas development assistance. However, Fiji's political crises since 1987 have impacted Fiji's role as an international actor, challenging Fiji's diplomats at its overseas missions to clarify government's intentions, and negotiate with its bilateral and multilateral partners. The imposition of trade sanctions by its traditional and closest neighbours has led Fiji to adopt a 'Look North' foreign policy with Asia with an economic oriented goal of sourcing potential export markets, promotion of Fiji to potential investors and as a tourist destination. It has also led to Fiji's membership and

strengthening of new and existing partners with the Non-Aligned Movement and the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) (Mataitoga lectures 2012).

1.2 Definitions

The literature on small states in international relations uses various terms. These terms include micro-state, small state, small island state and small island developing state. These terms and the context in which they have been used will be explained in more depth in this thesis. However, the international relations literature also disagrees on the definition of small states. While most sources have defined small states according to its population they have not agreed on the population ceiling which has ranged from 100,000 to a 1 million (Harden, 1985; Mohamed 2002; Commonwealth Reports 1985; Charles et al, 1997). In addition, some literature has used levels of economic development as a basis for their definition (Lloyd, 1968). This thesis will define small state in line with the Commonwealth definition that describes states with a population of 1.5 million or less (1985; Charles et. al, 1997). The more specific term of small island developing states has been used because it encompasses common geographical and economic characteristics and constraints of small island states. These include limited resources and small vulnerable economies, heavily reliant on exports and imports. However it is necessary to be selective of the small state literature as the term small state is also used to describe small European states whose European characteristics are quite disparate from the small states in the Pacific (Bissonette, 1992; Hey, 2003).

1.3 Rationale

One reason for studying the foreign policy and diplomacy of small island developing states is the perception that they are weak and unable to make a significant impact in international affairs (Sutton, 1987; Mohammed, 2002; Commonwealth Report 1985; Charles et al, 1997). Relative to large and middle powers, it has been argued that small island developing states issues are marginalised in the international arena (Fry, 1999). However, small island developing states have adopted a foreign policy agenda that shows they are involved in the international discourse. These have included international law and upholding environmental concerns that impact its vulnerable environment. Fiji as a small island developing state upholds a similar foreign policy agenda and seeks economic gains to assist its vulnerable economy. The role and functions of Fiji's overseas missions in the face of these challenges and vulnerabilities is thus of interest and importance.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Fiji's foreign policy agenda and the establishment of its overseas missions is studied against this framework. This thesis will analyse the characteristics of Small Island Developing States foreign policy and the special challenges they face in the international arena. This thesis traces the changes and continuities of Fiji's foreign policy since independence, noting specifically the turning points shaped by external factors such as globalisation and trade liberalisation as well as internal factors of political instability. It will explore the role and importance of Fiji's overseas missions in Fiji's foreign policy. Furthermore, this thesis explores the establishment of Fiji's overseas missions at various countries in the context of Fiji's foreign policy priorities.

1.5 Sources of Data and Methodology

The research methodology is primarily qualitative. Primary and secondary sources collected from Fiji's former diplomats and other sources are used to analyse levels of effectiveness in fulfilling its roles and functions. The primary sources were obtained from interviewing Fiji's former diplomats as well as Pacific island diplomats. Because of the distance and location of some of these diplomats, interviews were conducted electronically via email with an attached questionnaire. Face to face interviews were also conducted with former diplomats in the Suva area. These highlighted foreign policy goals for their term of service, their background and qualification prior to appointment, the training received and the key achievements or successes. It should also be pointed out that given the political coup of 2006 and the subsequent government and policy changes, a few diplomats declined to provide information for their own security. Secondary sources were obtained from the National Archives and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs office that included the Ministry's annual reports and bulletins. However, this was constrained by the absence of annual reports for the years 1992 to 2003. This study was also constrained by the inaccessibility of the overseas missions' annual reports which are retained in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as confidential documents. Therefore a generic rather than specific embassy assessment of the overseas missions is included in this thesis. Other secondary sources accessed at the National Archives included the Auditor General's annual reports to identify resources used by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and overseas missions. Statistics were also obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bureau of Statistics to identify sources of Fiji's Overseas Development

Assistance and budget allocation for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its overseas missions.

1.6 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is structured into six chapters. Chapter one outlines the background, statement of the problem, definitions of key terms, the rationale, objectives of the study and the data and methodology utilised in this study.

Chapter two provides the conceptual framework for studying the foreign policy of Fiji and role of the overseas missions. It analyses the characteristics of small island developing states and their foreign policy agenda. The instruments of diplomacy in an overseas mission include representation, negotiation, policy advice, information gathering, commercial diplomacy and consular advice.

Chapter three provides an overview of Fiji's foreign policy in two broad periods. The first period examines Ratu Mara's leadership period up to 1990 and traces key foreign policy initiative. This period established the broad foundations of Fiji's foreign policy agenda. The second Post-Mara period examines the changes and continuities in Fiji's foreign policy as Fiji's political crises, globalisation and a liberal trade regime impacted Fiji's bilateral and multilateral relations.

Chapter four analyses the role and functions of a selection of Fiji's overseas missions that were established during these broad periods. The first generation, 1970's includes the establishment of overseas missions in London, Brussels, New York and Canberra and will trace how their roles have evolved according to Fiji's foreign policy. The second generation, 1980's and 1990's will draw from Tokyo, Washington, Kuala Lumpur and Port Moresby in light of bilateral partners. The third generation, 2000's draws from the Beijing and Jakarta overseas missions, when there was further diversification of Fiji's foreign policy to East Asia and South East Asia in line with its economic priorities.

Chapter five assesses the achievements, successes, challenges and weaknesses of Fiji's overseas missions by evaluating the work of overseas missions against the major roles of representation, promotion of friendly relations, lobbying, negotiation, commercial diplomacy and its provision of consular services.

Chapter six is the conclusion which draws on the major findings and recommendations of the study. It also argues that sound diplomatic training will assist in the efficacy of Fiji's overseas missions.

Chapter 2: Small States Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

2.1 Introduction

Former Samoan Ambassador and Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade, described the challenge of small island developing states in the following terms:

'Smallness means that they are without the blessing of natural resources. They lack the continental blanket that gives a nation natural support in terms of the scattering of disastrous events like hurricanes. They also are without the adequate support of a diverse and numerous populations. So there is a problem in preparing the human resources needed to serve a fast evolving society. It is not easy for our communities to keep up with the rest of the world in handling new concepts and technologies and in tackling the pressures of economic competition

(www.globalpolicy.org/nations/micro/2003/2003size.htm. current at 7.12.05).'

The conventional wisdom is that small island developing states are weak and marginalised and have very little influence in international relations compared to large and more powerful countries (Commonwealth Report 1985; Charles et al, 1997; Harden, 1985; Tarte, 2008). Because of their size and geography as well as their inherent characteristics of having minimal resources Small Island developing states are described as vulnerable states.

The international relations literature shows that small island developing states have a number of special characteristics and constraints that define their foreign policy agenda and diplomacy (Briguglio, 2004; Commonwealth Report 1985; Charles et al, 1997; Harden, 1985; Henrikson, 2007; Mohamed, 2002; Sutton, 1987). SIDS foreign policies emphasise internationalist principles, environmental concerns in particular climate change, and seeks economic gains through overseas development assistance (ODA) and trade. Small Island developing states also favour regional cooperation or group diplomacy as a diplomatic strategy to have an effective voice in the international arena.

There are several terms used in discussing small states including microstate and small island developing state. This chapter will first examine the various definitions. It will then examine the distinctive foreign policy agendas of small island developing states as well as the

distinctive diplomatic approaches and strategies these states have adopted. This will highlight the distinctive challenges faced by small island developing states and the unique characteristics they face as international actors.

As small states are often vulnerable, poorly resourced, and located in remote places, it is argued that ‘diplomacy remains the chief, if not the only, instrument of statecraft available to them (Mohamed, 2002: 36).’ The foreign policies of small states indicate that the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy needs special consideration by their respective diplomats, political leaders and policy makers, so that despite their physical size and economic constraints they can still be effective in the international sphere. Because of these special considerations and challenges, the role of small states’ overseas missions is demanding as diplomats highlight and promote the special issues that are their national interest. In examining the foreign policy agenda of small island developing states, questions will be raised on how and where governments choose to establish their overseas missions. Given that these small island developing states have limited human and capital resources, the effectiveness of these missions in pushing their foreign policy agenda within these constraints will be discussed later in the thesis.

2.2 Definition of Small Island Developing States

The term small island developing state incorporates small states and micro-states and has become a more distinct category due to their developmental constraints and challenges being included in the agenda of international fora. The term micro-state was used in the 1960’s and 1970’s to refer to newly independent states with populations of about 300,000 (Boyce, 1974), while Ankar (2006) defines micro-states with a population level of 100,000 or less. Harden (1985:8) on the other hand defined micro-states as having a population level of 1 million. Mohammed defines micro-states that have more than eight overseas missions as having a population of over half a million and a level of industry over 30% (2002: 19). Despite these varying levels of population for their definition, their emergence as a separate category of states lower than large and middle powers, led to debate regarding their eligibility for UN membership and equal voting rights with large and more powerful states. The proposed resolution to oppose micro-states’ UN membership was defeated at the General Assembly but it was borne out of large states anxiety that the increasing number of small states after decolonisation could impact voting in the UN (Boyce, 1974: 23).

The three terms micro-state, small state and small island developing states have all been defined in terms of varying levels of population. The 1985 Commonwealth Report defined small states as having a population of 1 million or less but this was later raised to 1.5 million in the 1997 Commonwealth report. The three terms are often used interchangeably but this study will be using the term small island developing state (SIDS) because the term incorporates the particular challenges and constraints faced by countries like Fiji.

The term small island developing state has become a more distinct category due to their developmental issues being included in the agenda of international fora. It emerged from the United Nations concerns for 'island developing countries' and studies of small states that revealed unique development constraints (Hein, 2004: 13). Studies written in the 1970's highlighted dependency theories with small states being dependent on large countries for aid, due to their peripheral location and their weak position in the international economic system (Boyce, 1977). Their developing position and inherent economic constraints were then included in their distinct characteristic. The UN General Assembly resolutions and the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the 1970's and 1980's recognised the characteristic features of island developing countries as having limited natural resources, heavy dependence on imports, and restricted markets and 'vulnerability to natural and environmental disasters (Hein, 2004: 13)'. The Commonwealth too has concerned itself with the constraints and challenges experienced by small states, many of which are Commonwealth member states and fall in the category of SIDS.

The term small island developing state identified a particular category of small, vulnerable, resource poor and marginalised group of states. The UN's Division for Sustainable Development's Agenda 21 at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit drew up a programme for the Sustainable Development of Small Islands (Baldacchino, 2007: 546). The UN resolved to organise an international conference that would discuss the problems facing 'small island developing states' (Hein, 2004: 8). The Barbados meeting was held in 1994 and the term 'small island developing state' gained prominence as discussions dwelt on implementing a program of action for sustainable development, management of resources and national capacity building (Tevi, F. 2000 'Vulnerability a Pacific Reality'⁴; Hein, 2004: 1; Barston, 2006: 181). The UN then abandoned the term 'island developing countries' for the more

⁴ [URL://antenna.al/ecsiep/lome/vulnerab.htm](http://antenna.al/ecsiep/lome/vulnerab.htm) accessed 18th April, 2008

precise term ‘small island developing states’ (SIDS) (Hein, 2004: 13). In 1990, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) was formed as the official UN lobby group for SIDS. UNCTAD has devised an unofficial list of 29 SIDS based on characteristics of ‘stateness’, islandness, and smallness which it uses for analytical purposes to gain credibility (Encontre, 2004: 100).

The small island developing states and their UN lobby group AOSIS are crucial to this thesis because their developmental constraints and challenges define their common foreign policy agenda. Small island developing states face constraints that are due to a ‘high dependence on exports and imports, high dependence on capital inflows, and a lack of natural resources for some small states (Commonwealth Secretariat Briefing Note – Small States).’ Because of their remote locations, small island developing states face additional costs that impinge on trade. In 2000, the World Bank’s Development Committee found that small island developing states faced challenges of ‘vulnerability, capacity building to improve donor coordination, challenges and opportunities that emerged from globalisation and adapting to the changing trade regime (Small States: Special Challenges, Special Innovation Opportunities)’. The 2006 Small States Forum Report went further to examine the presence and nature of these challenges as well as the existence of new challenges in relation to globalisation. The 2006 Report stated the following as impacting their development: ‘Remoteness and insularity, susceptibility to natural disasters, limited institutional capacity, limited diversification, openness, access to external capital and poverty’ (Briguglio et.al. 2006 Small States Forum: 8 – 9). SIDS also face limited institutional capacity in the area of foreign policy and in its application in the overseas missions that serve as foreign policy outposts. The small island developing states economic size poses a development challenge where they have ‘little to offer by way of market access concessions and thus have limited negotiating power and leverage (Jones et. al 2010: 11).

Difficulties in reaching an agreed definition for SIDS have prompted Encontre to suggest that the UN should devise a list of SIDS based on concepts, methodologies and statistics similar to definition for LDC’s (2004: 101). In addition, SIDS should have specific issues as the basis for arguing special treatment. For example, SIDS should have specific issues that target the economic sphere and examine the framework of international organisations outside of the UN that they can utilize to address these issues (Encontre, 2004: 101). SIDS should continue to lobby for special recognition as the most ‘promising policy ...is one of self reliance, with

regional support, and adaptation to the changing economic and technological environment, on which they have little or no influence (Encontre, 2004: 102).’

2.3 Distinctive features of Small Island Developing States

Vulnerability and Resilience

Small island developing states face distinctive challenges of vulnerability due to their limited geographical land area or size, location in remote geographical regions and weakness compared to middle and large powers. The UN and the Commonwealth have worked to identify economic and ecological vulnerability in these states (Briguglio, 2007: 101) and to examine how limitations to size and influence pose distinctive challenges in foreign policy and diplomacy in the international arena. This study draws from literature from the Commonwealth, UN and its agencies, academic institutions such as University of Malta as well as NGO’s, and more recent arguments on how small island developing states can overcome these challenges or constraints to make an impact on the international arena. Briguglio argues that Small Island developing states should not be complacent with their distinctive challenges of vulnerability but should be building resilience to improve on development patterns (2007: 106).

Political vulnerability and Resilience

While some small island developing states are vulnerable to political instability, it has been argued that small island developing states are more likely to retain political stability and be resilient where there is ‘freedom of speech and assembly, some means of voicing criticism against government at whatever forum or media; also that there is a democratic process allowing political leadership to be changed peacefully, and respect for human rights (Sutton, 1987: 17).’

Briguglio argues that political resilience can be measured by good governance that consists of five yardsticks: ‘judicial independence, impartiality of courts, the protection of intellectual property rights, no military interference in the rule of law; and the political system and the integrity of the legal system (2007: 107).’

Economic vulnerability and Resilience

Small island developing states face economic constraints based on having a ‘high dependence on exports and imports, high dependence on capital inflows, and a lack of natural resources for some small Island developing states (Commonwealth Secretariat Briefing Note – Small States).’ The specific economic constraints facing SIDS are ‘a narrow resource base that restricts SIDS from benefitting from economies of scale; small domestic markets, resulting in heavy dependence on export markets and import sources, and often aggravated by long distances and low irregular international traffic volumes; high costs of energy, infrastructure, transportation, communication and servicing; fragile natural environments and limited resilience to natural disasters; and limited opportunities for the domestic and international private sector (Briguglio, 2007: 103).

SIDS are economically vulnerable because of their openness to global economic fluctuations; they depend on few export items and lack diversification of industries; rely on oil and industrial supply imports due to a limited resource base; and because of insularity and remoteness face high transport costs (Briguglio, 2004; Commonwealth, 1985; Hein, 2004; Tevi, 2000). They rely on one or two agricultural export items such as sugar and bananas that are prone to fluctuating world market price. Small Island developing states also have minimal ability to dictate terms in the global trading arena.

The University of Malta and Commonwealth Secretariat have developed an Economic Vulnerability Index based on ‘economic openness, export concentration, dependence on strategic imports such as fuel and food, and their peripheral location (Briguglio, 2004).’ Briguglio’s Resilience Index for assisting SIDS to implement policies that will improve their economy and Gross Domestic Product rates concludes that SIDS tends to be more economically vulnerable than other developing states. He argues that economically vulnerable SIDS that have a high GDP have implemented policies to manage vulnerability while ‘SIDS with low GDP per capita are vulnerable and poor and ... merit special attention and support by the donor community (Briguglio, 2004:...)’ Briguglio adds that these SIDS need to strengthen their resilience so as to achieve sustainable development. However, Briguglio adds that to do this donor assistance is essential (2004: 10).

A recent study on the political economy of islands has supported the resilience indicators for small island developing states but also adds that islands that develop ‘specialisation’ in a

particular industry or niche market have a higher tendency to become resilient (Bertram & Poirine, 2007; Baldacchino Ed: 331). Specialisation is defined as that of an 'entire community taking advantage of a niche of evolutionary opportunity by adopting a particular economic personality with its own distinctive set of institutions, policy imperatives and mutual understandings amongst the participating population (Bertram & Poirine, 2007; Baldacchino Ed: 331 – 332).' Successful examples of specialisation exist as Bertram and Poirine note with that of US garment manufacturing in Northern Marianas or the example of the Cayman Islands which has become a financial centre and tax haven. The overseas missions and trade offices exercise their economic and promotional duties in obtaining markets for niche products.

2.4 Small Island Developing States Foreign Policy

Small island developing states are said to have a narrow range of foreign policy goals which are shaped by their inherent vulnerabilities. These include upholding international law, environmental concerns particularly the impact of climate change, and economic benefits through trade access and provisions of overseas development assistance (ODA) (Mohamed, 2002: 12, 13; Hey, 2003: 5). The following is a discussion of the key issues and concerns that underpin the SIDS foreign policy agenda and are relevant for Fiji.

2.4.1 Internationalist Principles

It is argued that small states' foreign policy highlights 'internationalist principles, international law and other morally 'minded ideals' (Hey, 2003: 5). Most small states respect international law as it protects one from intervention (Sutton, 1987:28). International organisations and regimes such as IMF and WTO also provide order and predictability (Charles et al, 1997: 141). Small island developing states members of the United Nations view the UN as an effective multilateral institution where their membership and territorial integrity is recognized and they are accepted as equals with each having an equal vote alongside large, powerful states (Harden, 1985: 15). It is also a cost-effective way of establishing relations with many states in a single locality and institution, and a resourceful means of having key staff as the country's Permanent Representatives to the UN (Harden, 1985: 15). Rana, a former diplomat for India and expert on diplomacy of small states adds that small island developing states value multilateral diplomacy partly because it 'makes sense to work within the large frameworks' of the UN and its agencies, and it also gives their

missions in New York, Brussels or Geneva opportunities to establish bilateral links with countries that have many more overseas missions (2007: 6).

Some small island developing states have taken a leading role advocating internationalist principles such as Malta's role in the Law of the Sea, AOSIS role in Climate Change and Trinidad and Tobago's role in the International Criminal Court (Charles et al 1997: 139; Rana 2007:6).

Law of the Sea

In the 1970's and 1980's the foreign policy agenda of SIDS focused on securing benefits from marine and seabed resources. SIDS diplomats pushed the island agenda, highlighting the archipelagic principle of island states and their EEZ's, successfully displaying collective diplomacy (Fry, 2005: 96).

2.4.2 Climate Change

Thirty six Small Island developing states in 1990 formed the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and took a leading role in pressuring developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by '20% by 2005 using 1990 statistics as its baseline (Barston, 2006: 181; Charles et al, 1997: 146). AOSIS participated actively at the 1992 Earth Summit and promoted consultations and programmes for the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (Hein, 2004: 10). It operates as an ad hoc body through its members' Permanent Representatives at the UN missions in New York and also includes some non-island 'low lying coastal states (Hein, 2004: 10).' Today there are thirty small island developing states that are members of AOSIS, and four small island developing states are observers, while there are forty five small island developing states according to the UN criteria.⁵

Climate change is a distinctive and highly emotive issue on the foreign policy agenda for small island developing states because of the potential for sea level rise to have detrimental effects on island population, reducing land area, capital losses and the adaptation costs to environmental, ecological and social changes (Charles et al, 1997: 68). If the sea levels were to rise by one metre then the total population of countries such as Kiribati and the Marshall Islands would be affected. By comparison in large states, only nine percent of the population

⁵ [URL://www.sidsnet.org/aosis/members.html](http://www.sidsnet.org/aosis/members.html) accessed 5th March, 2010.

on average would be affected by one metre sea level rise (Commonwealth Report, 1997: 68). The marked loss of coastal lands for small island developing states is further compounded by the loss of capital. However, the Commonwealth report noted that the threat of sea level rise would also impact human resources as people choose to migrate to other countries or relocate to higher ground as the case may be. Sea level rise will lead to ‘coastal erosion, loss of land and property, dislocation of people or environmental refugees...reduced resilience of coastal ecosystems, saltwater intrusions into freshwater resources, and high resource costs that will be necessary to respond to and adapt to these changes (Gillespie, 2007: 12).’

It could also impact islands with low sources of freshwater as well as islands dependent on the Tourism industry. The loss of arable land and increasing levels of soil salinisation places added pressure on agriculture both for domestic and export production (Gillespie, 2007: 13). Climate change has also led to the increased incidence of cyclones, storms and tornadoes (Gillespie, 2007: 13).

The impact of climate change on the marine life of SIDS has been highlighted with the warming of waters affecting migratory species. Citing the Independent World Commission on Oceans, Gillespie adds that oceans have a greater tendency to store carbon than land based masses which leads to rise of sea temperatures (2007: 13). This in turn has the potential to damage marine ecosystems and habitats with alterations in ‘nutrient availability, biological productivity as well as its structure and functions (Gillespie, 2007: 13).’ The increase in greenhouse gas emissions has led to increased calcification which in turn leads to coral bleaching. For most SIDS that relies on the reef ecosystems for sustenance and for their tourism industry this is a grave issue. Associated with these threats are the impacts on mangrove, sea-grass beds, and other related biodiversity issues that are affected by diminishing coastal lands (Gillespie, 2007: 13).

2.4.3 Trade

Trade and economic security is a major concern of small island developing states (Fry, 1999: 25). Small island developing states face the challenge of erosion of trade preferences with trade liberalisation. Economic changes of the 1990’s period saw the emergence of globalisation and neoliberalism with its promotion of market led economy. This underscored the development challenges faced by small island developing states’ especially their diseconomies of scale (Campling, 2006: 243). Globalisation also ushered in a paradigm shift

whereby the state was expected to be more accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in the expectations for high standards of good governance (Bissessar, 2004: 88). International organisations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund as well as aid donors from developed countries stipulated that small island developing states implement structural adjustment policies so that aid would be used more effectively (Siwatibau, 1996: 5).

The World Trade Organisation's liberal trade regime of a level playing field has meant the erosion of trade preferences for many small island developing states. Agreements like SPARTECA the non-reciprocal regional trade agreement with Australia and New Zealand signed in 1981 granting duty free access on Pacific Island countries goods into their markets had to be adjusted. Similarly the Lomé agreements gave products from Small Island developing states in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific states preferential access to the European Union. Previously under the ACP / EU Lomé agreements, Small Island developing states could access the Stabex and Sysmin conditions for stabilising their exports (Commonwealth Secretariat / World Bank Report, 2000: 31). In keeping with the WTO trade rules, small island developing states could negotiate and sign up for individual partnership agreements with the EU that would help them deal with export earning fluctuations. However, the conditions for accessing such arrangement are quite high (Commonwealth Secretariat / World Bank Report, 2000: 31). Small island developing states have had to institute domestic fiscal reforms such as implementing policy and structural changes to attract private investment. With this comes government commitment to improving infrastructure such as roads, health, and educational institutions. In addition, some Small Island developing states have had to implement Value Added Tax to cope with the reduction in import tariff revenue (Commonwealth Secretariat / World Bank Report, 2000: 32).

Pacific Island states foreign economic agenda has centred on obtaining assistance to adjust to the erosion of trade preferences under the world trade regime. This has led to the PACER (Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations) and PICTA (Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement), which are both designed to generate closer economic trade agreements within the region and with other regions world-wide (Shibuya, 2010 : 13). Skilled trade negotiators are crucial for these multilateral agreements. These latest developments are part of the Pacific Plan that defines the Pacific Island leaders' vision for the region to attain economic prosperity (Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué 2009)

There is a growing school of thought that not all small island states are weak and vulnerable and that the rhetoric which describes SIDS as such has been used by policymakers, diplomats and politicians as leverage in obtaining greater favours such as aid and better conditions in multilateral trade arrangements such as Cotonou and a greater concessions from the World Bank (Warrington & Milne, 2007: 381).

2.4.4 Overseas Developing Assistance

Most SIDS rely heavily on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) from large developed states as well as on preferential trade agreements (Mohammed, 2002: 4). Most small states rely on overseas aid to finance development infrastructure and service their debts. Because they have a small export base, ODA also assists in balance of payments (Lal, Ed. 2000: 393). Some island developing states such as Tuvalu receive 70 – 80% of aid in proportion to GDP. Bertram and Watters cited in Baldacchino have argued that as a result most Small Island developing states have a MIRAB economy that is derived from Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy. For example, Fiji citizens in the British army or in the United States care giving industry send a significant amount of their incomes back home as remittances. In the late 1990's remittances to Fiji reached FJ\$313 million per annum but these have dropped in recent years to FJ\$250 million (Financial Services Sector Assessment, 2010: 6). In addition, small island developing states have a large bureaucracy and the bulk of overseas aid was directed at helping crucial sectors of education, health, and infrastructure (Lal, Ed. 2000: 397). Bertram's study found that '68 island economies...derived more than 50% of their import funding from one or both of aid and remittances (Baldacchino, Ed. 2007: 349).' By 2005 Bertram adds that world statistics had noted that 'remittances had overtaken ODA in international financial flows (Baldacchino, Ed. 2007: 354).' Fiji however does not fall into the migration, aid and bureaucracy definitions of the MIRAB model and like Papua New Guinea is classified as a non-MIRAB state (Bertram, 1999: 107).

2.5 Diplomacy of Small Island Developing States

Small island developing states seen as being weak, vulnerable and geographically and politically on the periphery of world affairs. Fukuyama, cited in Maass, defines weakness as an overall weakness of governmental control. Handel also cited in Maass describes weakness as a lack of power to influence international affairs (2009:4). Maass defines a weak state as not being able to exert power on other states and therefore having little significance (2009: 9).

However, Bertram and Poirine argue that small island developing states are able to command a greater degree of ‘diplomatic attention per capita’ because in comparison to other large and developed states they have more UN votes. ‘There are 191 (192 in 2008) seats in the General Assembly, of which 31 are held by island states up to a population size of Jamaica (2.7 million)...These 31 small island states hold one UN seat for each 707,000 population. The remaining 160 (161 in 2008) UN member states hold one seat for each 38.2 million population. In terms of diplomatic weight, each inhabitant of an island-state UN member is equivalent to 54 people in the rest of the world (Baldacchino Ed, 2007: 349).’ The AOSIS group in the UN forum is an indication of small island states trajectory from peripheral to forefront of environmental concerns such as climate change⁶.

The end of the Cold War in 1990 generated debate amongst academics that small states in international politics further be marginalised (Tarte, 2008: 3). There was a view that Pacific Small Island developing states concerns had ‘fallen off the map’ or relegated to being least important (Fry, 1999: 1). However, the 1990’s saw an increase in development assistance from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Asian Development Bank that were concerned with the impact of ‘of sustainability, good governance, bio-diversity, gender equality, conservation, population control’ on Pacific small states (Fry, 1999: 12). In addition, Asian states such as China, Taiwan, Japan and Malaysia continued to show a keen interest in the Pacific through provisions of development assistance (Fry, 1999: 13). China and Taiwan’s interest in the Pacific was due to their respective competition for diplomatic recognition. Malaysia had private investment interests in Fiji. China, Japan and Taiwan were also interested in the Pacific fisheries. The Pacific island states were also valuable for garnering allies at international fora (Fry, 1999: 11). Therefore rather than being marginalised Pacific island states have received increasing interest from major powers. In the 1980’s France increased its aid assistance to the Pacific while in the 2000 period China has been a major player (Tarte, 2008: 7). On the other hand, McNamara’s study on Pacific overseas missions at the United Nations forum highlights how Pacific issues and concerns are marginalised on the international stage when more pressing issues such as HIV in Africa or

⁶ AOSIS is not an institutionalised lobby group within the UN. Most Pacific island states are members of the Group of 77 Developing countries which is an institutionalised lobby group within the United Nations (McNamara, 2009: 5).

the war in Iraq take centre stage. As a result funding that was previously marked for the Pacific region is redirected to the 'spotlighted' UN crisis (2009: 9).

Group Diplomacy

As small island developing states, 'have relatively underdeveloped diplomatic machines and (have) a restricted range of policy instruments' (White, 2005: 399). These focus on political, economic and ecological vulnerability (Mohammed, 2002: 14). Berridge adds that the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of small states have a limited number of overseas missions, and few departments responsible for functional or geographical regions (2005: 11). The foreign affairs departments in small island developing states often lack essential financial resources and trained or skilled diplomats and negotiators that constrain diplomacy.

It has been argued that in view of these limitations group diplomacy or regional cooperation is the best diplomatic strategy for small island developing states.

Henrikson has argued that it is necessary and essential for small island developing states to encourage regionalism as it is an effective diplomatic strategy for the promotion of networking and cooperation that has led to the establishment of regional bureaucracies (2007: 7). By being part of a regional organisation small island developing states can elicit backing and support when they need it. Small island developing states can make more effective representations to international meetings such as the WTO through their regional offices. The Pacific Islands Forum for example has an officer based in Geneva and represents the region to WTO talks (Charles et al, 1997: 121). However, regional cooperation in the Pacific has not always been successful because the differences in economic structure and resources have led to competition or resentment (Connell, 1988: 69). Attempts to set up a regional airline and regional bank for example were not as successful as the establishment of the regional shipping and fisheries agencies – Pacific Forum Line and Forum Fisheries Agency. There has also been a resentment of Fiji's hold as host of a number of regional and international offices such as the University of the South Pacific and the Pacific Islands Forum. Fiji's advantage in having a central geographical location that is ideal for international travel routes as well as its existing infrastructure determined its host status for many of these regional organisations (Fry, 1981:16).

Regional cooperation has been seen as the best way for SIDS to deal with their common economic and social problems in the international arena. Individually according to Harden these states are ineffective (1985: 90) and the Pacific Islands Forum is indicative of the economic and political cooperation it encourages for its member states through its many initiatives, such as formulating effective common positions and providing a lobby group in support of key issues of concern. A notable achievement was seen with the UN Law of the Sea and the principle of 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone (Henrikson, 2007: 7, 8). The benefit of group diplomacy lies in providing an 'added bargaining position.' Examples of group diplomacy are the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group where member countries negotiate economic trade agreements, and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) which is a powerful lobby group in the UN.

AOSIS – An Example of Group Diplomacy

AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) is a good example of the value for small island developing states of engaging in cooperation and coordination especially in the UN. Small states can therefore pursue joint positions. In 1990, AOSIS had a membership of 36 states from the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Ocean (Barston, 2006: 181) and included non-island states of Belize and Guyana (Keith Reid, 1994: 39). Keith Reid adds that it successfully convinced the UN to locate the office for the Commission for Sustainable Development in New York rather than in Geneva as most small island developing states would not be able to afford having two offices (1994: 39). SIDS can also raise their profile and status by being seen as leaders in the region. For example, 'the success of the South Pacific Forum in promoting the end of nuclear testing, and in another context of securing the re-inscription of New Caledonia on the UN list of Non-Self Governing territories in the face of intense pressure by France, stand as examples of what small island developing states can achieve collectively (Charles et al, 1997: 144).'

AOSIS as a sub-group of the Group of 77 developing nations was responsible for drafting the Programme of Action for the Barbados meeting in 1994. As an example, of environmental diplomacy Barston explains that the Vanuatu diplomat opposed the draft text prepared by Peru because it did not adequately reflect the concerns and threats of small island developing states with low levels of development (2006: 182). AOSIS argued that the draft programme needed an 'early warning system, promotion of technologies to combat water shortage and

compensation for small island developing states for hosting ‘environmental tourism (Barston, 2006: 182).’ Barston adds that while the AOSIS diplomat, notably Van Lierop, made a significant contribution designing the programme there were difficulties with its implementation as AOSIS met with opposition from some Northern states.

Former Samoan ambassador and Chairman of AOSIS, Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade, in 2000 stated that at climate change conferences island countries had moved away from highlighting sympathy and survival issues but were instrumental in the negotiation processes.

‘...some of our senior negotiators are now chairing important groups. We have an AOSIS person who is chairing the subsidiary body on the implementation; we have a senior AOSIS person chairing the development of compliance system...We try to put in written submissions on almost every aspect, particularly on things we know a little about like adaptation, capacity building and so on (‘Fighting the Bigger Powers in the United Nations, small islands take a bigger role.’ Island Business, May 2000).’

Bigger powers at the United Nations had also lobbied AOSIS’ support particularly for Security Council membership votes, as AOSIS comprised 20% of UN membership (Island Business, May 2000).⁷ According to McNamara, no Pacific island state has yet been appointed to the Security Council, but ‘Fiji has been the only Pacific island state to hold a three year term with the Economic and Social Council (2000 – 2002) (2009: 1).’

Pacific Islands Forum – An Example of Group Diplomacy

Formerly known as the South Pacific Forum until 2009, the regional organisation Pacific Islands Forum has adopted strategies for common problems and concerns that have developed into regional policy and treaties. Fry refers to the period from 1979 to 1990 as being characteristic of the Pacific Islands Forum exercise of collective diplomacy which he defines as ‘joint regional action aimed at mediating, moderating or denying harmful global influences on the region and to maximise the benefits from positive international influences (2003: 96).’ The distinctive forms of protest against French nuclear testing in the Pacific, United States use of Johnston Atoll and the Marshall Islands as dumping grounds for chemical weapons disposal, and Japan’s shipping of plutonium through the Pacific Ocean

⁷ By 2000, AOSIS had increased its membership to 37 with the inclusion of 4 new UN member states, Tonga, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, with 1/3 of AOSIS comprised of Pacific Island states.

were a major foreign policy concern of the Pacific island foreign policy agenda, as island leaders were concerned about the vulnerability of their environment (Ogashiwa, 1991: 4). Continued intense pressure against French nuclear testing and US movement of nuclear armed vessels in the region led to the declaration of a South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone in 1986, in the Treaty of Rarotonga (Ogashiwa, 1991: 93 – 100; Shibuya: 5). France signed the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty in 1996 following much pressure from the islands that included French expulsion from the post-Forum dialogues, following French resumption of underground nuclear testing in Muroroa in 1995 (Fry, 1999: 7).

The security agenda post-Cold War as a result of globalization has seen the increased risk of small island developing states being used as centres for drug trafficking, terrorist organizations and money laundering (Fry, 1999: 21). The Forum in 1992 agreed to the Honiara Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation to monitor border security risks. As a result Small Island developing states have established an intelligence office and border controls to address these potential security threats (Charles et al, 1997: 115). Small Island developing states have implemented measures via their regional organizations to secure their border and naval patrols particularly for isolated island states. Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General, in addressing the meeting on Maritime Security in the Pacific Islands Region stated that ‘there is only one land border (Papua New Guinea) and a common oceans border among (the) 16 member nations’ of the Pacific Islands Forum⁸. In 1997 the Forum island countries agreed to the Aitutaki Declaration on Regional Security Cooperation which has guiding principles on regional security.

The Auckland Declaration adopted in 2004 following the Forum Leaders meeting, agreed to a Pacific Plan that would respond to the many challenges facing the Pacific island countries. The Pacific Plan’s vision states:

‘Leaders believe the Pacific region can, should and will be a region of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, so that all of its people can lead free and worthwhile lives. We treasure the diversity of the Pacific and seek a future in which its cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed. We seek a Pacific region that is respected for the quality of its governance, the sustainable management of its resources, the

⁸ Address by SG Tuiloma Neroni Slade at Maritime Security meeting, Honolulu, Hawaii, 13th September, 2010, accessed from www.forumsec.org.fj

full observance of democratic values and for its defence and promotion of human rights. We seek partnerships with our neighbours and beyond to develop our knowledge, to improve our communications and to ensure a sustainable economic existence for all.'

(The Pacific Plan, 2005: 3).

The Pacific Plan identifies four main pillars for strengthening regional cooperation and its institutions by 'enhancing and stimulating economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security (The Pacific Plan, 2005: 3).' Fry refers to this as the new regionalism where the region moves from cooperation to integration through sectoral regional agreements in border control or good governance that in turn would be developed as national policies (2003: 100).

The Pacific Islands Forum encourages integration through sectoral regional meetings such as customs officials, police commissioners, and trade and finance ministers. However, when island states declare sovereignty rights, regional integration is likely to be impacted ('Regionalism and collective diplomacy', Maiava, 2011). Maiava explained that the Pacific Island Forum member countries are quite diverse in terms of their geography, culture and developmental status and have responded differently to the distinct challenges they now face. Unlike the 1970's and 1980's where there were common positions against French nuclear testing for example, the island's reaction and position on climate change will differ from one country to another because of their diverse geography and their responses to climate change (Maiava, 2011).

Diplomats and Negotiators

Sutton is of the view that for small states there is a 'lack of institutionalisation in foreign policy formulation which is said to allow for a high degree of personal intervention and a corresponding ad hoc approach to issues. Together all are combined in a mainly passive and reactive foreign policy which sees strong support for international law and the operations of international organisations as the best safe guards for long-term security' (Sutton, 1987: 20). Small Island developing states have always supported the UN because the collective security principle guarantees small state security (Charles et al, 1997: 144). They also support international organisations in order to maintain their sovereignty (Herr & Nair, 2007: 142). Foreign policy is still the primary responsibility of government but they are not the only

actor. Representatives from non-state actors accompany country delegations to multilateral foras indicating that they have significant political influence ('New Modes of Diplomacy' Maitaitoga lecture, 2011)

Sutton adds that some small island developing states are 'leading states in their own regions (1987: 21).' Fiji, Sutton observed in 1987, was quite vocal on issues and concerns for the region more so than for a large state. Sutton also argues that the personality of the leader also influences the role states play in the international arena (1987: 21). Barston argues that developing countries tend to conduct personalised diplomacy through their representatives based at the various embassies rather than their foreign ministry by following the proper channels (2006: 71). But Barston adds that diplomatic styles change with government turn over, or with personality (2006: 71).

The deployment of skilled trade negotiators is essential for small island developing states foreign policy and diplomacy talks. Unlike large states that have additional personnel and resources to assist their diplomats and negotiators, the small island developing state diplomats and negotiators need to work doubly hard since they have limited resources. At the Doha WTO conference for example, a number of developing countries had less than five diplomats representing their country (Barston, 2006: 21). McNamara's study of Pacific island missions at the United Nations found they had on average 2.5 staff compared to 8.3 in African state missions, 12.3 in Asian state missions, 11.2 in Eastern European state missions, 10.9 in Latin American and Caribbean state missions and 21.0 in Western European state missions (2009: 4). United States of America has a total of 128 staff at its UN mission. The limited number of staff for Pacific overseas missions at the UN impacts their participation at the many and varied discussions that take place at UN headquarters.

It is important that human and technical capabilities are well matched to represent small island developing states and to synthesize the range of trade agreements as well as sector agreements and their sets of negotiations. This problem was recognized by the WTO and UNCTAD but no plans were made to assist small island developing states in their adjustment. small island developing states had to grasp the international skills themselves. Regional organisations are working towards assisting their member states in their adjustment, and the process could be improved with involvement and participation from the WTO. The Commonwealth has made available the services of a trade policy expert based in Geneva.

small island developing states such as members of the Pacific Islands Forum have set up a joint office at WTO similar to that in the UN. Small island developing states could also benefit from seeking a closer integration of the WTO and UN where they will be able to influence decisions (Charles et al, 1997: 144).

The small states literature argues that the role of the diplomat is absolutely crucial for representing the state's national interest. According to Dietrich Kappeler, because small state overseas missions have few staff, these diplomats need to be 'versatile (2007: 1).' Gilbert-Robert argues that a SIDS ambassador may find himself / herself playing different roles in one day ranging from chief trade negotiator to consular agent (2007 – 8: 2). The ambassador may even have to forego hiring a secretary as this would be a luxury given its embassy's budget allocation. Gilbert-Robert instead states that SIDS may have to consider employing 'working diplomats' as the quality of its officers is crucial for the effectiveness of its overseas missions (2007 – 8: 2). Furthermore Gilbert-Robert states that it is important for overseas missions to have a balance of home-based staff and locally employed staff. International relations have moved on from dealing solely with sensitive and confidential matters that often restricted the hiring of locally employed staff. The latter can be employed in office administration, and management and finance. In addition locally employed personnel who originate from the home country can also assist in tourism promotion and cultural exchange activities. Gilbert-Robert argues that all staff in the overseas mission whether they are home based or locally employed will be required to multitask. For example, the ambassador's chauffeur when he is not at the ambassador's call, may help at the reception desk, and assist in filing.

According to Gilbert-Robert it is important for the overseas missions of SIDS to have the following competencies:

'specialized negotiating skills in respect of trade and economic pursuits

'Soft and emotional skills for diplomacy and human resource management

'Leadership and multitasking skills for effective management (2007 – 8: 3).'

Since there is often few staff in overseas missions, it is important for the head of mission to create a harmonious working relationship by providing incentives. Gilbert-Robert also stresses the need to train diplomats including the ambassador (2007 – 8: 3).

The role of diplomats is even more demanding given the complexities of international relations in the contemporary era. Ambassador Isikeli Maitoga in his lecture to the Diplomacy course for Fiji civil servants, highlights the qualities of a diplomat of the twenty first century by referring to Professor Copeland's term the 'guerrilla diplomat.' These are diplomats that 'possess qualities that together amount to personal suitability: versatility, energy, critical consciousness, curiosity, an appreciation of diversity, an entrepreneurial spirit, physical stamina, spiritual resilience and a dash of guile – combine with courage and conviction...guerrilla diplomats must be problem solvers who can think on their feet, improvise as required, and, when appropriate, push the envelope to achieve results ('Role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Maitoga lecture, 2011).'

2.6 Small Island Developing States Overseas Missions

All states establish overseas missions at locations where their major interests lie. For Small Island developing states this tends to be within their immediate geographical region, their former colonial powers, and their important trade and security partners, and governed largely by the availability of resources (Sutton, 1987: 20; Mohammed, 2002: 22). Small Island developing states have also adopted various strategies for administering their overseas missions given their limited resources.

With the exception of Kiribati and Palau, all other Pacific island member states of the UN have an overseas mission at the UN headquarters in New York, highlighting the importance of having their representative at the international organisation (McNamara, 2009: 1). Small Island developing states establish permanent representatives at the UN so that it can also be a cost effective means of setting up bilateral links with other member states. Similarly, Small Island developing states of the ACP group have permanent representatives to the EU based in Brussels so that bilateral ties are also forged with individual member states of the EU (Herr & Nair, 2007:147).

Herr and Nair's study of Pacific Island Countries foreign affairs departments noted that Fiji and Papua New Guinea hosted diplomatic missions from their regional neighbours. Fiji in particular serves as a regional hub and is host to overseas missions from Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Suva is also important for establishing a resident mission as regional and

international organisations such as the UN are based at Fiji's capital as well. It is also a transportation and communications hub for the Pacific region (Herr & Nair, 2007: 144).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of small island developing states may use cross-accreditation of their diplomatic missions as a cost-cutting measure. This enables them to keep one overseas mission administering the bilateral links it has established with other states. These accreditations indicate that small island developing states have diplomatic relations with more nations which for some small states are a total of more than 70 countries (Mohammed, 2002: 18). In addition, small island developing states have also used Roving Ambassadors that are based at home and periodically visit the states within their jurisdiction (Herr & Nair, 2007: 145). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of small island developing states have also hired Honorary Consuls where citizens of the host country are hired to manage their external relations (Herr & Nair, *Fijian Studies* Vol 5 No. 1: 145).

Small island developing states tend to have fewer overseas missions and more resident missions in its capital city. Fiji has 14 overseas missions and 17 resident missions. This reflects its geographical position as a regional hub. Mohammed refers to this difference in diplomatic representation as 'unilateral representation,' where a larger state is represented at a small state but the latter does not reciprocate.

Small Island developing states also have consulates, trade missions and tourist offices at important locations. While the trade and tourist offices work with the embassies it helps the diplomatic staff in the offices to focus on its core functions. Fiji has consulates and trade missions at Sydney, Los Angeles and Taiwan and is linked with the regional Pacific islands Trade and Investment Commission offices in Beijing, Tokyo, Sydney and Auckland. The Fiji Visitors Bureau tourist offices are located in Los Angeles, Auckland, and Sydney, discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

2.7 Role of Overseas Missions

Mohammed cites James definition of diplomatic representation as 'the expression of communication being their official representatives or diplomats (2002: 14).' Diplomatic missions still remain the key way in which communication and dialogue is conducted between two states. According to Article 3 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations the functions of the diplomatic mission are:

- (a) 'Representing the sending State in the receiving state
- (b) Protecting in the receiving State the interests of the sending State and its nationals, within the limits permitted by national law.
- (c) Negotiating with the government of the receiving State
- (d) Ascertaining by all lawful means conditions and developments in the receiving State, and reporting thereon to the government of the sending State.
- (e) Promoting friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving State, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations (International Law Commission, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961).'

Maintaining an overseas mission helps to establish a country's identity in the international community (Barston, 2006: 21). They are essential for maintaining communication with their host government and international organisations which helps it to be part of the 'international discourse' and by its very presence enables it to deal with emerging issues associated with bilateral and multilateral relations (Barston, 2006: 21).' Berridge outlines the specific functions of overseas missions including representation, promoting friendly relations, negotiations, lobbying, clarifying intentions, information gathering / political reporting, policy advice, consular services, commercial diplomacy and overseas development assistance (2005: 120 – 129).

Representation

The overseas mission displays its nation's flag and represents its nation, and its ambassador is the head of state's representative in the host country (Mohammed, 2002: 26). As the country's representative the ambassador or high commissioner, undertakes this function in a number of ways. These may include 'entertaining, giving public lectures, appearing on television and radio shows, and attending state and public functions (Berridge, 2005: 120).'

Promoting Friendly Relations

Berridge states that the embassy's function is to establish links with the host country and to promote that country's foreign policy. The ambassador by his or her presence in the host country has a responsibility to acquaint her or himself with the local customs and culture. It is one way of obtaining the respect of public and government representatives (Mohamed, 2002:

27; Berridge, 2005: 20). Friendly relations are forged when the ambassador is acquainted with the local elites or 'opinion leaders' in the host country. The ambassador's role is also to create an awareness of the special problems and issues associated with his or her country. This is also known as 'constituency building (Mohamed, 2002: 28)'. The ambassador in meeting with academics, journalists, research institutions or professional associations may highlight the special concerns facing his or her country. By doing this the ambassador is not only establishing valuable networks with professional personnel but also allows for acquaintances to be established between these groups and their counterparts back home. The media an important 'opinion leader' also plays an important role in establishing favourable relations with the host country (Mohamed, 2002: 28).

Negotiation

The resident ambassador plays an important role in negotiation especially by following up on the agreements and assurances that may have been reached by their government leaders. Because of their close proximity they are in a better position to continue talks and to finalise the terms and conditions of agreement (Berridge, 2005: 122 – 123). The embassy either plays a leading or supporting role in the negotiation process (Berridge, 2005: 123). It also counters those who support summit diplomacy where top government leaders meet for talks and exchange trade and friendly agreements, as the ambassador has a longer time to prepare the groundwork for talks and finalise the agreements.

Mohamed argues that the ambassador is still the best person to lead these negotiations for several reasons, although not necessarily for multilateral diplomacy. Firstly, small states overseas missions are few in number and are allocated a significant portion of the government budget, so these should be used to maximum effect. Secondly, it would be more expensive for small states to send out visiting envoys and ministerial delegations when the mission is situated in that city. These visiting ministerial delegations cannot replace the ambassador who carries with the position the integrity and respect accorded to the position as the representative of the head of state. The embassies still have an important role in negotiations since they have had contacts with the relevant government officials and following discussions would firm up agreements (Mohamed, 2002: 3).

Lobbying

Berridge defines lobbying as ‘encouraging a favourable attitude to their countries’ interests on the part of those with influence, to whom access is vital (2005: 123).’ This is often undertaken in a similar way as maintaining representation, by establishing friendly relations or entertaining. Embassy officials will often lobby government officials, business leaders or media representatives. Lobbying is undertaken largely by ambassadors based at capital cities where it was crucial to establish partnerships with domestic groups.

Clarifying Intentions

Berridge explains that this is an important function for embassies to undertake as it is crucial that their host government is fully aware of the conditions or situation before it makes a decision (2005: 124). The ambassador may do this by following up with personal contacts with key personnel.

Information gathering / Political Reporting

The embassies ability to dispatch effective political reports allows states to have a detailed understanding of local leadership (Berridge, 2005: 125). The diplomat’s reports would be valuable for policy making. Because small states face financial constraints, media personnel cannot be stationed at the capital cities where their overseas missions are based. These reports cannot be replaced by the media because journalists rely on news reports from the news agencies of the host country which may have its particular bias or prejudice (Mohamed, 2002: 30). Diplomats should also not rely on media reports because these are often written within a short timeframe and not all aspects of the issue may be considered. It is also likely to be sensationalized. Instead Mohamed stresses that the best source of information is still the diplomats’ reports because these would have been compiled from meetings with a variety of ‘opinion leaders’ and top government officials.

Kappeler suggests that small island developing states may wish to consider using information communication technology as a means of reducing financial and human costs (2007: 1). Even though the initial implementation of IT communication may be expensive, in the long term it may be cost effective. The benefit of IT for small state diplomats and foreign affairs officers is that they can attend international conferences and still keep informed of the developments back at home. Often Kappeller notes that this same officer has prepared the papers to be

presented at the meetings, supervises the delegation and presents the position on behalf of his / her country (2007: 2).

Policy Advice

Overseas mission's reports when systematically compiled by the diplomatic staff are an important source of information for formulating policy. These are developed in consideration of the state they represent and the organisation or host government they are accredited to. The state is in a better position to make an informed decision on the political developments it observes in the host state (Mohammed, 2002: 30). Policy advice is derived from the ambassador's political reports. With the advances in technology, policy advice can now be received much more rapidly (Berridge, 2005: 126). The ambassador may also be recalled for this purpose.

Consular Service

Overseas missions provide consular services for their citizens who may be overseas on holiday, business, education or have attained permanent residency (Berridge, 2005: 126). The embassy also provides consular service for potential visitors and tourists, needing a visa or those seeking permanent residency (Berridge, 2005: 127). Many small island states are attractive tourist destinations so the consular function of providing visa to tourists is an important job for their embassies. For some small island developing states, visa requirements are waived for tourists from an important market (Mohamed, 2002: 35).

Commercial Diplomacy and Overseas Development Assistance

Berridge explains that commercial diplomacy is undertaken by embassies to promote their exports and to seek potential investment. Embassy staff would examine the market and inform their trade mission. Formerly Fiji Trades and Investment Board, the Investment Fiji has offices in Los Angeles, Sydney, and Taipei for this purpose. However, for small states embassies based in the capitals of its donor countries the most important function is negotiating for overseas development assistance.

Other means for requesting ODA may be through ministerial delegations led by the ambassador or by other ministries who seek ODA for a particular project. This, according to Mohamed, is an indication of uncoordinated foreign policy in small island developing

states, or as Trevelyan argues in Mohamed, these delegations may devalue the ambassador's position, and suggest that the government has no confidence in him or her. When this situation occurs, it may reveal that the Small Island developing states are still not able to derive the maximum benefit from their overseas missions (Mohamed, 2002: 31).

2.7.1 Effectiveness of Overseas Missions

Measuring the effectiveness of overseas missions can be gauged from results over time in terms of new or amended policies, the acquisition of overseas development assistance, the public exposure gained from public relations activities, number of tourist visitors or in working with the Tourism offices, trade and investment that have been finalised as well as financial management. For small states, these are defined by the state's foreign policy and the specific objectives for each overseas mission to achieve the state's foreign policy. However, Gilbert-Robert states that there is no defined formula for gauging the effectiveness of small state overseas missions but ambassadors and diplomats 'must be prepared to engage in a process of continuous assessment and evaluation of set goals and the methodology of achieving the desired targets (2007: 4).' Gilbert-Robert adds that 'the ability of a small mission to make its presence felt and its voice heard in the bilateral and multilateral environment requires some creative thinking and the courage to take initiative...The staff of small missions must be highly skilled diplomats and administrators, if the mission is to effectively achieve its corporate goals and objectives (2007: 5).'

The methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of Fiji's overseas missions in chapter five will comprise two main factors – Achievements and Successes on the one hand and Challenges, Weaknesses and Problems on the other. These outcomes have been gleaned from interviews with former diplomats, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs annual reports and newsletters, newspaper reports and other news releases from several overseas missions.

2.8 Conclusion

Small Island developing states have to deal with a range of political, economic and environmental challenges, and the small states literature proposes that new ways of exercising diplomacy may help them to influence international relations. These small states are limited by size, population and resources, and are vulnerable to the effects of global warming and climate change. The foreign policy agenda of small island developing states has

had to address these global issues and these islands have had to adjust to reduced preferential trade agreements in line with WTO regulations. The reduced level of development assistance post-Cold war has seen small states vie for overseas development assistance and engage new players. Small island developing states' foreign policy agenda has over time focused on internationalist principles, environmental concerns particularly the effects of climate change, trade and overseas development assistance.

The conventional wisdom is that because of their small size, such states are marginalized in the international arena and are vulnerable to political, economic and climatic shocks. However, studies have shown that they are able to make an impact in international politics through multilateral and bilateral partnerships. Through the effective use of group diplomacy small states are exerting influence by using their strength of numbers. They have also established overseas missions at key locations within their geographic region and where their major multilateral interests lie.

Small island developing states have adopted various strategies to manage their foreign relations, using their limited resources. Embassies are established at their major multilateral partners' headquarters such as the UN in New York, and the EU in Brussels, and at cities within their geographic region or are their main trading partners. Some embassies are also accredited to other states or organisation. The appointment of a roving ambassador is also used to manage their relations with several states in line with their limited resources. Most of these overseas missions on average are manned by between two to four persons.

The appointment and training of small island developing states' diplomat becomes altogether important. The small island developing states' financial and human resource limitations have meant that the diplomats have to be versatile by undertaking several roles in the overseas mission or based in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Innovative forms of diplomacy are also being encouraged with the advent of information communication technology and the greater involvement in international relations of non-government organizations and the general public.

The role of overseas missions discussed in this chapter includes representation of the sending state, promotion of friendly relations, negotiation, lobbying, clarifying intentions, information gathering and political reporting, policy advice, consular services and commercial diplomacy. For small island developing states this role is shaped by and reflects their special interests and

policy priorities in key locations such as New York, Brussels, their immediate geographical region and major trade partners. Given the challenges they face in international relations, one unique feature of these overseas missions is how they engage in group diplomacy to highlight small island developing states' vulnerability and present common positions.

Chapter 3: Fiji's Foreign Policy – Continuity and Changes

3.1 Introduction

Both before and after independence in 1970, Fiji aspired to be an active player in various international and regional fora and sought to project and protect a wide range of interests. In 1965 Fiji took a leading role in the region first at the South Pacific Commission annual meetings and following independence in the 1970's to 2006 at the Pacific Islands Forum (Mara, 1997). Furthermore Fiji's geographical location was ideal as the central administration and communication hub for the region and host for regional and international organisations, which was to cause a degree of regional tension with its island neighbours.

As a small island developing state restricted by resources, deemed to be weak and vulnerable to internal and external shocks, Fiji formulated a foreign policy that upheld international law, encouraged regional cooperation and sourced economic opportunities either through trade, investment or by way of overseas development assistance. Fiji's reliance on overseas in Western countries became the basis for the establishment of its overseas missions in various regions (Low, 1982: 96). Like other small island developing states Fiji valued the group diplomacy of the Pacific Islands Forum because of the collective voice it gave them to address the international community about foreign policy concerns such as disarmament, human rights, the Law of the Sea, climate change, fisheries and the environment. Fiji has advocated regional cooperation in so far as it does not interfere with its national interests and as a way to overcome Fiji's vulnerability to diseconomies of scale, natural disasters and erosion of trade preferences within the context of trade liberalisation.

Fiji has also established bilateral agreements and partnerships in various countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. It has also established multilateral arrangements through its membership of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) partnership with the European Economic Community (EEC) or European Union (EU), with the Commonwealth and the United Nations. Within the latter organisation, Fiji is grouped in the Asian region. It is also part of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) group and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

From 1987 to 2009⁹, Fiji experienced several political crises that impacted on its foreign policy. Due to the imposition of trade and travel sanctions by traditional partners, Fiji has steadily diversified ties with its 'Look North' foreign policy to Pacific Rim nations. This has seen the establishment of new diplomatic missions, most recently in Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa, South Korea and United Arab Emirates. In addition, Fiji has broadened its foreign policy networks by becoming a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, which extends Fiji's involvement in group diplomacy in multilateral organisations beyond that of the AOSIS, ACP, the Pacific Islands Forum and an observer of ASEAN.

This chapter will aim to show what kind of international actor Fiji is and has been and provide the context for analysing the role of overseas missions in its diplomacy and foreign policy. It will describe some of the major changes and continuities in Fiji's foreign policy from 1970 to 2009. There have been limited studies of Fiji's foreign policy with the most significant being Low's work on Fiji's foreign policy in the first decade of its independence status. Other studies have focused on Fiji and the Pacific regional context (Fry, 1999; Shibuya, 2007; Low, 1982; Mara, 1997; Tarte, 1985, 2008, 2010). This chapter will discuss Fiji's foreign policy of upholding decolonisation, disarmament, peacekeeping and security operations at United Nations fora, as well as the role Fiji has played in regional and sub-regional organisations; and the economic concerns of preferential trade agreements, globalisation and trade liberalisation. It will also examine the trends in overseas development assistance. This chapter will trace foreign policy in two broad periods. The first period was marked by a foreign policy that was established by the first Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara up to 1990, and the second main period from 1990's will trace foreign policy developments as a result of political upheavals under successive Prime Ministers, Sitiveni Rabuka, Mahendra Chaudhry, Laisenia Qarase and Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama. This will highlight the continuities and changes in foreign policy.

3.2 The Mara Years 1970 – 1990

The 1970 – 1990 period is referred to as the Mara Years in this thesis because Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara as Fiji's Prime Minister and foreign minister during this period profoundly

⁹ 1987, 2000, 2006 saw the overthrow of democratically elected governments by a coup d'état while 2009 marked a constitutional crisis when the President abrogated the 1997 constitution following the Supreme court ruling that declared the illegality of the 2006 military led coup.

influenced the foreign policy of Fiji. As a British colony Fiji's foreign policy prior to 1970 was dependent on the colonial power's interests in the region. The costs of maintaining its colonies in the Pacific were a matter of concern to the British Colonial office and a viable industry was sought to allow the colony to be self-sufficient. The sugar industry was developed to enable Fiji's economy to be self-sustaining. In 1882 the Australian based Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR) established its enterprise in Fiji to develop and monitor the planting of cane and it continued to administer the industry until 1973 (Lal, 1992:13). It was to mark the first of many Australian based companies investing in Fiji.

Fiji's diplomatic relations with Australia prior to independence were conducted by the British High Commission based in Canberra. Boyce & Herr add that during this period the Australian Parliament passed the Diplomatic Privileges Act which 'necessitated the official inclusion of the Fijian mission as being part of the British High Commission (1974: 31).' At that time, Australian based companies such as Burns Philp, Colonial Sugar Refining Company, W. R. Carpenters had invested in Fiji and had branched out into a variety of sectors. Australia was Fiji's main trade partner where Australian exports to Fiji in 1967 stood at \$15 million (Rokotuivuna et. al, 1973: 78). Fiji exports to Australia on the other hand ranged from \$5 - \$6 million and thus prior to independence in 1970, Fiji was already experiencing trade imbalances leading to trade deficits. The British colonial administration in Fiji established close relations with its two former colonies and settler colonies, Australia and New Zealand, as it was closer for trade, and bilateral partnerships.

Fiji's close trade relations with Australia and New Zealand and people to people relations were already established with investors, businessmen, and Fiji citizens travelling to and from Australia for purposes of education, visiting relatives or for medical treatment.¹⁰ New Zealand also had an important contribution and close relationship with Fiji in the education sector (Low, 1982: 76). People to people ties were forged with Fiji citizens offered scholarships in New Zealand.

¹⁰ Polynesian Company (1860's) bought land in Suva, encouraging a growing Australian settler community (Lal, 2000: 10).

Post-Independence: Foreign Relations

As a paramount chief Ratu Mara commanded presence and charisma and he was to set himself not only as Fiji's leader but also a regional statesman (Tarte, 1985: 29). Low states that Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara's character 'played a major part in the formulation and style of Fiji's foreign policy (due to his) international stature as a statesman and his personal involvement in many issues (1982: 96).'¹¹ As a Small Island developing state with limited resources, the Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara also held the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs until 1982. This is in line with the SIDS character of a strong personal stamp on foreign policy. According to Howard, Ratu Mara wanted to develop his image as a statesman in the international arena to boost his popularity at home (1991: 126).

Upholding multiracialism, racial harmony and tolerance both domestically and in Fiji's foreign policy, Ratu Mara spoke against South Africa's apartheid system, the racist policies in Uganda and the growing India-Pakistan conflict in 1973, 1975 and 1977 at the UN General Assembly, but he also noted that he had to cope with a nationalist political party at home that held similar ethnic elitist views to South Africa, India and Pakistan (Mara, 1997: 149 – 154). Simmering nationalist sentiments had not overflowed openly into politics. Human rights were an international law upheld by Ratu Mara's government and emphasised at the UN General Assembly speeches.

Ratu Mara's foreign policy for the most part was pro-western and leaned more to United States, Australia and New Zealand (Howard, 1991: 129). Ratu Mara in 1984 was the first Pacific Island leader to be invited to the White House. In his address, President Ronald Reagan commended Ratu Mara's leadership of Fiji which was 'a model of democracy and freedom, a tremendous example for all the countries of the developing world.' Mr Reagan also applauded Fiji's contribution to peacekeeping and recognised the regional stance Fiji

¹¹ Britain's indirect rule saw the recruitment of young indigenous chiefs who had been handpicked and given a western education. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara received his education first at Otago, New Zealand and later at Oxford University.

held on nuclear issues, while commending Fiji for allowing American naval vessels to transit Fiji.¹²

However, Fiji chose to maintain an independent position on international issues brought before the United Nations. Ratu Mara's government did not vote with Third World bloc votes and the Non-Aligned Movement as it did not agree with its position on a number of issues (Low, 1982: 81).

The main objective of Fiji's foreign policy for this period was to 'maintain good bilateral, regional and international political relations, to develop closer relationships with Fiji's neighbours in the Pacific; to promote and safeguard Fiji's economic and other interests including tourism; and to present Fiji's views on international issues and situations which are of concern to Fiji (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 2).'

In the early 1970's, the tourism industry brought in much needed revenue that was used to build infrastructure projects (Low, 1982: 32). As the nature of the industry sourced overseas visitors, Fiji's overseas missions undertook the role for the promotion of Fiji as a tourist destination in conjunction with the Fiji Visitors Bureau as discussed in later chapters.

3.2.1 Overseas Missions

The establishment of Fiji's foreign affairs ministry in 1970 after independence received assistance from Commonwealth countries such as UK, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. These countries also provided advice to Fiji's representative to Sydney who was tasked to determine where Fiji's interests would be served most cost effectively (Mara, 1997: 113). Foreign affairs Ministry staff attended training at Oxford, Canberra and the United States. Ratu Mara was responsible for appointing Fiji's Head of Missions, based on their years of experience in the civil service (Mara, 1997: 114).

The first overseas missions to be established after 1970 were Fiji's High Commissions to Canberra and London, and its Permanent Representative to the UN in New York. Ratu Mara was mindful of the cost of establishing overseas missions for a newly independent small island state, particularly at metropolitan cities such as London, New York and Canberra

¹² Remarks of the US President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Kamisese K. T. Mara of Fiji Following their Meeting in <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1984/112784c.htm> accessed 25th September, 2009.

(Mara, 1997: 117). It was important for Fiji to establish an overseas mission in London because it was deemed essential to retain ties with the Commonwealth and the UK, as both provided aid and technical assistance (Mara, 1997: 114). The Fiji government purchased a property in London for its ambassador in 1975, an indication of Fiji's government close and continuing relations with the UK and the Commonwealth (Parliamentary Paper No. 13 of 1976: 3)¹³.

Although the establishment of Fiji's Permanent Representative to the UN would be expensive it was also seen as cost effective in terms of representing Fiji's interests to Washington, as well as the then 129 member countries of the UN, and the UNDP head office at New York (Mara, 1997: 114).

Fiji's Consul to Sydney, Mr Raman Nair, was appointed Fiji's first Head of Mission to its Canberra office.

Fiji's mission in Brussels was established in 1973 and accredited initially to Sir Josua Rabukawaqa, the Head of the London Mission, until Mr Mike McGeever took up the post of Counsellor and Charge d'Affaires in July, 1973.¹⁴ The embassy was to represent Fiji to the European Economic Community (EEC) now referred to as the European Union. Its primary role was to market Fiji's sugar to the EEC through the Lome Agreements. Another of the mission's objectives included representation to the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) whereby Fiji was able to benefit from a broad spectrum of educational and scientific knowledge while protecting its 'traditional knowledge and culture'.¹⁵ In addition, the embassy was accredited to the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) 'providing opportunities for Fiji's rural based communities.'¹⁶ The embassy was also later accredited to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Multinational Force Organisation (MFO) and the International Criminal Court (ICC).¹⁷

¹³ Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Government of Fiji for the year 1975.

¹⁴ [URL://www.fijiembassy.be//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&itemid=26](http://www.fijiembassy.be//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&itemid=26) accessed 4/3/10.

¹⁵ www.fijiembassy.be current at 11/10/08.

¹⁶ History of the Mission www.fijiembassy.be current at 11/10/08.

¹⁷ www.fijiembassy.be current at 11/10/08.

In 1981, Fiji established a diplomatic mission in Tokyo. Fostering close partnership with Japan was considered important as Japan was seen to be a generous aid donor (Mara, 1997: 143). Japan at the time was also seen to be an emerging economic power in the region. In 1980 Japan provided a grant of F\$100,000 for disaster relief while in 1981 it provided F\$800,000 assistance for the rural fisheries development project, and provided technical assistance for aquaculture research and development project. Japan's technical co-operation consisted of aid in 'the form of resource surveys, equipment supply, provision of experts and volunteers and training for Fiji citizens (Parliamentary Paper No. 63 of 1983: 26).' While Ratu Mara acknowledged once again that maintaining an overseas mission in Tokyo would be expensive, he still considered it to be an important outpost. In 1982, 'Japan was the fourth largest source of tourists' with a total number of 18,029 visitors, an increase of 60%. To further boost the potential for a booming tourist market Fiji signed an Air Services Agreement with Japan in 1980 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63: 27).

Fiji also set up an overseas mission in Wellington, New Zealand in 1978 to improve its bilateral relations with New Zealand and to enhance their economic links (Yarrow Report, 2000: Annex D7).

Fiji established a mission in Washington in 1984 (the year that Ratu Mara went to Washington and was received by President Ronald Reagan), to encourage Fiji's bilateral relations with USA. Fiji also valued its ties with Washington as a source for garment exports. This is also discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

Following the coups in May and September 1987, international pressure and sanctions were applied to Fiji by its bilateral and multilateral partners. The role of overseas missions became more significant as they exercised damage control in trying to restore diplomatic relations with their respective partners (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 8). Mr Winston Thompson, Fiji's then Permanent Representative to the UN was also assigned the role of Special Emissary by calling on the representative of the Secretary-General of UN, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joseph Clark, in Ottawa, and a few Congress members in Washington (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 20).

In the wake of the 1987 coups, the Canberra mission was reduced in size and its role in facilitating Australia's technical aid and development assistance was suspended. The government did not replace staff that had resigned or were transferred. The mission did not

have a Head of Mission, but was looked after by a Charges d' Affair until 1989 (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 14). Despite this reduction in staff, Australian aid and trade remained the highest in Fiji's ODA and trade statistics.

An indication of a new shift in foreign policy towards Asia was seen with the establishment of an overseas mission in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in September 1988. Malaysia had increased its development assistance to Fiji including military training (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992:15). The establishment of this mission was also important for 'representation to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok, and to the Asia Pacific Development Centre (APDC) (Yarrow Report, 2000: AnnexD1).'

Fiji held its first Heads of Missions consultation in 1981. The second Heads of Overseas Missions Consultations took place in August 1990. Heads of Missions were briefed on the 'constitution, the economy, the work of important line ministries – Tourism, Information, Primary Industries, Trade, Finance, Public Service Commission and Immigration (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 8).' The Heads of Missions also visited a garment and furniture factory, and the Fiji Visitors Bureau. The objective of these consultations was to ensure that Heads of Missions were well versed with government's plans and would be able to counter negative reporting and information on Fiji's move to democracy.

3.2.2 Foreign Policy Trends

The foreign policy of the Mara years of leadership established some enduring features that were perpetuated by later governments. These included support for regional cooperation, international environmental laws such as the Law of the Sea, preferential trade agreements, pro-Western foreign policy alignment, as well as close ties with Taiwan and the Peoples Republic of China.

3.2.2.1 Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation was an essential tenet of Fiji's foreign policy because it encouraged avenues for newly independent island states to work together in areas of economic partnerships, and in protecting their fragile environment. Fiji became a vocal, assertive and active member of the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation, Forum Fisheries Agency, University of the South Pacific, Air Pacific, and Pacific Forum Line (Parliamentary

Paper No. 7, 1983: 8). Fiji also played a leading role in voicing Pacific islands concerns on the Law of the Sea discussions at the UN.

Ratu Mara in his memoir wrote,

'I have always held that a cardinal element in Fiji's foreign policy is regional cooperation in the South Pacific which had been going on long before independence (1997: 116).'¹⁸

Fiji's vocal and leadership role in the region was seen when the Pacific Forum Line, formed in 1977, faced financial difficulties. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara approached the EEC for assistance which agreed to help, emphasising the importance of a regional shipping line for the dispersed island states that face high transport costs (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 11). Further assistance to the Pacific Forum Line in the purchase of containers came from the European Investment Bank, Asian Development Bank and the OPEC Fund (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 11).

Fiji was also vocal in promoting decolonisation in the Pacific, and in 1981, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara led a mission to Paris, to hold discussions on the decolonisation of French territories in the Pacific (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 55).

Fiji on becoming a UN member in 1970 expressed opposition to French nuclear testing in the Pacific. Commentators state that Fiji was asserting its identity and upholding self-determination as a newly independent island state. The Fiji government was also influenced by a vocal domestic anti-nuclear lobby group (Tarte, 1985: 60). In 1973, Fiji together with Australia and New Zealand presented legal papers to the International Court of Justice 'contesting the legality and morality of the nuclear tests (Tarte, 1985: 57)'. The Court ruled that France should cease nuclear testing especially as nuclear fallout could be hazardous to the Pacific environment and its people. It was a diplomatic success as Fiji had the support of middle powers such as Australia and New Zealand according to Shibuya's analysis (1999:iii). In 1975 Fiji also supported New Zealand's resolution to the UN General Assembly proposing the declaration of the South Pacific as a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. Fiji provided the South Pacific island voice in both instances. Partly as a result of this diplomatic pressure, France

¹⁸ Prior to independence, Fiji was a member of the Pacific Islands Producers Association. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara worked with the leaders of Tonga and Western Samoa to negotiate favourable banana prices with New Zealand (Lal, 2000: 329).

ceased nuclear atmospheric testing in 1974 but continued with underground nuclear testing (Tarte, 1985: 58).

Diplomatic pressure was also applied by Fiji in encouraging decolonisation in the Pacific as this particularly targeted the French territories of New Caledonia and French Polynesia. Fiji was however, also mindful of its decolonisation stance on her citizens. While Fiji supported the Kanaks rights to self-rule in New Caledonia it also emphasized the need to recognize all races and provide equal rights to all living in New Caledonia as this would be in keeping with recognition of its Indian citizens in Fiji (Tarte, 1985: 75). Ratu Mara emphasised Fiji's anti-French nuclear testing stance by informing delegates at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM) that Fiji had 'banned all French goods, ships, aircraft, postal services and telecommunications (1997: 148).' Fiji used international conferences to highlight its objection to atmospheric nuclear testing in Mururoa Atoll. In 1973, it raised its objection at the World Health Assembly, Seabed Committee meeting, General Assembly and Special Committee on Decolonisation (Fiji Report, 1973: 8).

In 1986, Fiji signed the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty and its Protocols where it 'prohibited the testing, manufacturing and stationing of nuclear weapons in the treaty region, and outlawed the dumping of radioactive wastes in the region (Parliamentary paper No. 7, 1991:13).' It was ratified by Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, New Zealand, Tuvalu and Western Samoa. Protocols 2 and 3 of the treaty were also signed by USSR and China in 1986 (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 13) but France, UK and USA did not sign until 1996.¹⁹

Fiji signed and ratified the Multilateral Fisheries Treaty in 1987 between the United States and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) states. The region stood to gain US\$60 million over a five year period. This treaty was entered into especially after the Jeanette Diana affair – a US fishing vessel caught in Pacific waters fishing without a license (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 14 – 15).

In sum, Fiji after independence established its identity as an island nation state representing the views and concerns of the other islands within the Pacific. Fiji also played a leading role

¹⁹ www.fas.org/nuke/control/spnfz/index.html accessed 26th April, 2012.

in the negotiation of multilateral trade agreements that would assist small island states developing economies as discussed in the next section.

3.2.2.2 Preferential Trade Agreements

Fiji as a small island developing state facing diseconomies of scale saw the need to negotiate preferential trade agreements as a matter of national interest. Ratu Mara, prior to independence as a Member for Natural Resources, represented Fiji at the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and International Sugar Agreement from 1964 to 1967 under which Fiji was able to export between 170,000 to 200,000 tons of sugar to the United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand at a favourable price (Journal of Legislative Council, 1967). The Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA) obtained for Fiji a favourable price for its sugar exports to the United Kingdom. Fiji had successfully negotiated a bilateral agreement for its sugar trade. Ratu Mara in his memoir emphasized the importance for Fiji to present its case at the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement Talks (Mara, 1997: 113).

The United Kingdom's admission to the EEC necessitated former colonies in the ACP countries to negotiate continuance of preferential trade agreements in 1974. The multilateral trade partnership was between developed countries in the EEC and developing countries, whereby the former would assist the latter with export markets and aid.

Lome I (1975 – 1981) guaranteed Fiji, sugar exports at preferential price earning \$108.75 million annually (Mara, 1997: 165). Fiji was allocated an annual quota of 163,600 metric tons of sugar at preferential price, in the Sugar Protocol (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 38). Because of the preferential sugar price with the EEC, Fiji was able to negotiate this price with other countries through the International Sugar Agreement. Fiji was continuing in its leadership role in speaking up for the Small Island developing states not only in the Pacific but also in Africa and the Caribbean.

Lome I also granted Stabilisation of Export Earnings (STABEX) aid to assist ACP countries with fluctuation in export commodity prices (The Courier No 31, March 1975: 11). In the late 1970's and early 1980's STABEX provided relief to copra exporters whose earnings were affected by hurricane and drought (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 2).

Other sugar markets included 60,000 tons for export to New Zealand, and 12,000 each to Singapore and Malaysia, 46,500 tons to US and a little into the Japanese market. Sugar

marketing arrangements were also forged with Forum Island Countries under the Regional Long Term Sugar Agreement of 1976, whereby Fiji exports sugar to Forum member countries according to the agreed quota and price (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 3, 12).

Lome II signed in 1979 continued with the Sugar Protocol guaranteeing preferential access into the European market but also making provisions for the mining sector in ACP countries benefitting from the STABEX clause similar to agricultural products²⁰. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report for 1973 – 1982 emphasised the importance of the Sugar Protocol to Fiji and other ACP countries, because since 1975, ‘Fiji received over \$108 million more’ through the Protocol arrangement than the world market price for that same period (1982: 42).

Lome III effective for 1985 – 1990 continued Fiji’s guaranteed sugar export price as well as the provision of 20 million ECU grants for sectoral development.

The South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA) was signed in 1981 between the Forum Island countries and Australia and New Zealand as a non-reciprocal preferential trade agreement to boost export commodities to Australia and New Zealand. Forum Island countries were granted preferential access for export items. Fiji exported manufactured products to Australia and New Zealand on favourable SPARTECA terms. The sale of garments and furniture earned \$2million in addition to the export of gold, sugar and coconut oil. The agreement also made provisions for ‘economic, commercial and technical cooperation’ whereby Fiji made representations to seminars and with the assistance of the Fiji Trades and Investment Board (FTIB) organized trade missions and or exhibitions ‘to raise awareness amongst Australia and New Zealand business communities of Fiji’s ability to provide goods of acceptable quality (Parliamentary Paper, No. 7, 1991:10).’

3.2.2.3 International Law

The foreign policies of small island developing states have generally encouraged and supported international norms and legal instruments and regimes. Fiji’s foreign policy has highlighted environmental concerns that relate to oceans and during this period focused particularly on the Law of the Sea.

²⁰ www.acpsec.org/en/conventions/Lome_II_dossier.pdf accessed 15/11/10

Upon joining the UN in 1970, Fiji was elected to the UN Seabed Committee and became the voice for the Pacific as she was the only Pacific island state in the UN. Fiji's participation at each of the meetings of the UN Seabed Committee continued to the start of the third UN Law of the Sea Conference in 1974 where Fiji proposed the 'acceptance and recognition of the archipelagic principle' whereby small island developing states relied and claimed sovereignty over the marine area between their islands (Tarte, 1985: 81). The Law of the Sea Convention is an important regime for small island developing states like Fiji because the sea not only unites the scattered islands of the group but also provides a source of raw materials and natural resources in the seas and seabed (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 63). By 1976 the UN agreed to the establishment of a 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone that would incorporate the islands archipelagos. Fiji ratified the Law of the Sea Convention in 1982, the first country to do so. Fiji's diplomat at its New York mission Mr Satya Nandan played a significant role in its discussions and went on to be the Assistant Secretary General of UN Law of the Sea Division and in 1996 became the Secretary General of the International Sea Bed Authority based in Jamaica (Mara, 1997: 118).

Another area of international cooperation that Fiji has emphasised in its foreign policy has been in Peace keeping operations. 'Fiji's strong belief in the right of States to exist within secure and recognised boundaries was one reason for its participation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), as well as in the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in Sinai (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 46).'

Fiji's UN role was extended with the secondment of Fiji's troops to UN peacekeeping duties. This not only provided experience but also relieved youth unemployment as well as contributing F\$9 million annually. Mr Vunibobo in 1978 made a strong case for Fiji's troops to be sent to Lebanon and later to Sinai (Mara, 1997: 140). But delayed payments were often a cause for concern. (*Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983*). '

At the UN Fiji also supported UN Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) that called for a peaceful settlement to the Israeli and Palestinian crisis but tended to vote for Israel (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 45).

Fiji supported nuclear disarmament and the Comprehensive Test ban treaty in line with its strong objection to nuclear testing in the Pacific. Fiji not only upheld international security

but was also reiterating the importance of its ocean and marine resources to small scattered islands whereby nuclear disasters or testing could be detrimental to its vulnerable resources.

Fiji supported human rights instruments where it signed and agreed to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and was also a signatory to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In 1973, the UN marked the 25th anniversary of the convention and launched the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 64). In 1981, Fiji was elected to the UN Commission on Human Rights (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65). In addition, Fiji soon after joining the UN was elected by the General Assembly to be a member of the Special Committee of 24 on Decolonisation (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65).

In the 1970's Fiji's ambassador on becoming a member of the Committee of 24 or Decolonisation Committee, also took on Chairmanship of missions assigned to look into the Cayman Islands and US Virgin Islands' prospects for attaining independence status (Vunibobo, 2005: 11). Mr Vunibobo adds that small state missions' can gauge their impact on decision making if they are invited or voted in to be part of various committees (2005: 15).

Fiji joined the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 1978 and benefitted from the various development programmes it offered at regional and national levels. ESCAP also appointed a Liaison Officer for the Pacific region based in Nauru and appointed Fijian Mr Paula Sotutu to the position (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 24).²¹

Fiji's membership with the Commonwealth has seen its involvement in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional meetings for Asia and the Pacific. Its participation at these talks focused on economic cooperation and political issues. These talks then led to the formation of working groups to discuss trade, energy, terrorism, and illicit drug trafficking (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 55).

At the 1980 CHOGM regional meeting, Ratu Mara proposed the establishment of a Pacific Regional Advisory Service to provide essential manpower needs in specialist and technical fields to Pacific island countries characteristic of Small Island developing states facing human resource constraints (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 56). It is also worth noting

²¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report 1974 – 1982. Parliamentary paper No. 63, 1983)

that Fiji hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government of Meeting (CHOGM) from 14th – 18th October, 1982. Fiji's membership of the Commonwealth lapsed following the 1987 coup d'état until 1997 and again following the military coup d'état in 2006.

3.2.2.4 Trade

Fiji has a limited range of export commodities which are largely agricultural based. Its main agricultural export commodity was sugar and ranged from 65.6% of exports in 1970 to 82.8% of exports in 1975 to 72.9% in 1981. Sugar was thus an important foreign exchange earner (Low, 1982: 31). Other export items have been coconut products, gold, fish (prepared or preserved in cans), lumber, biscuits, cement, cigarettes and other products (Low, 1982: 31).²² The major buyers of sugar in 1970 – 1981 have been the EEC including United Kingdom, the latter being the highest, Japan (for 1971 – 1973, and 1979 and 1980), Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and USA (Low, 1982: 68).²³

Fiji's main imports up to 1981 were dominated by Australia and New Zealand providing food items and Japan supplying motor vehicles (Low, 1982: 72). Fiji had a negative trade balance with Japan for 1980 – 1981 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 25). It also had a negative trade balance with South Korea for the same period (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 26).

United States of America was also a valuable trade partner for 1980 – 1982. With the exception of 1981 there were favourable trade balances for 1980 and 1982. Its main export items were raw sugar, molasses, frozen fish, coconut oil and green ginger (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 32). Fiji also experienced favourable trade balances with Canada for the same period where the main export items were sugar and canned fish (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 33).

3.2.2.5 Overseas Development Assistance

Overseas development assistance was sought for Fiji's priority needs in infrastructure, education and training, technical advice and rural development. However, among Pacific island states, Fiji's per capita aid level was the lowest. Through its bilateral partnerships, Fiji between 1970 and 1973 received overseas aid from the UK, Canada, India, Australia and

²² Annual Trade Report, Parliamentary Paper, Bureau of Statistics, Suva in Low, 1982: 31

²³ Statistics and table obtained from Sugar Yearbook 1977, and Sugar Yearbook 1981.

New Zealand. UK aid came in the form of ‘\$5 million in development grants’ and a \$5.9 million development loan (Low, 1983: 73). India provided skilled personnel for advice and assistance in a number of technical fields. Australia through its South Pacific Aid Program since 1965 provided military training and other courses for civil servants. After Papua New Guinea, Fiji received the largest amount of Australian aid in the South Pacific (Low, 1983: 74). New Zealand provided a total of \$3 million in aid in the same period. Together with a US\$16 million grant from the World Bank, Australia and New Zealand provided a loan to assist the construction of the Suva – Nadi highway.

The EEC under Lome I (1975 – 1981) provided financial and technical assistance to Fiji valued at 9.9 million European Units of Account (EUA) for 1975 – 1979. The EEC also provided 2.5 million in EUA as aid funds to assist cyclone rehabilitation and a further 1 million was given as a grant (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 39). Fiji was also able to obtain through the EEC a loan of 12.5 million EUA from the European Investment Bank for the initial phase of the construction of the Monasavu Hydro Electricity Project. A loan of 11.5 million EUA was also granted for phase two of the project, and a loan of 12 million EUA for the phase three (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 40).

Lome II (1980 – 1985) financial assistance for Fiji stood at 5,227 million EUA which was an increase from Lome I. This was a ‘direct result of Fiji’s efforts to convince the EEC that there are special development problems for island countries which have limited natural resources, small economies and which are physically fragmented and dispersed over a wide area and which are geographically located at great distances from major world markets (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 41).’ An additional development in Lome II was the inclusion of agricultural cooperation.

Lome III (1985 – 1990) granted 20 million in EUA for the construction of the Kubulau Peninsula Road, Rural Electrification Programme, Coconut Rehabilitation, Microprojects, Trade and Investment Development and Technical Assistance and Studies.²⁴

Since 1965 Australia has provided aid to Fiji under its South Pacific Aid Programme. It provided military training as well as training for other personnel (Low, 1982: 74). Australia

²⁴ Alexandrakis, Nikolas. ‘EEC- Fiji cooperation.’

<http://collections/infocollections.org/ukedu/en/d/Jec129e/3.1.2.html> accessed 27th June, 2011.

also provided a \$A2.7 million loan for the construction of the Suva - Nadi highway. Other than Papua New Guinea, Australia provides the largest amount of aid in the Pacific region to Fiji which for 1977 to 1980 totalled \$A35.7 million (Low, 1982: 74). Low refers to Simington's work which states that Australia provided assistance for the equipping of Fiji's contingent to UNIFIL. It thus received the bulk of Australia's defence aid. Australia also plotted the base points for Fiji's 200 mile EEZ (Low, 1982: 75).

Australian aid to Fiji for 1979 / 1980 was \$9.216 million with an additional undertaking to provide \$A30.5 million for the three year period up to 1983 making it the largest aid donor (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 70). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report for 1974 – 1982 listed agriculture (especially rice and beef industry), hydroelectricity, sewerage, water supplies, and rural development as receiving Australian aid (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 70). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report listed Australia as giving the largest amount in overseas aid for 1986 of \$F15.1 million followed by Japan \$F8.3 million, New Zealand \$F3.7 million EEC \$F2.3 million, United Kingdom \$F1.7 million, France and other countries collectively gave \$F1.7 million, and UNDP \$F.5 million (Parliament Paper No. 7 1991: 20).

From 1970 – 1973 New Zealand gave a total of \$3 million and also agreed to loan \$NZ1.5 million for the construction of the Suva - Nadi highway (Low, 1982: 75). New Zealand also gave 'technical advice, expertise and scholarship grants to Fijian students (Low, 1982: 75).' New Zealand's bilateral assistance to Fiji for the period 1973 – 1980 has ranged from \$687,226 in 1973 to the highest in 1976 \$6,228,000 and \$4,212,426 in 1980 (Low, 1982: 76). New Zealand's contribution to the development of education has also been of importance, and provided personnel through the New Zealand Volunteer Service Abroad Scheme (Low, 1982: 76).

Aid from the European Economic Community was received via the Lome I, II, and III agreements. The United Nations Development Programme gave US\$1 million from 1977 – 1981 and gave expertise, study visits and training for development (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 72). The provision of training and technical expertise is particularly useful for Fiji as a Small Island developing state facing human resources constraints. UNDP also gave US\$1 million for technical assistance for agricultural rehabilitation in the central division particularly hard hit by the ravages of Cyclone Tia and Wally (Parliamentary Paper No. 63,

1983: 72). A contribution of \$5 million came from the World Food Programme for the funding of projects from 1977 to 1982, while the United Nations Fund for Population Activities gave \$500,000 for various projects. Assistance was also received from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation for Education and Training and was also directed to Export Market Development Programme (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 72).

The EU gave \$7.25 million for the establishment of the Kalabu Tax Free Zone under the provisions of Lome IV in 1990. It also gave \$F2.3 million (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 20).

In a new development France became a significant aid donor with a grant of \$8.8 million in 1988. This included '30 million French francs for a helicopter and vehicles for the army and police, 2.4 million French francs for a closed circuit security system for the Civil Aviation Authority and relief and rehabilitation equipment, and a loan of 30 million French francs for upgrading the Civil Aviation Authority's operations, Fiji Sugar Corporation equipment and radar system (Mara, 1997: 207).' It helped fill the gap left by traditional donors. Ratu Mara stated that this aid was to influence Fiji to change its position on nuclear testing and its support for self-determination in the French territories. French aid however dropped to \$2.5 million in 1989. Other aid donors increased their grant so that total aid received in 1987 stood at \$23.9 million and rose to \$43.2 million in 1989.

Prime Minister Ratu Mara in 1989 visited South East Asia to seek new partnerships after Australia and New Zealand's post-coup sanctions. This proved fruitful with South Korea agreeing to a loan proposal and talks were established for the commencement of agro-based joint ventures with potential Fijian businesses. His trip to Japan was a diplomatic necessity as according to Ratu Mara personal contact is essential for Japanese external relations (Mara, 1997: 211). Here too Ratu Mara began talks with Japanese business conglomerates interested in hotel development as well as securing scholarship awards for post-graduate studies at the University of the South Pacific. Ratu Mara thanked Japan for their generous aid in the construction of the Nursing School and the fisheries port at Lautoka, as well as their agreement to begin Air Pacific flight services out of Tokyo, as well as the growing number of Japanese tourists to Fiji (Mara, 1997: 211).

Table 1 and 2 show that Australia remained Fiji's largest ODA provider from 1970 – 1979, 1986 – 1989, and in 1990. There was a significant drop of Australian aid in 1987 because of

the coups but in 1988 aid exceeded its pre-coup levels. This suggests the effectiveness of Fiji's diplomacy post-coup together with the role of Fiji's mission in Canberra as well as Australia's interest in the region. By 1986, Japan had increased its aid to Fiji from \$0.5 million USD to \$4 million USD, which has been suggested by commentators as being spurred by its interests in fisheries in the Pacific (Tarte, 1998). However in 1987 Japan reduced its aid to Fiji by half and while it increased in 1988 and 1989 it did not exceed pre-coup levels until 1990. New Zealand gave the most aid in 1976 \$USD7.3 million but this was reduced in half in 1977. In 1978 after Fiji established an overseas mission in Wellington, New Zealand aid increased to \$USD5.8 million in 1979 showing a correlation between overseas mission and aid flow. New Zealand aid to Fiji ranked third behind Australia and United Kingdom respectively with \$FD3.8 million in 1990 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report for 1990 – 1991: 21).

As shown in Table 2, it is important to note that Australia and New Zealand's provision of aid to Fiji resumed a year after the second coup. This was also a timely diplomatic move as Fiji was courting new bilateral partners, with France and Malaysia providing much needed development assistance. The marked increase in French development assistance was seen as a condition for Fiji to moderate her stance on French nuclear testing in Muroroa and decolonisation in New Caledonia, and was considered a potential threat to the solidarity of regional positions on these two issues.

Table 1. Total ODA Net Flow into Fiji 1970 – 1979 (Million US Dollars)

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
DAC Countries										
Australia	0.8	1.2	0.7	2.4	4.5	4.1	3.6	5.1	8.7	10.3
Belgium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	-	-
Germany Fed Republic	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5
Japan	-	-	-	-	0.1	-	0.1	0.3	0.6	0.5
Netherlands	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.6
New Zealand	-	-	1.0	1.8	1.5	4.3	7.3	3.9	4.1	5.8
United Kingdom	5.6	7.8	4.7	8.3	6.6	7.2	8.5	8.8	8.9	7.3
United States	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
TOTAL	6.4	10.0	7.5	13.6	14.0	17.6	20.9	19.4	24.0	25.9
Multilateral										
AS.D.B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	-	-
E.E.C	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.7	1.7	0.4	3.2
U.N	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.5	-	-	-	-
U.N.D.P	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.3	0.8	1.1	1.1
U.N.T.A	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4
Other U.N.	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.3
W.F.P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.5	0.1
TOTAL	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.7	2.5	3.8	2.6	5.1
Bilateral and Multilateral Total	6.9	10.7	8.5	14.6	14.7	19.3	23.3	23.2	26.5	31.0
E.E.C. & Members	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.7	10.9	10.0	11.5

Source: OECD, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Less Developed Countries (1977, 1980) Paris (Low, 1982: 78).

Table 2. Overseas Development Assistance 1986 – 1991 (F\$m)

Country / International Organisation	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Australia	15.1	9.5	16.0	15.4	11.1	11.6
United Kingdom	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.3	3.8	3.8
New Zealand	3.7	4.6	6.7	6.2	3.8	3.7
Japan	8.3	4.0	6.1	6.6	9.8	NA
France	1.7	-	8.1	2.5	-	-
EEC	2.3	1.7	2.0	8.4	2.0	5.2
UNDP	.5	1.1	1.0	.8	.8	.9
Others	-	1.7	2.0	2.0	-	-
Total	33.3	23.9	43.3	43.2	31.3	25.2

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report 1986, Parliamentary Paper No. 7 of 1991, Parliament of Fiji; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report for 1987 – 1989. Parliamentary Paper No. 13 of 1992, Parliament of Fiji; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report for 1990 – 1991. Parliamentary Paper No. 22 of 1992, Parliament of Fiji.

3.2.2.6 Tourism

Fiji's tourism industry developed in the early 1970's and foreign loans were allocated to developing infrastructure to assist the industry (Low, 1982: 32). The construction of the Suva-Nadi highway was an important project. New hotels were also built to cater for increasing visitor arrivals which peaked in 1973 at 186,300 visitors (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 79). A United Nations Development Programme and World Bank Report on the Tourism industry assisted the government in identifying zones for development to cater for the industry's growing visitor arrivals and hotel occupancy (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 80).

In 1982, Tourism was incorporated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because of the external nature of sourcing visitors from offshore and secondly because ‘Fiji’s overseas missions are an important aspect of its relations with foreign countries and the promotion of Fiji as a tourist destination has been part and parcel of the mission’s activities (Parliamentary Paper No. 63 of 1983: 79).’ Visitor arrivals in 1982 exceeded the 200,000 mark with Australians continuing to comprise the bulk of visitors, followed by New Zealand and United States of America. The early 1980’s also saw an increasing arrival of Japanese tourists that eventually replaced Canada as the fourth largest number of visitor arrivals (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 81).

Fiji Visitors Bureau continued in its role as the tourism marketing agency and was allocated \$750,000 for the 1982 financial year. It had also established offices in Sydney and Auckland. Fiji’s overseas missions were also tasked with promoting Fiji as a tourist destination as discussed in later chapters (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 83). Tourist numbers declined dramatically following the 1987 coups. The Fiji government encouraged the tourist industry as an important source of foreign exchange and worked towards establishing stability to lure tourist arrivals. By 1990 tourist arrivals reached 278,000 (Mara, 1997: 217).

3.2.2.7 Relations with Asia

Fiji maintained close ties with Asia especially since a significant percentage of its population was originally from this region. Fiji joined the Economic Commission for Africa and the Far East, Asian Development Bank and applied for membership to the Colombo Plan in 1972, a Commonwealth initiative to encourage economic development in member countries²⁵.

Malaysia and Singapore as previously mentioned agreed to purchase a quota of Fiji’s sugar. Both countries provided technical assistance through the framework of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Report noted that ‘both these countries have been sources of inspiration for Fiji in policies relating to economic development, rural development, and multiracialism (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 28).’

Malaysia became a valuable bilateral partner for Fiji as it increased its development assistance. There was also increased interest from Malaysia for trade and investment opportunities in Fiji. A Malaysia trade display was set up in 1990 (Parliamentary Paper No.

²⁵ [URL://http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombo_Plan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colombo_Plan) accessed 15th November, 2010.

13, 1992: 20). Fiji also signed an air agreement with Malaysia in 1987 (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 6).

Prior to the 1987 coup, close relations had been forged with Japan. The Japanese Foreign Minister Mr Kuranari, visited Fiji in January 1987, and declared that two of Japan's foreign policy principles for the region were 'respect for independence and autonomy regardless of the scale of the nations involved and regional development assistance (Parliamentary Paper 13, 1992: 28). Close ties continued as Japan did not impose sanctions on Fiji's post-coup governments.

Japan established its embassy in Suva in 1978, followed by the Republic of Korea 1980 and Malaysia in 1982. Bangladesh, Pakistan, Singapore, Thailand and Sri Lanka had their Canberra based ambassadors accredited to Fiji, and Indonesia and the Philippines had their Wellington based ambassadors accredited to Fiji (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 22).

The People's Republic of China, Republic of China / Taiwan and the Republic of India's relations with Fiji deserve separate discussion as each has held a special place in Fiji's foreign relations.

Peoples Republic of China and Republic of China / Taiwan

Taiwan established an 'official trade mission – the East Asia Trade Centre in Suva in 1971 which was a channel for technical cooperation particularly in agriculture (Tarte, 2010: 119). Republic of China therefore established relations with Fiji much earlier than the People's Republic of China (PRC). Taiwanese fishing fleets were frequent traders in Fiji.

Fiji has a significant ethnic Chinese population that has contributed to Fiji's economic development. Early Chinese settlers had ties with the Nationalist party, establishing the Kuomintang party in Fiji and in time were to establish a school named after the party's founding father, Sun Yat Sen (Ali, 2002).

Following the warming of Sino-American relations in the early 1970's, Fiji established diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China in 1975. Fiji's sensitivity to China / Taiwan relations is indicated by its support for China's admission to the United Nations to occupy the China seat and its objection to Taiwan's expulsion (Low, 1981:85). Fiji therefore maintained a neutral foreign policy for both the People's Republic of China and the Republic

of China. In 1988 the Taiwan trade office in Suva was upgraded to the 'Republic of China Trade mission with consular privileges (Tarte, 2010: 120).' Fiji has maintained a 'One – China' policy but also emphasised its trade partnership with Taiwan. Fiji's leaders recognised in the 1970's that China would be a valuable partner because of their willingness to provide assistance and more so by their policy of non-interference in domestic politics (Low, 1981: 166).

Fiji's bilateral relations with China expanded with Fiji's Trade Mission to China in 1978, followed by a Parliamentary delegation to China in 1979. The Fiji Basketball team also visited China in 1978. Fiji also hosted a high level visit by the Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China, Madame Chen Muhua in 1979. This was followed by a China Trade Fair in 1980. Chinese acrobats and martial arts experts also visited Fiji in cultural exchanges (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 25).

The Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara paid a state visit to the People's Republic of China in 1978, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau visited China in 1980 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 24).

Trade with China was marked by China's purchase of 32, 630 tonnes of sugar in 1980 (Low, 1982: 68). In the mid-1980's overseas development assistance from China accounted for 1.75 per cent of Fiji's total foreign aid (Tarte, 2010: 119).

India

Fiji established diplomatic relations with India in 1970 and India set up its High Commission in the same year. A large migrant population in Fiji has been of common interest to both countries. The Centennial celebrations to mark the coming of Indian indentured labourers in 1979 were attended by two government ministers. The Prime Minister the late Mrs Indira Gandhi visited Fiji in September, 1981 enhancing close bilateral ties. India's foreign Minister also attended the CHOGM meeting in October, 1982 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 23).

India has provided advisers and technical expertise and has granted scholarships to Fiji citizens to study statistics, trade policy and rural development in India (Low, 1982: 74). However, relations with India soured following ethnic violence and intimidation after the 1987 coups. India expressed outrage at the victimisation of Indo-Fijians and condemned

Sitiveni Rabuka's coup and the subsequent interim regime led by Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. In 1989, Fiji closed the Indian High Commission in Suva exercising diplomacy by expulsion, showing its displeasure at India's alleged interference in Fiji's internal politics. However, while the embassy was closed Fiji – India diplomatic relations were not severed (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 11).

3.3 Post- Mara Years 1990 – 2010

3.3.1 Historical Developments

The first post-coup elections in May 1992 elections was won by Mr Sitiveni Rabuka's Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei party (SVT). Following the submission of the Reeves Commission's report to the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee, the 1997 constitution was promulgated²⁶. Fiji was readmitted to the Commonwealth in 1997 and general elections were held in 1999. Mr Mahendra Chaudhry was sworn in as the first Indo-Fijian Prime Minister in May 1999, following the Labour Party, Fijian Association Party and Party of National Unity's coalition election victory.

However, Mr Chaudhry's government was overthrown in a civilian led coup in May 19th 2000. The impasse which followed was resolved with the military appointed interim administration with Mr Laisenia Qarase as Prime Minister. Elections in August 2001 brought Qarase's party to power (Lal, 2006). The March 2006 elections brought Qarase's SDL government to power and reflected the ethnic divide in Fiji politics as the electorate once again voted along racial lines (Fraenkel & Firth, 2007; Lal, 2006).

However, political tensions continued between the military and the Qarase government because of the latter's race based policies of affirmative action, and alleged corruption. The military called on the government to withdraw its controversial bills or resign. Bainimarama issued Qarase a list of six demands and failure to meet these demands would lead to 'Clean Up Campaign.' Attempts to resolve the crisis failed when army commander Voreqe Bainimarama overthrew Qarase's elected government on 5th December, 2006.

²⁶ A Joint Parliamentary Select Committee was set up to review the 1990 constitution because of the disproportionate representation given to Fijians. As a result the Reeves Commission comprised of Sir Paul Reeves, Dr Brij Lal and Mr Tomasi Vakatora sought wide consultation in Fiji and abroad to submit its report.

The military backed Interim Government has until January 2012 ruled by decree which restricted personal liberties of free speech and assembly. The media too came under tight control of the military government. In 2007 a National Council for Building a Better Fiji, comprised of 45 prominent citizens drew up a People's Charter that was to address some of the crucial problems of race based politics and to formulate direction that would result in non-racial elections in 2014 (A Strategic Framework for Change, 2009). This will lead to the formulation of a new constitution.

3.3.2 Foreign Policy Trends

Fiji's foreign policy after 1990 continued to uphold a number of foreign policy concerns of the Mara period. These included group diplomacy at the UN and regional cooperation and diplomacy. Economic ties were maintained with Fiji's traditional partners such as the European Union, Australia and New Zealand, and Fiji also continued to play an active role in highlighting key foreign policy issues on the environment, trade, security and overseas development assistance. However, this period was also marked by significant changes as a result of globalisation and the accompanying liberal economic regime of the World Trade Organisation. Foreign policy changes were also implemented as a result of Fiji's political crises that led to the diversification of foreign partnerships and subsequently the opening up of new overseas missions.

3.4 Continuities

3.4.1 Group Diplomacy at the UN

Fiji maintained its group diplomacy at the UN with Forum Island Countries, the Asia group now renamed the Asia Pacific group, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and in post-2006 the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS). Key issues of concern for small island developing states were raised at these fora.

Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry addressed the 54th Session of the UN General Assembly in 1999, and reiterated a key theme of his government, the call for international organisations and developed countries to be mindful of the impact of globalisation on vulnerable economies.

*'Globalisation...must be accompanied by a strong and genuine international commitment, especially by those economies that dominate world trade, international finance, technology and industrial production, to consider special arrangements for developing economies.. Small developing economies urgently need the assistance of dominant world trade powers and international finance institutions to enable them to benefit from trade liberalisation and address their socio-economic problems from poverty alleviation to the debt-relief.'*²⁷

Fiji also worked with Pacific island countries to meet international human rights obligations. In 2004, it was decided that a UN Human Rights Commission Office was to be based in Fiji. Government departments also met to compile Fiji's report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of 2003 (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 19).

Fiji, through the work of Ambassador Cavuiliati and Counsellor Tupou at the Brussels embassy, was elected to the Executive Board of UNESCO in 2005. This was another significant position for Fiji on the international stage as the Executive Board is a crucial decision making body that outlines the work programme and budget estimates for the organisation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade, Mutual Outlook, Issue 1, Oct 2004: 2).

Despite diplomatic isolation post- 2006, Fiji's Permanent Representative to the UN, Mr Peter Thomson served as Chairman of the Asian Group, (now renamed the Asia Pacific Group), in 2011 indicating that Fiji had the support of a majority of member states. The Asian Group is comprised of 53 member states. This showed heavy commitment from a Small Island developing state, as its role was important in leading consultations for the election of the President of the General Assembly for its 66th Session. Mr Thomson stated that this was a successful achievement because they developed a system that was not divisive (Ministry of Information News 18th April, 2011).

Pacific Small Island developing states (PSIDS) emerged as a more active group due to Fiji's role in the UN. Fiji was also appointed as the leading state to represent PSIDS on oceanic matters at the UN. Fiji promoted a 'blue economy' to ensure sustainable use of ocean resources ('Mission lobbies for Blue Economy' Fiji Focus April 30th 2010: 9). The oceans

²⁷ URL: http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min99_eenglish/state_e/d5301e.pdf accessed 8th February, 2010.

resources continued to be a foreign policy concern for small island developing states as they depend on it for their livelihood.

3.4.2 Regional cooperation and diplomacy

Fiji continued to strengthen its support for regional cooperation and the formulation of common positions at international fora. However, Fiji strengthened its participation and involvement in the Melanesian Spearhead Group and Pacific Small Island Developing States after 2006 when diplomatic sanctions were imposed by Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands Forum.

The regional organisation, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) coordinated the Pacific's response to the Earth Summit in 1992, raising issues on rising sea level and its effects on small low lying islands (Parliamentary Paper No. 22 of 1992: 18). In 1992 Fiji with Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu organised a Pacific village at the Seville Expo, showcasing the islands' culture, people and economy.

Following ethnic tensions in Solomon Islands and a political crisis in Fiji, the Pacific Islands Forum in 2000 agreed to the Biketawa Declaration outlining strategies for dealing with politically unstable member states. The Declaration agreed to uphold principles of good governance, individual rights of citizens, democratic processes and institutions. However, the Qarase government was ambivalent about this regional framework (Qiolevu, 2011).

In 2003, Fiji along with Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Samoa sent police and military forces to Solomon Islands to maintain security as part of a Pacific Islands Forum initiative, Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) exercising the terms of the Biketawa Declaration. Fiji sent police personnel to assist RAMSI and appointed Fiji's Mr Mataiasi Lomaloma, as Assistant Special Coordinator²⁸. Fiji played a significant role in maintaining regional security, after it had displayed a credible return to democracy in 2001.

With increasing global connections, regional cooperation was encouraged by the Forum, more so because democracy, human rights, and good governance were seen as conditional for cooperation and provision of aid. Smaller Island States (SIS - Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru,

²⁸ RAMSI <http://www.solomontimes.com/news.aspx?nwID=648> accessed 26th December, 2010.

Niue, Republic of Marshall Islands and Tuvalu), a sub-group of the sixteen member countries of the Forum expressed shock at Fiji's 2000 parliamentary takeover. More pressing for SIS, was their reliance on Fiji as a transshipment service and concern about the possibility of Forum imposed sanctions (Pacific Islands Report, October 27, 2000). Fiji's strategic position was acknowledged by Australian Foreign Minister, Mr Alexander Downer, who was cautious about the imposition of sanctions that could impact Fiji's vulnerable economy.²⁹

New Zealand also imposed sanctions and travel bans targeting those involved in the 2006 coup or closely associated with the military and interim administration.

Fiji's role in the Pacific Islands Forum declined significantly following the constitutional crisis of 2009 and its subsequent suspension from the Pacific Islands Forum. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General, Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade stated that 'there (was) no assurance of commitment to an early return of elections; to the democratic constitutional governance for Fiji as Forum leaders (had) long been urging the interim administration (Markovic, 2009:17).' Fiji has maintained that it will not bow to Australian and New Zealand pressure and will make its own decision as a sovereign state on its roadmap for democracy. There is growing debate about Australia and New Zealand's policy on Fiji. Some argue that Australia's sanctions and hardline approach to Fiji have resulted in an impasse and undermined the cohesiveness of the Pacific Islands Forum (Herr, 2010: 6). The Australia and New Zealand influenced PIF has been displaced in the region, as Fiji has formed friends within the region through the sub-regional group Melanesian Spearhead Group. In the UN, the Pacific Small Island Development States group has displaced Australia and New Zealand from representing the region. Fiji has also formed its own relationships through its proactive foreign policy that 'Looks North' to Asia and beyond (O'Keefe, 2012).

Sub regionalism

Fiji joined the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) in 1996. Formed in 1986 by Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the Melanesian states were united in their anti-colonial stance that differed from the more conservative approach of their Polynesian neighbours (Lal, 2000: 327). The MSG free trade agreement has benefitted Fiji's

²⁹ Downer speaking at the 'Pacific Economic Outlook Seminar' at the Sydney University, 2nd November, 2000 in <http://www.dfat.au>

manufacturing industry. This was also a significant political development, as Ratu Mara's leadership was more aligned to the Polynesian islands in the Pacific. The Post-Mara period formed closer relations with its Melanesian neighbours. Papua New Guinea was the first country to recognize Fiji's new political set up following the May 1987 coup (Mara, 1997: 206). PNG also emerged as an increasingly important trade partner.

The sub-regional organisation worked well when trade relations were of mutual benefit to all parties. However, strains in the trade relations emerged between Fiji and Vanuatu in 2005 through the trade ban on Fiji biscuits, which was a loss of F\$2 million for Flour Mills of Fiji. Fiji retaliated by imposing a ban on Vanuatu kava US\$3.2 million. The trade disagreement was resolved in December 2005 when both countries agreed to freer trade, and Vanuatu's Finance Minister Willie Rarua extended his government's apology to the acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pita Nacuva (Foreign relations of Fiji – Trade war with Vanuatu).³⁰

Fiji's relations with Papua New Guinea were also strained in 2005 when Fijian mercenaries entered Papua New Guinea illegally and were allegedly involved in assisting militia in Bougainville.³¹

Fiji was to host the MSG leaders meeting in July 2010 as the next Chairman of the group and it was referred to as the MSG-plus talks with other countries were invited to attend. Fiji was using the MSG meeting to lobby and build up its network of allies to counter its suspension from the PIF. But prior to the meeting Vanuatu Prime Minister Edward Natapei cancelled Fiji's chairmanship stating that the MSG upholds values of democracy and good governance (Fraenkel, 2010: 9). Bainimarama in retaliation expelled the Australian High Commissioner, Ms Sarah Roberts, arguing that the Australian Foreign Minister had reminded the Vanuatu Prime Minister of the 'inappropriateness' of the talks (Fraenkel, 2010: 9).

In place of the MSG meeting, Fiji convened an 'Engaging Fiji' meeting that was attended by PNG Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare, Kiribati President Anote Tong, and Solomon Islands Prime Minister Derek Sikua. Bainimarama presented Fiji's National Charter for Progress and Change and the framework for progress to elections in 2014. Bainimarama also

³⁰ http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Foreign_relations_of_Fiji_-_Diplomatic_and_trade_developments/id/5057714 accessed 31st December, 2010.

³¹ <http://goto-fiji.com/travel/14/foreign-relations-of-fiji.html> accessed 4th July, 2011.

maintained his opposition to Australia and New Zealand's control over the Forum by stating that it was time for Pacific islands to 'break the shackles of the past' and move out of the 'traditional spheres of influence' (Fraenkel, 2010: 9). The communiqué from this meeting recognised Fiji's 'Strategic Framework of Change' and its steps to achieving democracy. This contrasted with the Forum stance as the PIF in May 2009 had 'unanimously' agreed to Fiji's suspension from the Forum. It was clear that Fiji's position was causing a rift to emerge amongst Forum member countries and undermined the regional organisation (Fraenkel, 2010: 9).

Fiji hosted the MSG in April 2011, at which Indonesia was invited to take observer status. It further indicated Fiji's independent and pro-active foreign policy where it was willing to engage with a wider range of partners. The 2011 meeting was considered a diplomatic victory for Fiji as it gained credibility from Pacific island states and it challenged the unity of the PIF. The regional meeting also indicated that the Forum was losing its significance as the Pacific regional organisation and emphasised the island states preference for an organisation devoid of Australian and New Zealand dominance (Herr & Bergin, 2011: 2).

3.4.3 Economic ties with EU, Australia and New Zealand

Since 2000 Fiji continued to negotiate its economic ties with the EU, Australia and New Zealand through preferential trade agreements and negotiated favourable terms within the regulations of the new liberal trade regime. Fiji along with ACP and Forum Island countries formed solidarity in negotiating trade terms with these large powerful countries. The diplomacy they engaged in was based on 'consensus, norm-setting and collective application of the rule of law' rather than the exercise of power by large states over small states (Camilleri, 2007: 9)

Lome IV (1990 – 1999) allowed for the continuance of Sugar Protocol, but also raised concerns that these were not compliant with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) established in 1995. Fiji was allocated 165,348 tonnes of sugar, the second largest quota, to export at preferential price receiving between 45million to 55 million ECU. Fish and garment exports also benefitted from a preferential trade arrangement. Lome IV encouraged structural adjustment policies in the ACP key industries, while also guaranteeing the provision of aid. In December 1994 both the EU and ACP countries were able to negotiate a 5 year waiver with the WTO. The ACP / EC Joint Assembly meeting in 1990 was attended by Fiji's

Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr Berenado Vunibobo. The meeting focused on specific issues affecting Small Island developing states in particular fisheries and the environment (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 12). Fiji was reappointed to the Bureau of the Joint Assembly as the Pacific representative and was also appointed to the working party of the Intra-ACP trade (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 12).

The ACP / EU countries signed the Cotonou Agreement in 2000 that replaced the Lome Agreement so that the multilateral trade agreement would be in line with the WTO and uphold sustainable development in the ACP states. In June 2005, the ‘ACP / EU signed the revised version of the Cotonou Agreement’ and agreed to further improve the quality and effectiveness of ACP / EU. The Cotonou Agreement in addition to agreed quota’s for export commodities to the EU markets, stipulated conditions to assist economic sustainability and political stability. More specifically, the revised version agreed to ‘eradicate poverty and assist ACP countries with their gradual integration into the global economy; and reinforce sustainable development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade Annual Report 2005:19).’ These trade agreements were tied to development. It also provided for cooperation between the ACP and EU and the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ACP / EU also agreed to work together to ‘fight terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade Annual Report 2005:19).’ The EU has also agreed to provide assistance to ACP in addition to the European Development Fund (EDF) ‘to build their human, institutional and technical resources in the above mentioned areas (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade Annual Report 2005:19).’

Fiji’s preferential trade agreement under Lome and then Cotonou was replaced by Pacific ACP countries with the EU negotiating the terms of the Economic Partnership Agreement from 2000 – 2007. The framework and terms of the EPA were formulated, bearing in mind the other multilateral trade agreements such as the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Trade Agreement with Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the Pacific Islands Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) which includes all the ‘Pacific ACP countries in a regional trade agreement in goods’ and Pacific Agreement for Closer Economic Relations (PACER) ‘that (was) negotiated with the 16 member countries of the Pacific Islands Forum (Foreign Affairs Bulletin, Issue 06, 2006: 3).’ These trade terms were negotiated to overcome

constraints associated with smallness and to also cope with a decline in aid (Falemaka, 2002).³²

Fiji initialled the EPA with the EU in December 2009 which allows for ‘goods only’ duty free access to the EU’s 27 member countries. ‘Fiji is to remove customs duties on 87% of its imports from the EU in the next 15 years³³’. In addition, the agreement also allows for cooperation whereby the EU will assist Fiji with animal and plant health that meets EU regulations for potential export products to EU markets³⁴.

However, the EU’s Council of Ministers condemned the 2006 coup and on 11th December, announced that

‘These developments are unacceptable for the international committee. Commitments must be respected. An early and inclusive domestic political process leading to a return to constitutional order and democracy in Fiji will allow us to provide assistance to Fiji, at a time when global economic prospects are becoming increasingly difficult.’

The EU announced that if it did not see a firm timeline for Fiji’s return to democracy, then it would cancel Fiji’s trade with EU which amounted to 24 million Euros (Markovic, 2009: 24).

Similarly the preferential trade terms with Australia and New Zealand in the 1990’s to 2000’s identified Australia as Fiji’s largest export market as shown in Table 6 and 7. In 1994 Fiji’s exports to Australia increased accounting for 25% of domestic exports. The main export item for this period was garments. By 1999 the export of garments to Australia had also increased accounting for 40.1% of domestic markets. In 2003 garment exports to Australia had dropped to 26.6% of export markets. Fiji’s major export destinations for 2003 were Australia, United States of America, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Japan.

The statistics for Fiji’s exports from 1994 – 2003 (see Table 6 & 7) indicate that Australia remained the leading export destination with the best years being 1998 and 1999 but also indicated that exports to Australia seem to be declining dropping from F\$385 million in 1999 to F\$254 million in 2003. Exports to UK reached F\$261 million in 1990 but dropped to

³² PECC Trade Forum, Mere Falemaka. 2002. ‘A Small States Perspective on Reform of Article XXIV.

³³ <http://www.acp-eucourier.info/Newsview.79.0.html> accessed 21st December, 2010.

³⁴ <http://www.acp-eucourier.info/Newsview.79.0.html> accessed 21st December, 2010.

F\$185 million in 2003. Fiji's exports to Malaysia from 1990 to 2003 did not exceed F\$70 million with no figures recorded for 2000 to 2003. Significantly Fiji's exports to USA show increasing figures reaching F\$259 million in 2001.

Table 3: Major Export Destinations 1984 – 1993(Value F\$)

Country	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
United Kingdom	82,959,747	108,732,225	138,790,317	152,827,959	161,640,607	261,180,965	171,533,000	178,134,614	142,518,916
Australia	36,502,418	53,378,347	72,582,706	123,574,463	134,385,191	122,456,784	98,667,000	110,531,260	151,581,778
New Zealand	17,266,867	20,929,762	23,469,487	44,514,775	92,384,850	89,000,055	51,066,000	35,142,621	32,239,031
Japan	6,376,757	5,416,865	12,355,761	26,383,012	40,385,037	55,437,292	37,752,000	33,778,421	50,928,508
Malaysia	-	-	-	-	-	66,987,024	29,520,000	40,778,525	37,500,098
USA	-	-	-	-	-	56,229,980	72,418,000	82,096,259	89,709,000

Source: International Merchandise Trade Statistics 1990 Bureau of Statistics; Overseas Merchandise Trade Statistics 1994 Bureau of Statistics

Table 4: Major Export Destinations 1994 – 2003 (Value F\$)

Country	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
United Kingdom	154,878,092	175,353,758	166,492,361	152,195,069	210,449,653	135,554,673	178,094,473	184,250,131	183,043,564	185,206,623
Australia	166,330,041	198,880,047	264,287,708	293,496,628	338,977,001	385,141,244	315,976,624	276,377,214	219,877,893	254,765,024
New Zealand	38,288,913	40,805,134	35,590,289	39,142,120	39,100,995	45,176,896	46,025,959	40,517,608	43,071,904	49,657,776
Japan	54,113,502	50,096,185	68,775,324	42,116,628	41,550,928	36,628,625	44,656,487	52,973,974	63,410,435	41,533,233
Malaysia	38,117,919	41,265,349	31,312,826	16,900,767	6,174,555	56,275	-	-	-	-
USA	88,971,213	99,287,132	90,488,355	108,390,464	82,141,093	125,680,191	223,551,519	259,413,806	201,560,356	225,186,917

Source: Overseas Merchandise Trade Statistics 1994 – 2003 Bureau of Statistics, Fiji

3.4.4 Key Issues – Environment, Security, ODA

Governments in the Post-Mara period prioritised key issues of the previous era, including environment, security and sought overseas development assistance.

Addressing the UN in 2002, Prime Minister Qarase reiterated the importance of the oceans to Pacific Island states, stating the importance of 'conservation and sustainable use of the Ocean (which) is vital to the survival of the human race (Qarase, 2002: 2)³⁵.' In response to the need for protection of the oceans as vital resources, Qarase added that it was for this reason that the Fiji government had supported a 'regional Ocean Policy' which stipulates the principles for 'promoting the Pacific as a maritime environment in support of sustainable development' which are contained in the 'UN Convention on the Law of the Sea as well as other

³⁵ Statement by Hon. Laisenia Qarase, Prime Minister and Minister for Fijian Culture at the 57th session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, Thursday 19th September, 2002.

international and regional agreements'. Two years later, in 2004, Prime Minister Qarase re-emphasised the need for protection of the oceans and its marine life.

'We will stand united to guard our Oceanic heritage, which is a treasure for all humanity. Our region has the world's largest remaining, sustainable tuna fishery, an essential source of food for the global market. But more than 95% of the value of the mid-Pacific Ocean tuna catch goes to distant water fishing nations (Qarase, 2004: 2)³⁶.

As a result of this stance, Fiji ratified the regional fisheries treaty under the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Convention in June 2004 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade, Mutual Outlook, Issue 1, Oct 2004: 2).

In relation to security issues, the Rabuka era (1992 – 1999) expanded Fiji's contribution to UN Peace keeping operations. Fiji as a small island developing state was presenting itself as an international player concerned with upholding peace in trouble spots worldwide. Fiji troops were sent to join UNIFIL, MFO in Sinai, UNGOMAP in Afghanistan and UNTAG in Namibia (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 7). Despite arrears in re-imbursements payments from UN, Fiji in 1991 provided peacekeeping troops to UNIFIL (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 10). Fiji troops in Lebanon numbered 726 for 1990 and 1991, while 478 troops were assigned for Sinai duties in 1990 and 378 in 1991.

In response to UN requests in 1991, Fiji selected police and army contingents for duties in Iraq and Kuwait – UN KOM. Twenty five police officers were sent to Iraq in 1991 for peace monitoring duties under the UN Guard Contingent for Iraq Initiatives. Senior army officers were also sent to Afghanistan for peace monitoring duties (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 10, 11).

Fiji's prominent role in peacekeeping operations led to Fiji's election to the UN Peace Building Commission in May 2006 for a two year term. Fiji's then Permanent Representative to the UN, Mr Isikia Savua said that 'all member countries of the UN were eager to be pioneer members of this important commission ... and for a very small country like Fiji to assert its position among the bigger nations speaks volumes of the international support Fiji

³⁶ Statement at the 59th Session of the UNGA, Hon Laisenia Qarase Prime Minister of the Republic of the Fiji Islands, Friday 24th September, 2004, New York.

has in the area of international peace and stability ('Fiji on New UN Body' Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade Issue 06, June 2006).'

Despite the political crises of 2000 and 2006 overseas development assistance from donor countries was not adversely affected. Australia imposed 'smart sanctions' after the 2000 coup that downgraded the aid relationship with the suspension of projects involving naval visits and joint military exercises. However, Australia remained Fiji's largest aid donor even though strained relations existed between the two countries.

The EU in 2004 through its European Development Fund provided assistance to the education sector to the value of 23.1 million Euros for the Fiji Education Sector Programme (FESP) for 2005 – 2009. The aid package was directed to five key result areas that included improvements to infrastructure, resources and materials and capacity building of personnel.³⁷ The EU also contributed '11 million Euros for the construction of the new and improved Rewa Bridge in April 2006, 4.15 million Euros for the upgrading of the Lautoka Teachers College campus in September 2005, 5.2 million Euros for the construction of the Naboro landfill in October 2005, 4 million Euros for the construction of sewage pipeline at Kinoya March 2005.'³⁸

China's aid which increased substantially in this period was directed to the construction of major projects such as the Suva sports stadium in preparation for the 2003 South Pacific Games.³⁹

³⁷ EU Aid Programs <http://www.delfji.ec.europa.eu/en/achievements/fiji.htm> accessed 4th July, 2011.

³⁸ EU Aid Programs <http://www.delfji.ec.europa.eu/en/achievements/fiji.htm> accessed 4th July, 2011.

³⁹ Foreign relations of Fiji – Relations with China and Taiwan in http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Foreign_relations_of_Fiji_-_Diplomatic_and_trade_developments/id/5057714 accessed 31st December 2010.

Table 5: AID ASSISTANCE BY COUNTRY 2000 – 2010

Donor	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	Actua l F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Actual F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Actua l F\$m	Rev F\$m	Budget F\$m
Australia	4.00	4.56	6.80	12.50	12.50	16.90	17.43	21.88	20.90	16.30	21.70
Canada	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.04	0.04	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
China	2.75	6.25	2.75	0.00	0.00	0.30	1.41	17.85	17.30	11.80	9.30
EU	2.20	3.31	12.84	22.20	22.20	27.82	8.39	24.00	17.40	25.90	20.30
France	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Japan	3.20	4.00	4.80	8.20	8.20	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.00	3.00
Korea	0.06	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.40
New Zealand	0.09	0.62	0.86	0.40	0.40	1.90	2.61	0.83	2.90	1.70	9.60
UNDP	0.25	2.12	0.25	0.01	0.01	0.10	0.01	0.80	1.40	1.20	0.60
Others	0.80	0.80	1.60	2.59	2.59	2.40	6.75	2.07	4.30	3.90	8.90
Total	13.60	22.14	30.35	45.94	45.94	50.44	36.60	67.43	64.20	77.10	73.80
Comprisi ng											
Cash	1.10	0.46	0.27	1.97	3.40	4.38	6.40	3.5	12.60	5.40	8.90
Aid in Kind	12.50	21.68	30.08	43.97	42.54	46.06	30.20	63.93	51.60	71.70	64.90

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs website.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj/index/php?option=com_content&view=article&id=76&Itemid=91 accessed 2nd May, 2011.

The aid statistics for 2000 – 2010 (Table 5) incorporate the governments of Qarase from 2000 to 2006 and Bainimarama since 2006. It is significant to note that Australia, China and the EU increased their aid assistance after the 2006 coup. However, Australia's aid dropped slightly in 2009 to F\$16.3 million but is similar to the aid given in 2005.

3.5 Changes

The 1990's brought significant changes in Fiji's foreign policy with globalisation and the free trade regime, World Trade Organisation (WTO). It also marked the diversification of Fiji's foreign partnerships and the establishment of new overseas missions. The latter two changes have to a large extent been a response to political crises within Fiji.

Globalisation is defined as 'a process in which the production and financial structures of countries are becoming interlinked by an increasing number of cross-border transactions to create an international division of labour in which national wealth comes, increasingly, to depend on economic agents in other countries (Bairoch & Kazul-Wright in Firth, 2000: 2 & 3).' Globalisation ushered in government policies for structural adjustments so that public enterprises would be privatised to be more efficient. It was also accompanied by a greater degree of accountability to the neoliberal free trade framework of the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation (Firth, 2000: 10). Globalisation was characterized by free trade and the removal of trade barriers such as tariffs, quotas, subsidies and preferential trade arrangements; technological advancement and speed and ease of communication with the internet that has brought in electronic commerce; and the free movement of capital (Firth, 2000: 11 – 14).

Small island developing states had to make significant adjustments in order to compete on a level playing field with other states with a greater degree of resources. However, it is also important to note that most small island developing states were rushed into globalisation and its liberal trade agenda. External forces from General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) dictated that these small island developing states had to adjust their economies and trade patterns. Fiji had benefitted for 30 years from preferential price from the European market for its sugar exports. Once Fiji became WTO compliant these terms under the Sugar Protocol of the Lome Agreement between ACP and EU, as well as SPARTECA with Australia and New Zealand, and the Multi-Fibre Arrangement were to change.

Fiji with other PIF member countries in the Leaders Forum in Auckland agreed to the Pacific Plan in 2004 that would promote development in the region based on four key pillars – economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 4). The small island developing states had formulated a common plan to help them adjust to the challenges and constraints of limited economic resources in a liberal trade regime. It was a concrete strategy at group diplomacy for island states with shared interests and common concerns.

The 37th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Summit in 2006 agreed that regional integration in energy, transport and ICT, while strengthening inter-governmental processes in support of sustainable development, economic growth, good governance and security would strengthen the Pacific Islands Forum states position in globalisation (Firth, 2007: 10). The leaders also welcomed proposals for bulk purchasing of petroleum and also called on SOPAC to organise a regional meeting of Energy Ministers to discuss ‘challenges facing the region, as well as look into opportunities for renewable energy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade, Mutual Outlook, Issue 8, December 2006: 5).’ Regional Ministers Meetings in various sectors were also held to establish regional positions in coping with globalisation.

In keeping with the liberal trade regime, Forum Island Countries agreed to PICTA in April 2003 which Fiji along with 10 other countries ratified. PICTA is a free trade area for Forum Island Countries to gradually reduce tariffs over an 8 year period while Small Island States have a ten year period to adjust. Forum Island countries also agreed to a tariff reduction implementation schedule which Tonga and Samoa have accepted. These reductions began in 2005 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade Mutual Outlook, Issue 1 2004: 10).

PACER, signed by Forum Island countries, sets out a gradual timeframe for a free trade arrangement with Australia and New Zealand to be reviewed on a three year interval. It allows for the gradual implementation of free trade between the FIC’s and Australia and New Zealand. ‘PACER accords Australia and New Zealand with essentially ‘equal first negotiating rights’ with Forum Island Countries – that should any PACER party begin negotiations with any other non-Party, then they must begin negotiations with Australia and New Zealand on a free trade agreement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade Mutual Outlook, Issue 1 2004, 10).’ It also allowed for a Regional Trade Facilitation Programme (RTFP) ‘for technical assistance and trade capacity building, financial and

technical assistance from Australia and New Zealand (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Outlook Issue 1 2004: 10).’

3.5.1 Diversification of Foreign Partnerships

Fiji’s Look North foreign policy was first adopted in 1987 as trade sanctions were imposed by traditional neighbours Australia and New Zealand. Ratu Mara’s caretaker government’s ‘Look North’ foreign policy sought diplomatic and trade ties with Asian countries that would be willing to establish ties (Low-O’Sullivan, 1989: 35). The Minister of Foreign Affairs visited China in 1987 and ‘pledged that Fiji would work to strengthen and expand the existing good relationship into mutually beneficial dimensions (Low-O’Sullivan, 1989: 37).’ There was also an influx of Chinese businessmen and investors that flocked into the country to take advantage of the tax-free garment industry, lured by the opportunity of acquiring Fijian citizenship and the prospect of using Fiji as a stepping stone to Australia and New Zealand.

The Qarase government in 2001 further diversified Fiji’s foreign partnerships in its continuation of the ‘Look North’ foreign policy that sought closer relations with China. Prime Minister Qarase stated,

‘We look now for new markets, where there is flexibility of entry and a readiness to meet the export needs of small, isolated island countries. This is what we would like to engage on with China as we increasingly look north for the answers to our trade and investment aspirations.’⁴¹

Fiji in 2004 instituted its improved relations with China and formulated its Draft Statement on Fiji’s ‘One China Policy’ for implementation in 2005 (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 11). However Fiji’s application of this policy was challenged on two occasions in 2005, firstly when the Republic of China (Taiwan) President Chen Shui bian was met by Vice President Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, and other chiefs and senators during a brief stop-over in Nadi, at the Sheraton. The Foreign Minister, Mr Kaliopate Tavola delivered the government statement to curb an irate reaction from the People’s Republic of China, stating that the

⁴¹People’s Republic of China-Fiji Relations

http://www.ask.com/wiki/People's_Republic_of_China%E2%80%93Fiji_relations accessed 26th November, 2010.

leaders met the Taiwanese President in their private capacity. Secondly, Health Minister Mr Solomone Naivalu voted in support of Taiwan's observer status to the World Health Organisation in 2005. The incident led to the Chairman of the People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) visit to meet Prime Minister Qarase to iron out these differences. The government responded that it could not afford to lose a valuable partner like China.⁴² Fiji has however continued its unofficial ties with Taiwan despite China's insistence that Fiji weaken its ties with Taiwan. In 2002, Fiji opened its Trade and cultural office in Taipei, which indicated the Fiji government's policy of maintaining its trade and cultural ties with Fiji (Tarte, 2010: 124).

The Bainimarama government has significantly strengthened its relations with Asian countries. China in particular has contributed much development assistance, although a number of these were initiated in the 1990's (Fraenkel, 2010: 10). After the 2006 coup, China increasingly became a valued bilateral partner because it did not interfere in Fiji's domestic politics.

China has stood by Fiji and agreed to various commitments in education, cultural and people to people exchanges that strengthened Sino-Fijian relations. On receiving these agreements, Prime Minister Bainimarama re-affirmed Fiji's adherence to the 'One China' policy, and thanked China for 'fully recognizing Fiji's sovereignty and adopting a policy of non-interference in its domestic affairs.'⁴³ As a small state Fiji has established its independence in its foreign policy and has diversified its foreign policy so as to maximise its economic gains in export markets, accessing potential investors and sourcing overseas development assistance.

Fiji has further diversified its foreign relations by strengthening relations with another Asian state, Indonesia which held the influential position of Chair of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Fiji Focus April 16th 2011: 2). The strength of its economy provides another market opportunity for Fiji's exports. Indonesia has been described as a potential candidate for emerging economic powers BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), (East Asia Forum Weekly Digest 23rd May, 2011).

⁴² <http://goto-fiji.com/travel/14/foreign-relations-of-fiji.html> accessed 4th July, 2011.

⁴³ http://www.ask.com/wiki/People's_Republic_of_China%E2%80%93Fiji_relations accessed 26th November, 2010.

3.5.2 New Overseas Missions

Due to Fiji's increased and improved relations with Asia as part of its 'Look North' foreign policy, Fiji opened an embassy in Beijing in 2001 and in New Delhi in 2005. China and Fiji strengthened ties following a high level delegation visit to Beijing in 2002 where they agreed to cooperate in trade, economy, technology, agriculture, fishery, education and culture, health and tourism.⁴⁴ Prime Minister Qarase led a high level delegation to India in October 2005 to also officiate at the opening of Fiji's embassy in New Delhi. India was deemed to be an important ally for Fiji because they shared common positions in upholding the causes of developing states. Fiji also valued India as an influential country at the G77 (Group of 77 Developing States), NAM and WTO foras (Fiji-India Bilateral Brief, October 2005: 3). India according to the 2003 Goldman Sachs report is a member of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) emerging economic powers (Drysdale, 2011).

During the Bainimarama period, an unprecedented number of new missions were established – Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa in 2011 and United Arab Emirates and South Korea in 2012. This has stemmed from the government's foreign policy priorities stipulated in the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development in 2009 – 2014 that aim to 'foster and enhance relations with Fiji's bilateral and regional partners, deepen their engagement in the Asia region, strengthen Fiji's relationship with the Pacific family and pursue a full agenda of economic diplomacy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Annual Corporate Plan, 2011: 3).' It has largely been Fiji's economic problems after the 2006 coup and the imposition of diplomatic sanctions that resulted in Fiji's proactive foreign policy. Fiji has strengthened its regional partnership through the MSG and the PSIDS at the UN following its suspension from the PIF in 2009. The PSIDS is gaining more recognition than the Forum, which was indicated by its support at the UN for United Arab Emirates bid to host the International Renewable Energy Agency. As a result of this diplomatic move, Prime Minister Bainimarama and Attorney General Kaiyum were invited to

⁴⁴ 'Memorandum of Understanding' in <http://internetwebsystem.com/program/com/fiji/index.php?file=detail.php&nowdir=&id=863&detail=1> accessed 31st October, 2006.

Abu Dhabi, and talks included the proposal for the establishment of an Arab League office in the Pacific⁴⁵.

In addition, Fiji is engaging with foreign partners further afield such as Brazil, Indonesia and South Africa, and is now a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. Fiji's former Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs stated that this was in keeping with the government's policy of establishing an embassy on each continent (FBC interview podcast)⁴⁶. It has also forged relations with Russia with visa-free travel offered to Russian visitors and promises of cooperation in a few fields including health (Visa-free Travel, Fiji Times 3rd February, 2012).

3.6 Conclusion

The changes to Fiji's foreign policy include the phasing out of preferential trade agreements succumbing to WTO liberal trade regime. It was also marked by globalisation with increasing interconnectedness through technology and ease of information. The more significant changes to Fiji's foreign policy have stemmed from the political coups in 1987, 2000, and 2006 where Fiji has sought partnership beyond its traditional partners.

Diplomatic sanctions have led to the diversification of Fiji's foreign policy to 'Look North' to Asia and beyond. These have led to the establishment of overseas missions in Kuala Lumpur, Beijing and New Delhi. In 2011 and 2012 overseas missions were established in Jakarta, Pretoria, Brasilia, Seoul and Abu Dhabi. These have stemmed from the Bainimarama government's goal to strengthen international cooperation with new partners. It has also strengthened its ties with China. On the other hand, Australia and New Zealand's diplomatic sanctions have raised debate about their level of engagement with Fiji as well as their strategic interests in the region. In a significant diplomatic move, Fiji's adoption of a more proactive foreign policy has shown that Fiji has chosen its own partners and will not continue to defer to Australia and New Zealand. These have marked the significant changes in Fiji's foreign policy trends. The political crises have also placed added challenges on overseas missions as they respond to reactions from Fiji's bilateral and multilateral partners.

⁴⁵ 'Fiji's search for new friends' Sandra Tarte in <http://www.eastasiaforum.org> accessed 11th January, 2012.

⁴⁶ www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj accessed 4th February, 2012

The continuities of Fiji's foreign policy include an export oriented priority and to source overseas development assistance to increase economic gains for its vulnerable economy. Fiji continues to maintain regional cooperation and group diplomacy with the Pacific Islands Forum until 2009, Melanesian Spearhead Group, ACP trade partnership with the EU, PSIDS and Asia Pacific group at the UN and is seeking further multilateral partners with the Non-Aligned Movement and observer status with ASEAN.

Chapter 4: The Role of Overseas Missions

4.1 Introduction

The establishment of overseas missions is a key indicator of foreign policy priorities and these overseas missions become an instrument of foreign policy. Of the Small Island developing state in the Pacific, excluding Papua New Guinea, Fiji has the largest number of overseas missions – a total of 16. These are located in London, New York, Washington, Brussels, New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing, Tokyo, Wellington, Canberra, Port Moresby, a Consul General in Sydney, and more recently, Jakarta, Pretoria, Brasilia, Seoul and Abu Dhabi. In addition Fiji has three Trade Commission offices in Chinese Taipei, Los Angeles, and Sydney. The number of overseas missions a small state has can be seen as an indication of its level of involvement in the international arena (Mohammed, 2002: 15). Mohammed's study examined diplomatic representation in 37 micro-states in the year 2000 where micro-states on average had 7 overseas missions. Fiji at that time had 10, similar to Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean and Gambia in Africa (2002: 17).

This chapter will examine the role of a selected number of overseas missions. These are London, New York, Canberra, Brussels, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Washington, Port Moresby, Beijing, and a brief overview of the Jakarta mission. London, New York, Canberra, and Brussels are the first generation missions whose roles have evolved according to Fiji's foreign policy. The second generation missions of the 1980's that will be examined include Washington, Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur. The Washington mission will be examined because it not only represented a period of closer Fiji-US relations during the Mara years, but holds economic significance for a small island state keen to market its goods to the United States of America. Similarly, Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur were important for Fiji's economic interests. The Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing and Jakarta missions will be looked into because they represent our close relations with East and South East Asia beginning in the 1980's up to 2009. Fiji only has one overseas mission based in a neighbouring Pacific Island state, Port Moresby, and this will also be examined because of their close political and economic ties. This chapter will examine when these missions were established and provide a description of the nature of Fiji's relationship with the host country. It will also state the details of its key roles and accreditations, and will explain the key issues and trends in the mission's work.

The role of overseas missions will also be looked at according to their periodic political reporting of important issues to the headquarters, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to Mohamed (2002: 29) this information is crucial as it pertains to policy decisions. However, while information technology has helped to speed up dispatches, the ambassadors' role is still crucial as information gatherer and dispatcher as he or she comes into contact with government officials, military officers and other representatives of the diplomatic corps. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has for the past five years used an intranet linking of the missions with the headquarters, which has allowed for speed in dispatches, dissemination of information and relaying of decisions.

This chapter will examine the role, function, issues, activities and policies of each of Fiji's overseas missions mentioned above and analyse how their role has evolved over time. Information for this chapter was obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Reports⁴⁷, its Bulletin publications in 2004 to 2006, anecdotal accounts from former diplomats, the Yarrow Report, and primary sources such as speeches, overseas missions' websites and news releases.

4.2 Functions of Overseas Missions

The core functions of overseas missions are to represent the sending state in the receiving state, and this may include entertaining, being the country's representative on television and radio shows as well as attending state and public functions (Article 3 Vienna Convention, 1961; Berridge, 2005: 120).

Overseas missions are also to 'negotiate with the government of the receiving state (Article 3 Vienna Convention, 1961).' The embassy plays a leading or supporting role in the negotiation process (Berridge, 2005: 123).

They also have an important role in observation and reporting. Effective political reports to the sending state enables the sending state to understand leaders of the host state (Berridge, 2005: 125). These reports are essential for policy making.

The overseas missions are also tasked with 'promoting economic and commercial relations' (Mataitoga lectures, 2012). This is a key role for overseas missions as they promote their

⁴⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Reports 1974 – 1982, 1986, 1987 – 1989, 1991, 2004, 2005.

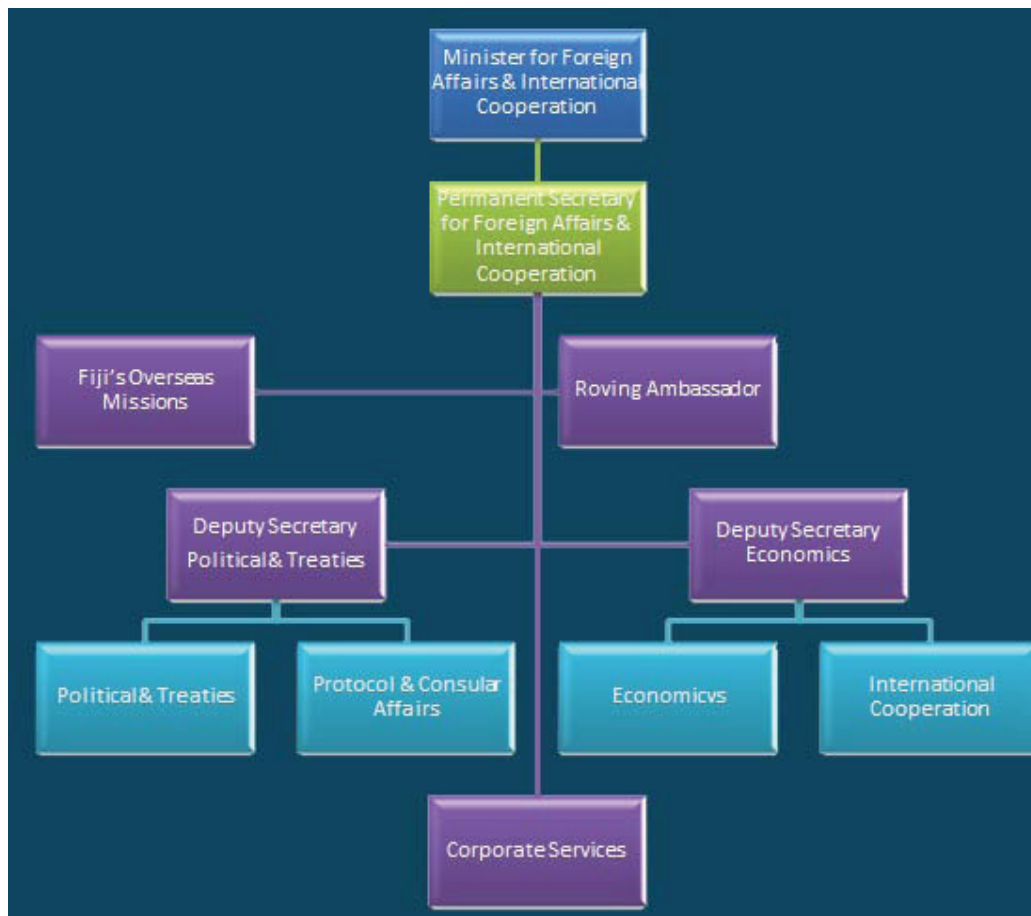
export items as well as seek potential investors. Termed commercial diplomacy this role can also include sourcing development assistance.

Another important role overseas missions carry out is promoting friendly relations through cultural exchange. Diplomats encourage friendly relations with their host government when they acquaint themselves with the local culture and or language. It has been argued that this is one way of obtaining the respect of the host government leaders (Mohamed, 2002: 27; Berridge, 2005: 20).

Providing consular services is also an important function of overseas mission. This service is given to their own citizens, and other interested travellers. These roles will be discussed later in this chapter and draw from examples from selected overseas missions.

4.3 Fiji's Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Fiji's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not surprisingly small compared to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in large states such as Australia, Japan and China. In 2005 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had a total personnel of 54 (Parliamentary Paper No. 45,2006: 43) Fiji's Ministry is organised into four functional areas and reflects Fiji's foreign policy priority areas, Political – Treaties, Protocol and Consular Affairs, Economics, and International Cooperation. Fiji's overseas missions are grouped separately in the organisation chart where depending on the nature of the mission fulfil their bilateral or multilateral roles (Mataitoga Lectures, 2011: 4). The overseas missions' bilateral and multilateral roles are linked to the functional areas by the nature of issue at hand.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Organisation Chart
www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj accessed 9th July, 2012.

4.4 First Generation Missions

The first generation missions were established in the 1970's and point to Fiji's intention to engage with its bilateral and multi-lateral partners to gain maximum benefit. They include London, Brussels, New York and Canberra.

4.4.1 London

The London mission was established in 1970 to maintain Fiji's historic relations between the Chiefs and people of Fiji with the British Crown and the Commonwealth (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD3). These historic links are valued in Fiji families where the British Royal family is followed with keen interest. This stems from the understanding incorporated in the Deed of Cession when Fiji's chiefs ceded Fiji to Queen Victoria as a monarch of Great Britain. These were strengthened by Royal visits to the islands. Prince Charles represented

the Queen during the Independence Celebration in 1970. Queen Elizabeth visited Fiji in 1982 and Prince Edward paid a visit in 1984. Mr Filimoni Jitoko (HoM 1996 – 2001) stated that the special relationship between Fiji's Great Council of Chiefs and the British monarchy was indicated by the Queen's personal remarks. The Queen would ask about the well being of Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara or Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau (Personal interview 1st June, 2010).

The establishment of Fiji's mission in London was to maintain Fiji's close ties with the British monarchy and the legacy of its colonial experience that defined the mission's function of promoting cultural ties. It also played a crucial role in facilitating negotiation talks between Fiji's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs for a preferential price for the purchase of Fiji's sugar exports. The Fiji mission has primarily strengthened Fiji's relations with the UK, the Commonwealth, and the European Union, previously known as the European Economic Community for the purposes of establishing trade ties, accessing aid and strengthening cultural ties.

The Commercial Counsellor's role at the London mission, in the early years of its establishment was essential for negotiating a preferential sugar price with the buyer Tate & Lyle. It was the mission's primary economic role to liaise and negotiate the export of Fiji's sugar through Tate and Lyle. It was imperative for the mission to have a Fiji Sugar Marketing officer. Mr Kaliopate Tavola in 1984 was the first to assume this position in addition to being the Commercial Counsellor where his responsibility was to negotiate sugar sales under the Sugar Protocol and its preferential pricing to Tate and Lyle (Fiji Business Magazine, February 2006: 4). Fiji in 1984 was exporting 140,000 tons of sugar to the Commonwealth at a preferential price, and the mission together with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, attended London sugar talks to negotiate this favourable price (Mara, 1997: 117). Staff at the London mission assisted the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the negotiation process. It was crucial for meeting Fiji's foreign policy objective of ensuring a guaranteed preferential price and market for sugar its main export item.

In addition, Tavola undertook commercial diplomacy by promoting tourism, and also followed up on commercial enquiries such as the export of canned tuna and processed ginger (Electronic interview 15th August, 2007).

Commercial diplomacy was also performed by the London mission as it liaised with the Commonwealth for the provision of technical aid and assistance that led to £300,000 worth of Aid and Technical Assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Fiji has also obtained technical assistance from the Commonwealth during periods of political stability. However, during periods of political instability sanctions were imposed and Fiji was suspended from the Commonwealth.

The commercial counsellor was also responsible for identifying Commonwealth training and technical cooperation for Fiji citizens. It was essential in identifying development assistance for Fiji civil servants.

More recently it has been reported that the ambassador has continued as Fiji's permanent representative to the International Sugar Organisation (ISO) and is part of the Executive Council and Administrative Committee of the ISO (Fiji Focus, August 14th 2010: 7).

The London mission also represents Fiji to the multilateral talks of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where it is pushing for 'funding mechanism to ensure a longer term financing, insurance on loss and damage,' common positions held by small island developing states, G77 and China and Coalition of Rainforest Nations (Fiji Focus, 14th August, 2010: 7)

In 1998, the London mission has strengthened its public diplomacy following cultural links between Fiji and UK where Fiji's military band participated at the military tattoo. The then Head of Mission, Mr Filimoni Jitoko used this event to negotiate for the recruitment of young Fijian men and women to the British Army. While it strengthened relations between UK and Fiji, Fijians employed in the British Army helped to relieve unemployment and this has led to the rise in Fiji's remittances levels. The mission has also established close relations with the British Ministry of Defence where the HoM is invited at certain times to speak to Fijian soldiers about the finer points of adjusting to life in the UK and the importance of saving their money. The mission organises the monthly remittances in bank telegraphic transfers of Fijians in the British Army totalling £115,000 (Fiji Focus, August 14th 2010: 7). The increasing number of Fijians in the British Army with their families has seen the mission fulfil its consular role.

Fiji's relationship with the UK has evolved from its status as a colony to a member of the Commonwealth and through the EU / ACP partnership during periods of political stability. The London mission was also established to 'maintain and strengthen bilateral relations with the British Government and as a member of the Commonwealth Secretariat (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD3).'

Heads of Missions serving in London have ranged from magistrates, senior civil servants and administrators, and a former Commander of the Royal Fiji Military Forces. The current High Commissioner, Mr Solo Mara was Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prior to his appointment, and had previously served as a junior diplomat in London.

4.4.2 Brussels

The Brussels mission serves as Fiji's representative to several multilateral organisations such as the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP), World Trade Organisation (WTO), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, International Criminal Court, Multinational Force of Observers, World Customs Organisation, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Court of Justice (Fiji Focus, 17th July, 2010: 5). Rana states that this multiple accreditation is a feature of small island developing states' overseas missions as a cost-saving measure but the question arises as to whether the mission represents Fiji's interests to all of these organisations effectively ('The Diplomacy of Small States': 5).

Fiji's foreign policy priority of negotiating preferential trade agreement for sugar exports was the Brussels mission key role particularly following Britain's entry to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973. In 1981 Fiji benefitted from the preferential price of sugar exports earning F\$108.75 million (Mara, 1997:165). In 1990, Ambassador Kaliopate Tavola, in his representational role attended the ACP – EEC Joint Assembly with the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr Berenado Vunibobo. The meeting addressed the economic constraints affecting small island developing states, their fisheries and environment and agreed to the resolution on the 'special problems of the region' (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 6). 'Fiji was reappointed to the Bureau of the Joint Assembly representing the Pacific and the working party of the Intra-ACP Trade (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 12).' Suva also hosted the 50th ACP Council of Ministers and 15th ACP / EEC Council of

Ministers in March, 1990. The conference examined the progress and implementation of Lome III as well as the resolutions from the Joint Assembly meeting (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 13).

The mission also identified development assistance with FAO that assisted agriculture, forestry, and rural based communities. In particular, it promoted aquaculture as a source of income for communities in Naitasiri, Namosi, Wainibuku, and Navosa. Through FAO development assistance, the Fiji Pine Commission worked on a national forest program with built in strategies for conservation, and the use of forest resources at Lololo, Bua, Naboutini, Lau and Nabou Pine station. The information section of FAO assisted in disseminating research and scientific reports, technical knowledge and expertise that helped government planners, traders, and training that is in turn forwarded to the Koronivia Agriculture Research Station, Naduruloulou, and Nacocolevu.⁴⁸

The late 1990's and 2000's marked a turning point in Fiji's trade ties where trade liberalisation challenged established preferential trade agreements. Then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Tavola, Ambassador Isikeli Maitaitoga and Counsellor Mr Pio Tabaiwalu, were able to extend Fiji's preferential access by negotiating a waiver on its Most Favoured Nation status with the EU through the WTO (Personal interview Mr Pio Tabaiwalu, 22nd April, 2010). Mr Maitaitoga was posted to Brussels in 1998 when negotiations began for the extension of ACP / EU preferential trade agreement under Lome IV and Cotonou (Mr Maitaitoga electronic interview, 24th July, 2006). This was essential for Fiji because its narrow economic base depended on sugar.

The Cotonou Agreement 2000, unlike the previous Lome Agreement, (dealt with in more detail in the next chapter), upheld democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law. Embodied in Article 96, instances of violations of democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law allow all parties to enter into consultations. Should these consultations not be in accordance with the terms of the agreement then cooperation between parties will be suspended.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <http://www.fijiembassy.be> accessed 11th October, 2008

⁴⁹ 'The ACP – EU Partnership Agreement and human rights protection' in <http://www.fiacat.org/en/spip.php?article236> accessed 7th July, 2011.

Following the 2000 coup, the mission together with the Interim Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Kaliopate Tavola, presented Fiji's case to the European Council to convince the Council of the credibility of Fiji's roadmap to democracy so as not to lose substantially from its sugar exports. Fiji's access to its EU sugar market was jeopardized by the political upheaval. Fiji received sympathetic support from Papua New Guinea and Ghana which the delegation had identified as their 'friends' using the facility of Article 96 (Personal interview Mr Tavola 18th May, 2010). Article 96 also stipulated the involvement of civil society in the consultation process, which was attended by Ms Tupou Vere as the Non-government Organisation representative. Ms Vere commended the role played by Mr Tavola in the closed room sessions where he convinced the EU to accept Fiji's Roadmap to Democracy in two years. She added that the European Community respected Mr Tavola because he was formally the Dean of Diplomatic Corps in Brussels (Personal Interview, April, 2007). According to Mr Tavola, Fiji was interrogated and under scrutiny but the delegation was able to show transparency and generated sympathy because their submission was convincing, so sanctions were lifted (Personal interview, 18th May, 2010).

The Brussels' mission's commercial diplomacy and multilateral representation was impacted by the political crisis in 2000. It affected the continuation of development assistance and aid from the EU and other multilateral organisations. Following the May 2000 coup the EU imposed restrictions on development aid with a temporary freeze on the provisions within the 9th European Development Fund. It was resumed in November 2003 following assurances by the Fiji Government that Fiji had implemented policies for national reconciliation as well as the country's return to the rule of law, and constitutional rule⁵⁰. For 2003 to 2007 the 9th European Development Fund focused on improving rural education infrastructure. In turn, these periods of suspension or termination of development assistance creates challenges for the mission staff in their negotiation role and commercial diplomacy.

With trade liberalisation and Fiji's membership of WTO, the Brussels mission is undertaking a significant role in representing Fiji to the rules based trade regime, and highlighted the need to appoint economists and trade specialists. Fiji joined the WTO in 1996. Because the

⁵⁰ EU development assistance to Fiji – Country Strategy Paper for 2003 – 2007 in http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_3198_en.htm accessed 16th December, 2011.

mission is Fiji's non-resident representative to WTO, it is engaging in group diplomacy with similar sized countries that have similar concerns.⁵¹

In 2004 the embassy staff with trade officers from headquarters attended WTO rounds of negotiations to formulate a framework of modalities in agriculture, Non-Agriculture Market Access (NAMA) and Services and 'ensured that these would be built on the commitment to Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries' incorporated in DDA. The mission and headquarters staff also ensured that the 'Small Economies Work Programme referred to paragraph 35 of the DDA continued to provide meaningful result in terms of special and differential treatment (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 24).' Exercising group diplomacy the mission and headquarters staff gave 'joint Submissions on the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing in October 2004, joint Submission on Fisheries Subsidies as part of the group of Small and Vulnerable Coastal Economies, and joint Submission on Small Economies Work Programme in May 2004 (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 24).' It has therefore been imperative that the mission staffs are able to push the finer points that would best benefit Fiji's vulnerable economy.

Ms Yolinda Chan explained that during her term she assisted the Ambassador and Counsellors in dealing with other trade, economic and political issues revolving around the ACP – EU partnership, such as the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Ms Chan also stated that Fiji's missions such as Brussels are short staffed so diplomats have to be multi-skilled and undertake multiple tasks so as to provide support when fellow diplomats are out of the office (Electronic interview 11th April, 2007).

Former ambassadors that have served in Brussels include Mr Mike McGeever who was appointed Counsellor / Charge d'affairs in 1973, followed by Mr Satya Nandan in 1976. Other ambassadors that have served in Brussels include senior civil servants that have held Permanent Secretary positions in the Ministry of Agriculture, Justice and Foreign Affairs. Mr Kaliopate Tavola who was the Commercial Counsellor in London was appointed ambassador in 1988 (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992). Ratu Tui Cavuiliati and Mr Peceli Vocea held Permanent Secretary positions in Foreign Affairs prior to their appointment. Mr Peceli Vocea is currently Fiji's ambassador in Brussels.

⁵¹ <http://www.fijiembassy.be> accessed 11th October, 2008

4.4.3 New York

Fiji's Permanent Representative to the United Nations at New York was established in 1970. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara in delivering his maiden speech at the General Assembly acknowledged the challenges Fiji as a small island developing state would have in 'not just being seen but heard as well' whenever it raised concerns on international issues at this multilateral forum (Mara, 1997: 239). Like other world leaders Fiji's Prime Minister addresses the UN General Assembly annually highlighting key foreign policy issues and presents Fiji's views on global matters.

Since its membership at the United Nations, Fiji has taken an active role in a range of international issues such as decolonisation, human rights, Law of the Sea, UN Peacekeeping and environment. To do this Fiji's diplomats engaged in group diplomacy with the Pacific region, other small island developing states or with the Asian regional group.

Following Fiji's admission to the UN in 1970, it was elected to the Special Committee of 24 on Decolonisation, whose main tasks included 'recommendations on the implementation of the UN's Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65).' Fiji's presence at the Decolonisation Committee stressed the importance of self-determination. As a result Fiji was part of the UN visiting missions to colonies. Mr Vunibobo as Fiji's Permanent Representative to the UN 'led UN Visiting Missions to the Cayman Islands, the United States Virgin Islands and Vanuatu. Fiji diplomats were also part of UN Visiting Missions to the British Virgin Islands, the Cocos Keeling Islands and the Tokelaus (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65).' The missions' representational role in the promotion of the South Pacific Forum's foreign policy of decolonization was particularly significant. The Kanaks of New Caledonia had presented their independence aspirations through the Forum. Mr Winston Thompson notes that the mission took a leading role in lobbying that New Caledonia be added to the list of non-self-governing countries as neither New Caledonia nor Wallis and Futuna were part of this group. It met a lot of opposition from France and other francophone countries but the Forum's position won. Mr Thompson notes that it took up a lot of their time (Personal interview Mr Winston Thompson, 1st April, 2007). Fiji's Permanent Representative to the UN has also voiced Fiji's position human rights at various UN.

In the 1970's, the Fiji government upheld multiracialism and it was considered important for Fiji to support international conventions such as 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The mission in 1978 organised with the headquarters a Fiji delegation to the Geneva World Conference on the Decade for Action to counter Racism and Racial Discrimination. The conference adopted a 'Programme of Action which included recommendations for comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the racist regimes of South Africa and the elimination by Government of all discriminatory laws and practical laws to punish dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, and promotion of the rights of indigenous people and migrant workers (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 64).' Fiji also recognized the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and in 1975 sent representatives to the 1975 Conference on Women at Mexico, and a delegation to the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women. A follow up meeting for Pacific women was hosted by Fiji in October 1980 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 64). Through the mission's representational and lobbying role, Fiji was elected to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1981 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65).

The New York mission played a significant role at the Third UN Law of the Sea Conference and provided policy advice to headquarters until 1982. Fiji's Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr Satya Nandan played a key role in the negotiations and Fiji represented Pacific Island States who were not represented at the UN. Mr Nandan signed the treaty for Fiji which was also the first country to ratify it. Fiji's ratification of the Treaty indicated its importance to Fiji's national interest because the treaty provided boundaries for states' activities in the seas, where it stipulated maritime zones, rules for drawing boundaries and had the legal framework for settling international disputes (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 62). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Report for 1974 - 1982 noted that as a result Fiji had 'promulgated into law' its 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which was highly beneficial as its fishing industry accounted for \$17 million in 1981 (1983: 63). Because of Fiji's limited land resources the seabed offered great potential not only for oil exploration in Fiji's seabed which at the time was already in progress but also other resources which could greatly assist Fiji's economy. Fiji also emphasized the importance for distant water fishing countries such as United States to recognize Fiji's EEZ.

In 2004 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the New York mission worked on the Law of the Sea and the Marine Spaces Act. Consultations were held with respect to 'Fiji's Maritime Boundaries Delimitation and extended Continental Shelf claims that were submitted to the UN Commission on the limit of the Continental Shelf in 2009 (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 19).' The Commonwealth Secretariat provided legal assistance for the review of 'maritime legislation with respect to Fiji's extended Continental Shelf Claim (Parliamentary Paper No. 74, 2005: 19).'

The New York mission also played a significant role negotiating and lobbying for Fiji's participation in peacekeeping. This further indicates Fiji's internationalist image in upholding peace in troubled hotspots. The first contingent to the Fiji Battalion to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 1978 numbered 500 and this was increased to 650 in 1979 (Howard, 1991: 143). Fiji troops were also assigned to be part of the Ceasefire Monitoring Force in Zimbabwe and to the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai. Other peacekeeping assignments that Fiji's troops have been sent to include Afghanistan and Pakistan, Iraq and Kuwait, Somalia, Bougainville, East Timor and Solomon Islands (Goiran, 2009: 6).

In 2004, the New York mission secured the deployment of a guard unit to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and two teams for the Public Security Department (PSD). Fiji was the only country that provided troops for UNAMI (Parliamentary Paper No. 74, 2005: 15). Former ambassador Mr Isikia Savua, explains that much of the lobbying and negotiation for the deployment of troops occurs in the corridors or at informal settings such as cocktails and lunches. He adds that as a diplomat one needs to establish a network, know the UN system and use it to one's advantage (Personal Interview Mr Isikia Savua, 30th April, 2007). Fiji's contribution to peacekeeping 'has raised Fiji's profile in international security in the Pacific region (Parliamentary Paper No. 74, 2005: 21).' Fiji's diplomats have become very well versed with the UN system of lobbying knowing that a small island developing state is often marginalised by larger powers and more pressing issues, and so needs to engage actively in various fora in order to make an impact. However, the post-2006 political crisis also saw opposition to Fiji's participation in future peace-keeping duties by some member states.

Fiji's involvement in peacekeeping has gained international recognition through membership of the UN Peace Building Commission (PBC) in 2006 and 2007. The UN Peace Building Commission was established in 2005. This was a significant role for Fiji as a member of the Asia voting bloc and was an indication of the support Fiji gained in recognition of her contribution to international peace and security. The PBC's role is to tap and channel resources to be used for strategies to assist and advise post-conflict states in recovery, especially in reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development (Press Release www.fijigov.fj June 7th 2006).

In group diplomacy the mission works closely with the Pacific Islands Forum group, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) and is a member of the Asian bloc of voting UN members (Fiji Focus 17th July, 2010: 4). The Asian bloc is one of the largest UN blocs comprised of 54 countries so Fiji's lobbying to be elected into UN bodies has to be intensive and effective. In the 1970's for example Mr Vunibobo was appointed President of the Governing Council of the UNDP (Personal interview Mr Winston Thompson 1st April, 2007).⁵² Since Fiji's suspension from the Pacific Islands Forum in 2009, Fiji has sought closer partnership with its island neighbours in the PSIDS grouping where Australia and New Zealand are not represented (Herr and Bergin, 2011: 5). According to a journalist, the staff at the mission are extremely busy sometimes working late into the evening as they represent Fiji at a number of meetings (Momoivalu, 2004:7).⁵³ In 2010 for example the mission attended and reported on the following meetings: Commission on the Status of Women, High Level Event on South-South Cooperation, Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the 16th Session of the International Seabed Authority, the Review Conference on the Conservation and Management of Straddling and Highly-Migratory Fish-Stocks, the Commission on Sustainable Development, 20th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention of the Law of the Sea, 18th Meeting of the State Parties to the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, UN Security Council Working Group on Decolonisation, the UN Commission on International Trade Law, and the

⁵² Australia and New Zealand are part of the Europe bloc despite being geographically located in the Pacific, because it is a smaller bloc and they have a better chance of being voted into UN bodies (Personal Interview Mr Thompson 1st April, 2007).

⁵³ 'Serving in Fiji's missions abroad', Fiji Business Magazine, December, 2004.

Review Conference of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Fiji Focus 17th July, 2010: 4).

Group diplomacy in AOSIS enables the New York mission to carry out its representational and lobbying role, in emphasising the importance of Climate Change to small island developing states. There have been some successes in their group diplomacy. The AOSIS' cause on Climate Change, has led the UN General Assembly to include Climate Change on the agenda, an indication that developed states have listened to the lobbying of small island developing states (Interview Mr Peter Thomson 29th June, 2011). In 2010, the mission processed Fiji's application to the Non-Aligned Movement as part of its foreign policy of establishing positive relations with a wide range of nations (Fiji Focus 17th July, 2010: 4)⁵⁴.

The New York mission represented Forum island countries by highlighting the importance of protecting its oceans, protested the testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific and proposed a nuclear test ban treaty (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 9). With Fiji's suspension from the Forum in 2009, the New York mission has played a leading role in the Pacific SIDS. The HoMs of the eleven PSIDS meet monthly to discuss common issues and draft resolutions, while the next level in their respective missions have formed a Working Committee to formulate their common positions (Interview Mr Peter Thomson 29th June, 2011)⁵⁵.

The mission also serves to undertake bilateral relations with 'countries where Fiji does not have accredited ambassadors' and in 2010, Fiji established diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Eritrea, Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan (Fiji Focus, 17th July, 2010: 4). This is in keeping with the Bainimarama government's foreign policy of extending Fiji's diplomatic relations beyond its traditional partners.

The mission's role of representing Fiji's interests at this multilateral forum and its associated agencies has governed its activities. These agencies include the 'UN General Assembly (plenary agenda items and General Assembly Committees 1 to 6), Security Council,

⁵⁴ 'Foreign policy' in http://www.fiji.gov.fj/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=646&Itemid=197 accessed 16th December, 2011.

⁵⁵ Interview on South South News in Ministry of Foreign Affairs Channel in <http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj> accessed 7th July, 2011.

Economic and Social Council (including its subsidiary organisations such as UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, etc), and ...inter- regional (G77, AOSIS/SIDS), regional (Asia Group) and the sub-regional groupings (PIF) (Permanent Mission of the Republic of Fiji to the United Nations, March 2007)⁵⁶.’ It also provides consular services for Canada, New York, tourism promotions and awareness to business community and schools.

Until 1985 with the establishment of Fiji’s mission in Washington, the New York mission was also accredited to the United States of America. It continues to provide a supporting role to the Washington mission, the Trade Commission and Fiji Visitors Bureau based in Los Angeles. It also supervises the Honorary Consul in Ottawa (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD6).

As a result of the Fiji mission’s advocacy the UNDP has channelled development assistance to rural areas. The UNDP also carried out a feasibility study for the planting of pine and both of the latter two projects were implemented by Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). UNDP also funded a major study for the development of the Tourism industry which identified Natadola as an ideal site (Vunibobo, Ambassador Lecture Series USP: 31st August, 2005).

The success of the mission’s representational and lobbying role led to Fiji’s election to the ECOSOC in 2000 – 2002, the third time since 1970. Because membership to UN committees faces intense competition and lobbying and negotiation, this is a remarkable achievement for the Fiji mission, since the 54 members are elected during the General Assembly. Fiji’s role in ECOSOC is extremely important for a small island developing state and has resulted in some significant developments such as pushing for some Pacific Island States to be reclassified to a higher status from LDC’s. Thus the Fiji mission’s role has been quite extensive. Yarrow states that the Fiji mission’s role at the UN is disproportionate to Fiji’s small geographical size (2002: AnnexD6).

Long serving civil servants with illustrious careers and experience at Permanent Secretary levels have been appointed as Fiji’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Mr Semesa Sikivou was a senior Education Department administrator prior to his appointment (Mara, 1997: 114). Ratu Manasa Seniloli and Mr Amraiya Naidu had served as Principals of large schools. Mr Filipe Bole had taught in several secondary schools, until taking up senior

⁵⁶ ‘Welcome to the Fiji Mission Website’ in <http://www.fijiiprun.org> accessed March 2007.

positions as Senior Education Officer Secondary, Deputy Secretary for Education in 1972, and Permanent Secretary for Urban Development and Local Government, and was Permanent Secretary for Education for six years before taking up his appointment in New York (Interview Mr Filipe Bole, 7th July, 2006). Mr Berenado Vunibobo had served for twenty two years in Agriculture, and had served as Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Tourism and Fisheries, and was the Permanent Secretary for Public Works Department for three years prior to taking up his appointment in New York (Interview Mr Berenado Vunibobo 24th November, 2006). Ratu Jone Radrodro and Mr Poseci Bune also had long careers in the public service both rising to hold Permanent Secretary Positions. Mr Winston Thompson had served as Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forests, Permanent Secretary of Finance, and Permanent Secretary of Public Service Commission. Mr Isikia Savua was previously Counsellor at the mission during Mr Winston Thompson's term, and was Consul-General in Sydney. Prior to taking up his appointment, Mr Savua served as the Police Commissioner (Personal Interview Mr Isikia Savua, 30th April, 2007). All incumbents had long careers in the civil service, and in the positions they held were responsible for government policy and providing advice to their respective Ministers. Fiji's current ambassador Mr Peter Thomson had served as a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a Permanent Secretary of Information prior to moving to New Zealand after the 1987 coup.

According to Howard, the appointment of Heads of Missions during Ratu Mara's Prime Ministership was based on selecting 'educated commoners as a means of patronage' which was later extended to also include persons of chiefly rank (1991: 127). Mr Filipe Bole's appointment as Permanent Representative in 1980 was noted as Ratu Mara's choice for grooming educated leaders who could take up leadership positions in the Alliance party. Appointments to heads of other missions were seen as a reward for service (Howard, 1991: 127).

4.4.4 Canberra

Fiji's relations with Australia developed through commerce in the colonial era, as fellow members of regional organisations, tourism and defence ties, and with increasing people to people links through education, sport, and various other fields. Because of this, the Canberra mission's roles are to 'foster and promote cordial and good political relations with Australia;

stimulate, promote and enhance trade, investments and tourism; and facilitate and enhance education and cultural relations.⁵⁷

A large part of the work of the Canberra mission is to carry out commercial diplomacy. This included the negotiation and dissemination of policy advice for South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA) in 1980. The trade agreement negotiated by regional trade officers and their respective foreign affairs representatives, granted Forum island countries access to 'export products duty free on an unrestricted non-reciprocal basis' to Australia and New Zealand (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 12). In keeping with Fiji's export driven economy the mission assisted the application of this agreement between the two countries.

The development of Textile Clothing and Footwear (TCF) industries in Fiji benefitted from access to these markets. Fiji's traditional goods to Australia were gold, sugar and coconut oil, and in 1986 diversified to include \$2 million sale of garments and furniture. An awareness campaign in Australia and New Zealand through trade missions, seminars and exhibitions was organized with the guidance of FTIB for Fiji manufacturers to visit Fiji's two major trading partners. The Sydney Exhibition 30th April 3rd May 1986 was officially opened by the Prime Minister with a day set aside for Investment Seminar (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 15 - 16).

Fiji's TCF industries continued to enjoy preferential market access to Australia in 2004. Fiji's trade with Australia improved for 2004 by \$49 million compared to the previous year (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 2005: 22). The mission worked with the headquarters in its negotiations and talks with their Australian counterpart (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 26).

In keeping with WTO regulations trade relations with Australia are now incorporated in PACER – Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations, which is facilitated by the Pacific Islands Forum. Further to this, the 2006 High Commissioner, Mr Amraiya Naidu presented a submission to the Australian Senate Committee on employment, workplace relations and education on a Pacific regional seasonal contract labour that would assist

⁵⁷ 'Our Mission' in <http://www.fijihighcom.com/home-mainmenu-1/our-mission-mainmenu-31.html> accessed 7th July, 2011.

Pacific island economies ('Pacific region seasonal contract labour' Daily Post, 29th August, 2006). Fiji's 2009 suspension from the Forum has stalled the continuance of these discussions.

The above are in keeping with the Canberra mission's economic roles to 'encourage investment in Fiji and support and increase the export of Fiji products and goods to Australia' while its consular role is also to provide 'service and assistance to Fiji citizens (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD8).' Australia has been one of Fiji's largest aid donors, but this has not been reflected in the size of the mission. While Australian aid dropped slightly after 1987, it has not been significantly affected by the 2000, 2006 and 2009 political crises. 'In May 2009, the Australian government withdrew funding for a key electoral post in Fiji (Markovic, 2009: 15).' The total ODA for Fiji for 2009 – 2010 was A\$35.4 million. However, no aid has been given directly to the government. Much of the development assistance has been directed to governance and the health, education, rural economic development, civil society sectors, and technical support to the textile, footwear and clothing industry.⁵⁸ This is in keeping with Australia's foreign policy of maintaining its aid assistance that directly benefits communities and helping Fiji with its adjustment to the global financial crisis and political instability.

The coups in 1987 led to the reduction in the mission's work due to the Australian government's suspension of some development assistance and military training programmes. Its work was also affected by staffing issues where diplomats were either transferred or resigned. The mission kept the Australian government and the other foreign embassies in Canberra informed of Fiji's political developments. The Head of Mission was also recalled so the mission was administered by three Charges *dé Affaires* (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 14). Then in 1989 Dr Mesake Biunaiwai was appointed ambassador and undertook representational and lobbying role and made several high level state and official visits to New South Wales, called on the Leader of the Opposition, Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Chief Justice, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to name a few. He also made a state visit to Queensland between June and July 1989 (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 14).

Relations between the two countries worsened following the 2006 coup and the constitutional crisis of 2009. The Australian High Commissioner was expelled in November 2009 by the Fiji government because both Australia and New Zealand diplomats in Fiji had allegedly

⁵⁸ Republic of Fiji Country Brief http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fiji/fiji_brief.html accessed 8th July, 2011.

informed recently appointed Sri Lankan judges that they would face travel bans similar to other government and military officials. In retaliation, Australia ordered Fiji's High Commissioner, Mr Kamlesh Arya to return to Fiji.⁵⁹ Both Australia and New Zealand have maintained their stern call for Fiji to return to democracy.

The Canberra mission's representational and negotiation roles include 'strengthening bilateral relations with Australia, enhancing awareness of Fiji in Australia' which has an economic role of promoting tourism as well, and 'strengthening 'people to people' links (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD8). According to the Fiji Bureau of Statistics Visitor Arrivals statistics for 2000 – 2010 show that Australian tourists have accounted for the most in tourist arrivals (Fiji Bureau of Statistics – Key Statistics: September 2011).

The Fiji mission's consular role maintains relations and contacts with Fijians residing in Australia and works with them in organizing the annual Fiji Day celebrations in October. Fiji citizens in other Australian cities also organize this annual event for cultural exhibitions and for social networking. The Canberra mission plays a consular role in monitoring and supporting Fijian students at various Australian institutions. During Fiji's election years, the mission has provided assistance in administering the election process for Fijians in Australia. Information details for immigration and investment to Fiji are provided by the mission as well as assisting Fiji nationals with renewals of passports. The mission provides detailed information for schools and interested communities. Where relevant the mission works in conjunction with the Fiji Visitors Bureau office and Trade Commissioner in Sydney.

Fiji's first High Commissioner to Canberra was Mr Raman Nair, who had been the first Administrative Officer for Australia prior to independence (Mara, 1997: 114). Other ambassadors that have served in Canberra include Mr F. M. K. Sherani, Dr James A Maraj, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific, Mr Epeli Kacimaiwai, who had served as Permanent Secretary of Education and Principal of Queen Victoria School; Mr Peter Stinson, former Alliance parliamentarian, and Minister of Finance, Ratu Isoa Gavidi, who had served as a junior diplomat in London, and was former Permanent Secretary of Information, Mr Isikeli Mataitoga, former Director of Public Prosecutions, Major General Jioji Konrote, former senior military officer, Mr Amraiya Naidu, former Principal, public

⁵⁹ 'Australia and New Zealand expel senior Fiji diplomats' in <http://www.telegraph.co.uk> accessed 8th July, 2011.

servant, and former Ambassador to the United Nations. Mr Kamlesh Arya, a former school teacher, Fijian Teachers Union trade union leader, Labour parliamentarian and President of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, was appointed ambassador in 2009, but was recalled after a few months following strained relations between the two countries. There were brief periods after 1989, and 2007 when the mission was looked after by a Charge d' Affair.

The Canberra mission is normally staffed by three diplomats, Head of Mission, Counsellor and First Secretary, and three locally engaged staff – a Personal Assistant, Immigration officer to Ambassador and a chauffeur (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD8). Following the constitutional crisis of 2009 Fiji's mission in Canberra was reduced to two persons, the Deputy Head of Mission and the Second Secretary⁶⁰. The Fiji government owns a Chancery in Canberra.

4.5 Second Generation Missions

The establishment of three additional missions in the 1980's was driven by economic goals of extending Fiji's market for its goods and to promote tourism industry in Japan and United States of America. The Kuala Lumpur mission marked the beginning of Fiji's 'Look North' foreign policy as it sought new partnerships following the 1987 political crisis.

4.5.1 Washington

The Washington mission was first established in 1985, for political considerations when Ratu Mara's Alliance government had close political associations with USA. As earlier mentioned, Ratu Mara was the first Pacific island leader to be extended an invitation to visit the White House in 1984. It was also a period during the Cold War when Fiji was more closely aligned to the West. The Washington mission also held economic value for Fiji's export industries.

The Washington mission carried out its negotiation role in commercial diplomacy with the Garments Trade mission in September, 1987. It successfully secured US\$250,000 of orders for that year. In 1987 as well, FTIB appointed an agent for the garment industry who was attached to the Washington mission (Parliamentary Paper 13, 1992: 21).

⁶⁰ 'Fiji High Commission Australia' in <http://www.fijihighcom.com/contact-us.html> accessed 19th December, 2011.

The 1987 coup impacted Fiji and USA relations and all Fiji missions were required to convey to overseas partners information on Fiji's Interim government, and its work with the constitutional committee on moving Fiji back to democracy (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 7). They were also responsible for restoring improved bilateral relations. The US aid suspended in 1987 was restored in 1988 after the Interim government had achieved political stability (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 28).

The Washington mission's role in liaising with United States government officials was enhanced in 1990 with President George Bush's announcement of the US – Pacific Islands Joint Commercial Commission (JCC) to look at avenues for 'commercial opportunities and trade concerns; establishment of two new funds – an Asian Pacific Growth Fund to assist private sector and natural resource development respectively; the creation of general new US-AID private sector assistance programme to enhance agriculture and marine resource development; and a programme of education assistance involving the East West Centre for Pacific Island citizens (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 15).'

Senior officials of the US Commerce Department visited Fiji in March 1991 to continue further discussions on the proposed JCC with the Ministry of Trade and Commerce. Forum leaders meeting in October 1991 agreed that further discussions with US officials continue and that the JCC office be based at the East West Centre in Hawaii (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 20).

Former US ambassador to Fiji David Lyons in addressing the Fiji Economics Association in June 2005 stated that there was still a lot of scope for JCC to make effective progress. One such initiative was the creation of a US based data bank of 'commercial and economic information on Pacific Island Countries (Lyons, 2005: 2). The effectiveness of JCC lies with Pacific Island countries and their US counterparts activating the facilities within JCC so that meaningful and effective trade develops between the small island developing states economies with that of a large power (Lyons, 2005: 2). Outgoing US ambassador Mr Steven McGann, stated that Fiji's main export products to the US market in 2011 have been Fiji Water and mahogany ('Enhancing international relations', Fiji Focus, July 9th 2011: 2).

In recognition of the potentially huge US market, the Washington mission was the first Fiji overseas mission to set up a website promoting the trade and investment opportunities in Fiji (Personal interview Anare Jale, 23rd July, 2008). The mission also secured the services of a

trade consultancy firm, Sandler, Travis and Rosenberg to undertake a study of trade options for Fiji. Fiji on receiving the findings shared this information with its regional neighbours, as they could effectively meet the market demand. It was also another indication of group diplomacy of small island developing states (Friends of Fiji Newsletter Spring 2004: 6).

Mr Anare Jale lobbied for the return of the Peace Corps Volunteer Services, which had ceased its services in 1998 (Personal interview Anare Jale, 23rd July, 2008). Fiji had lost a number of its skilled citizens through migration, so the Peace Corps was reintroduced in 2003 to address the skills shortages and provide technical expertise in various areas, more notably in rural development projects.

In 2003, the Washington mission, in recognition of the importance of remittances to Fiji's economy due to the increasing number of Fiji nationals residing in the US as care givers, conducted a survey that was presented to government (Friends of Fiji News Spring 2004: 6). The Fiji government presented a proposal to the US mission in Suva on securing legal status for Fiji nationals in USA working illegally in the care giving industry. US immigration policies are undergoing reform and there is no further development of benefit to Fiji citizens.

The Washington mission engaged in commercial diplomacy to increase Fiji's exports in 2003 to exceed that of F\$250 million. It required the joint work of the mission with the Trade Commissioner based in Los Angeles to engage in commercial diplomacy with Montalvan Sales Incorporation to seek ways of reducing high freight costs, a major hindrance for Fiji's exports. Discussions were also held with Fiji Water to increase its US sales so that it would replace the declining garment exports.⁶¹ In 2006, the Washington mission successfully negotiated the exemption of import duties for Fiji exports for two years under the Generalised System of Preferences. This was particularly beneficial as Fiji exports to the US market had increased by 68% since 2004 ('US extends exemptions' Fiji Times 18th December, 2006).

The mission plays an important role in promoting Fiji's commercial relations with USA. Fiji products are promoted at USA, Canada and Mexico markets (Electronic interview Jesoni Vitugavulu, 20th November, 2006). The small island developing states diaspora has been recognised as an important source for investment, establishing networks and sourcing niche

⁶¹ 'Montalvan's Sales Inc. to further increase imports from Fiji', 'Fiji Water on track with sales target' in www.fijiembassy.com current at 27th June, 2006.

export industries (Briguglio et al, 2006: 22). The mission also promotes investment opportunities in Fiji, and its attractiveness as a tourist destination, and has sought opportunities for aid and technical assistance. In May, 2010, the Washington mission successfully assisted Asia Oil and Gas Company with obtaining tender documents for the Fiji-Momi Bay Project which it eventually won (Fiji Focus, 14th May, 2010: 9). The mission in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the FTIB also assisted the establishment of the South Pacific Business Development (SPBD) an American micro-financing company which set up its offices in Nadi and with plans to expand to Suva (Fiji Focus, 14th May, 2010: 9).

The Washington mission is accredited to Mexico. It also deals with international institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and the Smithsonian Institution which is also based in the capital (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD5).

The mission has three diplomats, the Head of Mission, First Secretary and Second Secretary, with three support staff – the Personal Assistant to the Ambassador, the Administrative Assistant and Chauffeur.⁶²

Current Ambassador Winston Thompson on presenting his credentials to the US President Barack Obama explained that Fiji was keen to uphold democratic principles but that these would be more inclusive where racial based politics would be removed. The US provided little bilateral assistance but contributed to the Asian Development Bank and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community which had not withdrawn their aid since the political crises of 2006 and 2009.⁶³

The Friends of Fiji, a group comprised of former Peace Corps volunteers, works closely with the Washington mission in organising fund raising activities for rural based development projects in Fiji and other developing countries. It also helps establish people to people links. In 2011, a group of Friends of Fiji helped Habitat for Humanity construct two homes and donated laptops to a school (Personal discussion former Peace Corps volunteers 2nd July, 2011). Its newsletter keeps former Peace Corps volunteers informed of latest developments in Fiji and helps to promote an awareness of Fiji's culture.

⁶² Embassy Staff <http://www.fijiembassydc.com/default.asp?contentID=515> accessed 8th July, 2011.

⁶³ US-Fiji Relations in <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1834.htm> accessed 19th December, 2011.

The first ambassador to Washington was Ratu Jone Radrodro who had previously served as Fiji's ambassador to the United Nations in 1983 – 1985. From 1987 to 1990 the embassy was looked after by Abdul Yusuf, who had worked for Fiji Sugar Corporation (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 3). In 1991 Ratu Finau Mara was appointed Charge d'Affaires, after serving as a legal officer in the Attorney General's office, and taking on the position of Chief Administrative Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 4). Other ambassadors and diplomats that have served in Washington include Mr Pita Nacuva from 1992 - 1998, a career civil servant prior to his appointment was the Director for Tourism⁶⁴, Mr Anare Jale who served from 2001 – 2004, was the Registrar of Trade Unions and Secretary of Public Service before taking up his posting⁶⁵; Mr Jesoni Vitusagavulu was appointed ambassador in 2006 and prior to his posting was the head of the Fiji Trades and Investment Board, Peni Lomaloma was Charge d'Affaires from 2008 to 2009 and had previously served as a diplomat. There were also brief periods when the mission operated at the Charge d'Affaires level.⁶⁶ The current Ambassador is Mr Winston Thompson, Fiji's former Permanent Representative to the UN, Permanent Secretary of Finance and Chief Executive Officer of Telecom Fiji and Fiji's Special Emissary to its international partners in 1987.

In conjunction with the Australian, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea missions in Washington the Fiji mission organises an annual Pacific Night, which has gained popularity with Congress members writing in to request invitations. As a public diplomacy initiative it is an ideal opportunity to introduce and market Fiji's products and promote its potential as a tourist destination (Interview Anare Jale, 23rd July, 2008). The 2008 Pacific Night attracted 800 – 900 people at the National Geographic Society Headquarters that enjoyed Pacific cuisine and entertainment.⁶⁷

The Fiji embassy staff in its representational and cultural roles also participated at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. 'Cooking demonstrations of Fijian food such as cassava pie

⁶⁴ <http://www.lookinglassdesign.com/fijicoupmay2000/july2000/705-cabprofile.fvn.html> accessed 11th July, 2011.

⁶⁵ <http://fijituwawaprofile.blogspot.com/2008.04/meet-anare-jale-of-ono-i-lau.html> accessed 8th July, 2011.

⁶⁶ In 2000 prior to Mr Anare Jale taking up the post and 2004 when Anare Jale returned to Fiji.

⁶⁷ <http://www.fijiembassydc.com/default.asp?contentID=811> accessed 11th July, 2011.

and kokoda as well as tapa printing was displayed by the mission staff and their families. The mission staff also performed a Fijian ‘meke’ or dance. Fiji’s participation was noted by the media:

‘It is rare for a small country like Fiji to take centre stage in the capital of the world’s last remaining super power. Although the tropical South Pacific is normally off the radar screen, this weekend’s spotlight is partially on Fiji at Washington annual gathering of cultures, called the Smithsonian Folklife Festival (Fiji Focus, 14th May, 2010: 9).’

The mission in 2010 also took advantage of the 45,000 large gathering that attended the 2010 IRB Las Vegas Sevens to stage a joint display with Air Pacific, Trade Commission and Tourism Fiji.

The Washington mission’s role has focused more on enhancing economic opportunities for Fiji in trade, investment and tourism, which is seen in the varied activities to increase Fiji’s exposure. Fiji’s leaders and former leaders also attended the much sought after annual Presidents Prayer Breakfast.

4.5.2 Tokyo

Fiji opened its first Asian overseas mission in Tokyo in 1981 with four diplomats assigned to the mission. Its economic priority is to promote Fiji’s exports in what has been traditionally Fiji’s main import destination. Tourism arrivals from Japan have also added to the economic gains of Fiji and Japan’s bilateral partnership. Japan is also a valued aid donor for Fiji and the region. The mission’s key role is to promote Fiji and Japan’s economic and commercial relations. According to former ambassador to Japan Mr Kotobalavu this included to obtain markets for Fiji, promote Fiji as a source of investment, source development aid and promote Fiji as a tourist destination (Personal interview, 4th November, 2007).

Fiji’s trade with Japan has always experienced a deficit with Fiji’s imports of motor vehicles, vehicle parts and electronic items accounting for the imbalance. In the 1980’s Fiji exported raw sugar to Japan. Fiji’s exports to Japan have ranged from woodchips, sugar, fresh tuna, and in 2002 there was ‘potential for the export of fresh and processed produce such as mango, papaya, okra, cut-flowers, and ginger (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD10).’

In 2009 Fiji's exports to Japan amounted to F\$63 million⁶⁸. Fiji's trade to Japan has increased with the export of fish, beverages, manufactured goods and niche products such as pearls. For the first time in July, 2008 Fiji recorded a trade surplus, a significant achievement for a vulnerable small island developing state⁶⁹. In the same period, EF Enterprise Inc. Japan signed a license to distribute Fiji Noni juice. The same company has signed an agreement with Punjas Ocean Soap Ltd for the marketing of soaps in Japan. Cosmetic products such as Pure Fiji are also breaking into the Japanese and Korean market. Pure Fiji has appointed Mr Makoto Omuro of Saitama Prefecture sole distributor in Japan, of its highest quality soap, 'Sovu ni Viti' (Fiji Focus 25th September, 2010: 9).

Fiji's trade has also been assisted by the Pacific Island Centre (PIC), established by the Pacific Islands Forum in 1996 to promote Pacific island trade, investment and tourism in Japan. Fiji's major companies have showcased their products at the PIC. Fiji's ambassador to Tokyo, Mr Isikeli Mataitoga, has embarked on a new strategy of approaching Prefectural governments in Japan to establish special relationships with Fiji.

Japan also offers potential for tourists and in 1982 Japanese visitors were the fourth largest tourist group to Fiji (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 27). The mission worked closely with the FTIB and FVB in 1987 where a Fiji Exhibition was organised in Kobe (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 28).

Ambassador Mataitoga's lobbying and negotiation with Prefectural government found that within these governments are potential businesses, investors and tourism markets that go beyond the major Japanese cities (Fiji Focus 25th September, 2010). The mission also organised a tourism dinner for Tokyo travel agents in August 2010, as part of their ongoing work of promoting Fiji as a tourism destination (Fiji Focus 25th September, 2010).

In 2004 and 2005, the Tokyo mission promoted Fiji at the 2005 World Expo at Aichi. In addition, it also promoted ecotourism as Japanese tourists are keen to visit similar ecotourism spots such as Abaca in the province of Ba (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 27).

⁶⁸ Public Lecture by Ambassador Yoshizawa in http://www.fj.emb-japan.go.jp/JapaneseVersion/Political/Public%20Lecture%20USP_text_j.html accessed 20th December, 2011.

⁶⁹ July – August 2008 Highlights in <http://www.fijiembassy.jp/newsletter.html> accessed 11th July, 2011.

The Tourism Fiji Marketing office in Tokyo is continuing its efforts to increase tourist arrivals. In 2008 the annual Japanese tourist arrivals to Fiji was 23,000, ranked seventh behind Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, UK and Europe (Fiji Bureau of Statistics – Key statistics: September, 2011). The tourism industry was assisted by the addition of two new air routes from Fiji to Tokyo by Air Calin and Continental Airlines because Air Pacific has stopped its direct flights.⁷⁰ In addition, Japanese investors have also tapped into Fiji's tourism industry.

Japan has been Fiji's second largest donor of Overseas Development Assistance. For a small island developing state, ODA is always welcomed but experts have warned that aid is often linked with pressures placed on Pacific island countries to vote for Japan's position in multilateral fisheries talks (Tarte, 1998: 14 – 16). In the 1970's Japan's aid and interest in Fiji and in the region was largely to do with fisheries. In 1981 Japan's aid to Fiji stood at F\$300,000 and continued to increase reaching F\$4.4 million in 1983 (Howard, 1991: 136). In 1986 Japanese aid to Fiji stood at F\$8.3 million with the bulk donated to the construction of a fishing port in Lautoka (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 20; Howard, 1991: 136), while aid in 1987 was F\$4 million, F\$6.1 million in 1988 and F\$6.6 million in 1989 (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 6).

The Japanese government has been a generous donor by assisting with the development of infrastructure such as the Colonial War Memorial Hospital new extension, the Central Nursing School in Tamavua, and the regional institution of the University of the South Pacific based at the Laucala campus. Japan's Grant Aid has, since 1998, been directed to specific infrastructure projects in health, University of the South Pacific ICT Center, Pharmaceutical Centre, and the Fiji Meteorological Centre. Japanese aid to Fiji is largely due to Fiji's regional 'hub' status with projects designed to benefit the region, not only Fiji.

In 1980, Japan provided a grant of F\$100,000 for the Disaster Relief Fund and in 1981 F\$800,000 was channelled to rural fisheries development, aquaculture research and development. Japan's technical cooperation and aid to Fiji was organized into resources survey, equipment supply, provision of experts and volunteers for training Fiji citizens (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 26).'

⁷⁰ Tourism in Embassy of the Republic of Fiji Islands Japan / Korea / Russia / Philippines in <http://www.fijiembassy.jp/newsletter.html> accessed 11th July, 2011.

Significantly, Fiji has also offered educational assistance to Japanese students in the Fukushima Prefecture, affected by the March 2011 earthquake, to study in Fiji for up to a year and be admitted to the Fiji National University and to various high schools in Fiji⁷¹. This is a unique bilateral tie between the two countries, where Fiji is not necessarily the recipient of the assistance.

The mission's consular roles have included immigration details to Japanese travellers as well as looking after Fiji nationals in Japan furthering their studies or rugby players on contracts.

Until 2012, the Tokyo mission was cross-accredited to South Korea where it supervised an Honorary Consul General, to the Russian Federation and the Philippines. It also supervised the Hong Kong based Honorary Consul but this responsibility has since been shifted to the Beijing embassy (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD10).

The Tokyo mission also has a small complement of staff comprised of the ambassador and First Secretary, Counselor and Trade Officer⁷² with two locally employed staff, a Personal Assistant and Chauffeur (Yarrow Report 2002, AnnexD10).

The mission also strengthens people to people understanding that may lead to potential investors or increase tourist numbers. Its consular role involved looking after Fijian students enrolled at various tertiary institutions and rugby players on contract. Mrs Litia Mawi who served as Deputy Head of Mission in Tokyo from 2002 to 2006, explained that her key performance roles were 'linking sectoral counterparts in the Japan / Fiji government sectors, facilitating Fiji Tourism policy and Fiji / Japan Trade and Investment through strategic networking, providing Fiji / Japan Immigration policy guidance and direction by monitoring the relevance of Fiji's immigration requirements for consular outputs, managing the Mission's corporate matters and increasing Japanese awareness of Fiji by marketing Fiji at all levels (Personal Interview Mrs Litia Mawi, 30th June, 2006).'

Fiji's first ambassador to Tokyo in 1981 was Mr Jioji Kotobalavu, who had been a long serving public servant in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr Kotobalavu had completed a Masters degree in Auckland, received three months specialist training with the UN Security

⁷¹ 'Fiji Offers Assistance to Disaster Stricken Japanese students' in <http://www.fijiembassy.jp/news/11/20110426.html> accessed 11th July, 2011.

⁷² http://www.fijiembassy.jp/news/11/20110208_1.html accessed 14th July, 2011

Council, as well as Foreign Service training at Oxford covering International Economics, International Politics and the French language (Personal Interview Mr Jioji Kotobalavu, 4th November, 2007). In 1986 the Head of Mission was Mr J. D Gibson who had previously been Fiji's High Commissioner in London. He returned to Fiji in May 1988 and the embassy was looked after by two Charge d' Affaires, Mr A Baniola and Mr A Haroon (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 27). Mr Charles Walker was appointed ambassador in November, 1988. Mr Walker had been a long serving civil servant, politician and was a former Minister of Finance in Ratu Mara's Alliance government. Mr Robin Yarrow was ambassador in 1992 until 1996. Prior to his appointment Mr Yarrow had served with the Agriculture Department rising to the position of Permanent Secretary, when he was then posted to Brussels for two years (Personal interview Mr Robin Yarrow 30th October, 2006). Other ambassadors that have served in Tokyo include Ratu Tui Cavuilati, who had served with the Agriculture and Foreign Affairs Ministries, Ratu Tevita Momoedonu, and Ratu Inoke Kubuabola who had served formerly as Fiji's ambassador to Papua New Guinea. In 2011, Mr Isikeli Maitoga became Head of Mission. He has served as ambassador to Canberra, Brussels and as Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade.

4.5.3 Kuala Lumpur

The Kuala Lumpur mission was established in September 1988 in recognition of the fact that Malaysia was the second highest buyer of Fiji's sugar, and strengthened bilateral relations through aid, training and defence at a time when Fiji faced diplomatic isolation from its closest neighbours Australia and New Zealand (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 15). Malaysia had established its embassy in Suva in 1982 (Howard, 1991: 129). Malaysian companies also showed a great deal of interest in investing in Fiji.

Fiji and Malaysia's bilateral relationship is based on historical partnership where Fiji troops fought in the Malaya anti-communist campaign from 1952 - 1956 (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD1). Prime Minister Ratu Mara's official visit to Malaysia in June 1982 highlighted the close relationship between the two countries. The Malaysian Prime minister stated in his speech to welcome Ratu Mara,

'Fiji and Malaysia enjoy a long association forged in the troubled days of the emergency in Malaya, as we were known then. We are indebted to you. There is a continuing and abundant

store of affection and good will towards Fiji amongst the people of Malaysia (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 28).'

The ambassador is accredited as Fiji's Permanent Representative to ESCAP. Fiji is the only Pacific island country represented at this forum. As a UN regional body ESCAP is important for Fiji because it focuses on 'regional economic cooperation, environment and natural resources development, poverty alleviation measures (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD1).' ESCAP's two regional institutions, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and ESCAP Pacific Operations in Vanuatu are essential links for Fiji (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD1).

The mission forged close economic and commercial relations with Malaysia. Fiji exported sugar to Malaysia at a preferential price. Malaysia in 1988, next to United Kingdom was Fiji's second most important market for sugar importing 400,000 tons (Personal Interview Pio Tabaiwalu, 22nd April, 2010). It also increased its development assistance to Fiji which included military training as Australia and New Zealand had suspended its bilateral military agreement after 1987 (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 15). The mission's economic role included trade and investment promotions as there was much interest shown in 1988 for Fiji. The Carpenters Group was purchased by a Malaysian company and another company established the Merchant Finance.

The mission has a small staff with the Head of Mission, First Secretary and Second Secretary assisted by four locally employed staff, personal assistant to the Head of Mission, Finance / Administration Officer, Receptionist and Driver (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD1).

In February 1990, the Kuala Lumpur mission assisted the trade mission to South East Asia. Led by Mr Berenado Vunibobo, Minister of Trade and Commerce, Fiji officials visited Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia to promote the Tax Free Zone policy (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 20). The mission also assisted Mr Vunibobo's attendance at the 46th session of ESCAP along with Mr Savenaca Siwatibau the head of ESCAP Pacific office (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 17). Similarly in 2009, the mission facilitated sectoral links with the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forest, Mr Jonetani Cokanasiga's attendance at the sustainable development and food security conference (Bula Maleya News Vol. 2 Issue 3, 2009:3). In 2009 as well the mission strengthened bilateral ties in investment with the Naime Road Construction and EXIM Bank (Bula Maleya News Vol. 2

Issue 3, 2009: 3). The Naime Road Construction Company was contracted to build 11 kilometres of road linking Waito to Wailotua.⁷³

In conjunction with the Malaysian Industry Development Authority (MIDA) the Fiji mission in June, 2009 organised a seminar promoting Fiji's potential for business initiatives. The seminar attracted 103 companies. The mission in 2009 worked with the FTIB and the Ministry of Trade Tourism Industry and Communication to facilitate the establishment of business firms in Fiji (Bula Maleya News Vol. 2 Issue 3, 2009: 3). This was followed by FTIB CEO Ms Annie Rogers visit in August to attend the 'Familiarisation Programme for Officials of Investment Agencies of South South Countries (Bula Maleya News Vol. 3 Issue 4, 2009: 3).' It was also an initiative organised by MIDA. Having come soon after the seminar on 'Doing Business in Fiji' it helped to increase awareness of Fiji's business and investment opportunities and provided comprehensive information of the processes involved. The mission in July 2011 achieved its goal of establishing the Fiji-Malaysia Business Council that was attended by fifteen businessmen, three of whom represented companies that were operating in Fiji. As with all of Fiji's overseas missions, diplomats take advantage of available opportunities whereby they are able to showcase the countries major products, and require networking with local officials in the host government.

Malaysia also offers various training opportunities that have been utilised by civil servants. For example in the second quarter of 2009, an officer from Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority (FRCA) attended a course on Taxation of International Transaction for Custom Officers while a health official attended a course on Epidemiological Intelligence and Management course. A senior officer with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was awarded the Colombo Plan Scholarship to pursue a Masters Degree in Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy (Bula Maleya News Vol. 2 Issue 3, 2009: 4). Navy officers also completed six months training Commando Tactical Class I and II (Bula Maleya News Vol. 3 Issue 4, 2009: 4). The mission's newsletter provides Fijian students on FAB scholarships and rugby players playing for various teams with exposure to Fiji friends in Malaysia.

The mission also played its cultural role by showcasing Fiji on the Malaysian Government TV9 Channel in July, 2009 with celebrity Chef Wan where mission staff demonstrated

⁷³ <http://www.naim.com.my/pressdetails.asp?id=390> accessed 12th July, 2011.

traditional food preparation and displayed Fijian handicrafts. This aimed to boost Fiji's image for tourism and trade (Bula Maleya News Vol. 2 Issue 3, 2009: 3).

The groundwork for setting up the mission was initiated by Mr Bal Ram as the Charge d'Affair in 1988 and 1989, while his Second Secretary was Mr Daniel Johnson (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 15). Fiji's first ambassador to Malaysia was Colonel Mosese Buadromo who took up his appointment in January 1990, and Mr Saula Sovanivalu replaced Mr Daniel Johnson (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 4). Col. Mosese Buadromo was a senior military officer prior to his appointment. Other ambassadors that have served in Kuala Lumpur include Dr Ahmed Ali, who was a parliamentarian and had previously served as Consul – General in Auckland (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 3), Ratu Isoa Gavidi in 1997 and 1998 who had served in the London mission as First Secretary. Adi Samanunu Talakuli Cakobau was ambassador for eight years, and prior to her appointment had served as a politician in Rabuka's government. In 2010 the Head of Mission was Mr Suliasi Lutubula, who formerly served as Principal of large secondary schools. He was replaced in 2012 by Mr Meli Bainimarama who previously served as Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of I-Taukei.

4.6 'Look North and Beyond' Missions

The political crises of 1987, 2000 and 2006 have led to Fiji's foreign policy of forging close relations with its Asian neighbours, as diplomatic sanctions were imposed by its traditional bilateral and multilateral partners. This section will examine the role of the Beijing, Port Moresby and Jakarta missions.

4.6.1 Beijing

The Beijing embassy was established in 2001 in line with Fiji's 'Look North' foreign policy and is accredited to the Special Administration Region of Hong Kong. The Beijing mission has played a crucial role in strengthening Fiji's relations with the Peoples Republic of China particularly during Fiji's political crises when its traditional partners such as Australia, New Zealand, United States and United Kingdom imposed sanctions on Fiji. China on the other hand maintains a policy of non-interference in a country's internal politics which has benefited the Fiji government in the post 1987, 2000 and 2006 political crises periods. Since

2006, the Fiji government also valued the importance of strengthening ties with a major emerging world power (Tarte, 2010: 118).

The mission initially had a small complement of staff with the Head of Mission and a Second Secretary (Yarrow Report, 2002: Annex D2). By 2006 the mission had an additional diplomat, First Secretary Mr Naipote Katonitabua who was previously the Head of Overseas Development Assistance Unit with the Budget Division of the Ministry of Finance⁷⁴. The mission was also assisted by a Third Secretary, Mr Elia Sevutia who prior to his appointment was the Executive Officer Protocol with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade⁷⁵. The diplomatic staff in 2010 was increased to include a Counsellor, Mr Filipe Alifereti, a long serving civil servant in the Agriculture Ministry, and prior to his appointment was the Manager of the Fiji Meat Industry Board⁷⁶. The mission in 2011 was assisted by three locally employed staff: a Consultant on Chinese Affairs / Commercial Executive Assistant / Translator / Interpreter, Personal Assistant to the Ambassador, Receptionist / Administrative & Consular Assistant⁷⁷. The Beijing mission, is the largest overseas mission in terms of staffing and underlies the importance of Fiji's strengthened relations with China and potential for further bilateral ties. Fiji is able to afford the additional staff as China shares the costs of administering this mission. The locally employed staff assist with providing translation services.

Fiji is committed to the 'One China' policy although it maintains economic ties with Taiwan and this has been a point of contention with China (proper referencing 2010 needed).

⁷⁴ 'Diplomatic staff' in

<http://internetwebsystem.com/program/com/fiji/index.php?file=detail.php&nowdir=&id=550&detail=1>
accessed 31st October, 2006.

⁷⁵ 'Diplomatic staff' in

<http://internetwebsystem.com/program/com/fiji/index.php?file=detail.php&nowdir=&id=550&detail=1>
accessed 31st October, 2006.

⁷⁶ 'Farmers ministry differ over pork' in <http://www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=89683> accessed 13th July, 2011.

⁷⁷ <http://bio-visa.com/program/com/fiji/index.php?file=detail.php&nowdir=&id=551&detail=1> accessed 13th July, 2011.

Following the coups in 1987, 2000, and 2006, China has become increasingly a close partner choosing not to interfere in Fiji's domestic politics. The deputy director general of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deng Hongbo stated in 2006:

*"We have always respected Fiji's status as an independent nation and we have called on the other countries to do the same and reconsider their attitudes towards Fiji and the current situation in the country."*⁷⁸

Prime Minister Bainimarama in a newspaper interview in August 2010 stated that,

*'China is the only nation that can help assist Fiji in its reforms because of the way the Chinese think...What they want to do they do, they are visionary in what they do...We need infrastructure, we need water, we need electricity. Australia and New Zealand and America, none of those nations are going to provide that. We know that now because of their policies towards us so let's forget about these nations.'*⁷⁹

A key aspect of the mission's traditional political role has been facilitating high level meetings between Fiji's and China's political leaders. In 2002 a Parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the House of Representatives attended the 3rd General Assembly of the Association of the Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP) at the invitation of the Chinese government⁸⁰. The Speaker reiterated Fiji's 'One China' policy at the conference and outlined Fiji's 'Look North' foreign policy that hoped to improve relations with other Asian countries⁸¹. The President of the Senate in 2003 led a small team that also accepted an invitation from the Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and visited China for one week. The visit was marked by high level meetings with top

⁷⁸ [http://www.ask.com/wiki/People's Republic of China%E2%80%93Fiji relations](http://www.ask.com/wiki/People's_Republic_of_China%E2%80%93Fiji_relations) accessed 26th November, 2010.

⁷⁹ 'Fiji should align itself with 'visionary' China instead of Australia and NZ, says Bainimarama' in <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/fiji-should-align-itself-with-visionary-china-instead-of-australia-and-nz-says-bainimarama/story-e6frg6so-1225904044740> accessed 13th July, 2011.

⁸⁰ <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/hansard/viewhansard.aspx?hansardID=607&viewtype=full> accessed 13th July, 2011

⁸¹ <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/hansard/viewhansard.aspx?hansardID=607&viewtype=full> accessed 13th July, 2011

government and business officials, with the view of ‘promoting bilateral cooperation between the Fiji Senate and the CPPCC National Committee; enhance bilateral relations that would be mutually beneficial and promote investment opportunities in Fiji⁸².’ These high level visits began prior to the establishment of the Beijing embassy.

Fiji’s leaders that have visited China include ‘Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ratu Mara in 1979, 1985, 1988 and 1990, Governor General Ratu Penaia Ganilau in 1980, Minister of Foreign Affairs Filipe Bole in 1987, Commander of the Fiji Military Forces Sitiveni Rabuka in 1990, President Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau in 1991, Commander of the Fiji Military Forces Ratu Epeli Ganilau in 1992 and 1997, Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka in 1994, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Mr Berenado Vunibobo in 1997, Prime Minister Mr Mahendra Chaudhry in 1999, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Sugar, Mr Kaliopate Tavola in 2001 and 2002 and Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase 2002 and 2005⁸³. Prime Minister Bainimarama visited China in 2010 that coincided with the Fiji Day Celebrations at the Pacific Pavillion at the Shanghai Expo. Bainimarama met with a number of Chinese investors that included China Railway Construction Company that was engaged to conduct dredging of Rewa River and undertake civil works for the Housing Project at Tacirua Plains, and the Shanghai Urban Construction Ltd that is also involved in a number of construction and refurbishment jobs.⁸⁴

Similar Chinese top government leaders visited Fiji – ‘Vice Premier Chen Muhua in 1979, Hu Yaobang (General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party in 1985, Premier Li Peng in 1992, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in 1996, Chi Haotian (Vice Chairman of the Central Military Committee) in 1988, and Wu Yi (Minister of Foreign Economic Cooperation and Trade) in 1998.’⁸⁵ Premier Wen Jiabao visited Fiji in January 2006 to open the China – Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum, an indication of China’s increased interest in the Pacific region (Wesley-Smith: 17).

⁸² <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/hansard/viewhansard.aspx?hansardID=168&viewtype=full> accessed 13th July, 2011

⁸³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peoples_Republic_of_China_-_Fiji_relations accessed 13th July, 2011

⁸⁴ ‘Bainimarama rounds up China visit’ in Tarana News in http://www.tarana.co.nz/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=4520 accessed 13th July, 2011

⁸⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peoples_Republic_of_China_-_Fiji_relations accessed 13th July, 2011

According to some commentators China's increased influence in the Pacific region is largely to isolate Taiwan (Wesley-Smith: 25). The People's Republic of China has always blocked any independence moves by the Republic of China (Taiwan), claiming that the island state is part of China. Fiji maintains that its links with Taiwan are largely economic, and it has a Trade representative based in Taipei. Fiji's relations with China and Taiwan have on a few occasions been a source of tension. In 2005 the Taiwan President visited Fiji and was met by the Vice President Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi and the Health Minister's support for Taiwan's observer status at WHO, mentioned earlier in chapter 3.

In Beijing, the Fiji mission's lobbying for development assistance has led to a substantial increase in China's aid to Fiji. This is usually facilitated by high profile visits – so called 'visit diplomacy' (Tarte, 2010: 121). In 2002 it constructed sporting facilities in preparation for the South Pacific Games and donated a public address system for the Parliamentary complex⁸⁶.

China's development assistance to Fiji was at its highest in 2007 at F\$17.85 million. Figures for 2010 indicate a drop to F\$9.3 million.⁸⁷

China's provision of soft loans has been directed to the development of infrastructure such as the Sawani Serea Road to the value of US\$31.4 million. The project was undertaken by China Gezhouba Group Company Limited which was also tasked to improve the Sigatoka Valley road.⁸⁸ Concerns and criticisms have been levelled at Chinese aid projects where China stipulates that 50% of building materials originate from China, its lack of capacity building for local employees and its violation of occupation, health and safety issues.⁸⁹ These

⁸⁶ <http://goto-fiji.com/travel/14/foreign-relations-of-fiji.html> accessed 13th July, 2011.

⁸⁷ http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.fj/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=76&itemid=91 accessed 2nd May, 2011

⁸⁸ 'Bainimarama praises China for commitment to improving infrastructure in Fiji' in <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/7397935.html> accessed 13th July, 2011

⁸⁹ Matthew Dornan, Australian National University PhD student, in a paper for the East Asian Bureau for Economic Research in <http://pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=16481627894bff530a612cb701bf1a&PHPSESSID=d96ca71e7b99cd2fb1a4ec1a05d71c08> accessed 29th December 2010.

issues were also apparent in the Nadarivatu hydroelectric project to Sinohydro raises questions about the quality of projects provided by Chinese based companies.

Fiji's trade with China is increasing as the Fiji embassy continues to undertake market research and promotion to tap into the large export market. Fiji in 2006 was exporting 'sugar, timber, spices and marine products.'⁹⁰ There was potential to explore niche markets for bottled water, coconut products, seaweed and fresh chilled seafood. Fiji's trade with China also benefitted from a Bilateral Trade Agreement signed in 1997 granting Most Favoured Nation status for Fiji exports and imports of China's goods. The Fiji mission works closely with the Pacific Islands Forum Trade Office in Beijing that was opened in 2002.⁹¹

The mission's key role has focused on securing economic gains for Fiji but this has been hampered by resources, where the opportunity to travel the vast nation is hampered by limited funds (Electronic Interview Mr Jeremaia Waqanisau, 29th August, 2007). China has increased its development assistance to Fiji and has provided a number of soft loans to assist with developments to infrastructure as well as military training and is now Fiji's second largest donor. However, despite Fiji's 'Look North' foreign policy, economic benefits to Fiji have been minimal. China's aid targeted for specific projects is contrary to Fiji's preference for a multi-year aid package. In addition, aid projects have been hampered by administrative details by both partners (Tarte, 2010: 125 – 126).

The mission in 2005 facilitated Fiji's inclusion as an 'Approved Destination' for Chinese tourists. This was followed by Air Pacific's announcement to provide twice weekly flights to Hong Kong. It follows government's plan to encourage tourists from China and have provided for a non-visa requirement (Preethi Sundaram 'China – the new Pacific power' Fiji Island Business, October 2010). Chinese tourists have shown slight increases with 4,087 in 2009 and 18,147 in 2010 trailing nine places behind Australia, Fiji's highest source of tourism (Fiji Bureau of Statistics – Key Statistics: September 2011).

Fiji's first ambassador to Beijing was Luke Raturvuki, who was also a long serving senior civil servant in the Agriculture Ministry and had served as the Permanent Secretary to the

⁹⁰ 'Bilateral Trade with China' in <http://internetwebsystem.com/program/com/fiji/index.php?file=detail.php&nowdir=&id=864&detail=1> accessed 31st October,

⁹¹ http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200209/12/eng20020912_103067.shtml accessed 13th July, 2011

President's office. Mr Ratuvuki took up his appointment in 2001. In 2004, Mr Jeremaia Waqanisau was appointed Head of Mission and remained in the position until 2006 when most diplomatic missions' positions were reshuffled by the Bainimarama regime. Mr Waqanisau had held several senior positions in the military and the civil service and prior to his appointment was the Chief Executive Officer of Home Affairs, Immigration and National Disaster Management⁹². He had also served as Chief of Staff and Deputy Force Commander for UNIFIL. In 2007, businessman and politician Sir Jim Ah Koy was appointed Fiji's ambassador to China, following endorsement from the Peoples Republic of China⁹³. Prior to his appointment, Sir Jim Ah Koy was the Chairman of the FTIB. He also owns a number of companies listed under the Kelton group with a few that have branched into Papua New Guinea⁹⁴. In 2011 former Police Commissioner and Deputy Commander of the RFMF, Mr Esala Teleni took up his appointment as Head of Mission⁹⁵.

4.6.2 Port Moresby

The Fiji embassy in Port Moresby was established in 1993 and was the first Fiji mission in a Pacific Island country. Close relations between the two countries began in the late 1800's when Fijian missionaries worked in PNG (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD9). Historically, relations between Fiji and Papua New Guinea have been cordial prior to and soon after attaining independence in 1970 and 1975 respectively. The first Prime Ministers of Fiji and Papua New Guinea, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara and Sir Michael Somare also became close friends. Fiji nationals have worked in PNG as police officers and teachers (Electronic interview Mr Sekove Naqiolevu, 2nd July, 2007). Papua New Guinea has been particularly sympathetic and supportive during Fiji's internal crises and has publically opposed Australia and New Zealand's imposition of international sanctions. Sir Michael Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea reacting to Australia and New Zealand's calls for the Forum Island countries to impose sanctions post-2006 coup said,

⁹² Mr Jeremaia Waqanisau's Curriculum Vitae in <http://www.embbiz.net/fiji/ab.doc> accessed 31st October, 2006.

⁹³ <http://nfybible.com> accessed 13th July, 2011.

⁹⁴ <http://nfybible.com> accessed 13th July, 2011.

⁹⁵ 'Teleni appointed to ambassadorial role to the People's Republic of China' in <http://www.fiji.gov.fj> accessed 13th July, 2011.

'We wouldn't be doing justice to our objectives if we sought sole punitive action for a member of our family (Westmore, 2007).'⁹⁶

Papua New Guinea together with Ghana formed the 'Friends of Fiji' submission to the EU when Fiji's delegation presented the 'Roadmap for democracy' following the 2000 coup (Personal Interview Kaliopate Tavola, 18th May, 2010).

The mission's key roles are to encourage close political ties between the respective Melanesian governments and encourage trade through the Melanesian Spearhead Group trade agreement. Papua New Guinea holds potential for increased trade with Fiji because of its large import bill with Australia. Better shipping services are likely to see the transfer of some of PNG's imports to Fiji (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD9).

The Fiji mission is accredited to the Melanesian Spearhead Group, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (Yarrow Report, 2002: AnnexD9).

The mission promotes economic and commercial relations with MSG member countries, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands and ties with the FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front) of New Caledonia. The mission works to encourage trade between the member countries as agreed in the MSG Trade Agreement.

Trade with PNG is a major aspect of the mission's work because of PNG's vast size and population (Electronic interview Mr Sekove Naqiolevu 2nd July, 2007). Fiji's exports to Papua New Guinea have risen steadily from 2003 and in 2008 stood at F\$10.1 million. Fiji exports 'insulated wire and cables, wheat, bread, pastry, cakes and biscuits, telephone sets and medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products for therapeutic or prophylactic uses (Papua New Guinea Fact Sheet, FTIB).'

The mission was also involved in the negotiations and communication between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade and Commerce and its counterparts in Vanuatu in 2005 over the ban of Fiji biscuits to protect its own industry. The issue was resolved in December when Fiji and Vanuatu countries agreed to lift their respective trade bans⁹⁷.

⁹⁶ http://www.newsweekly.com.au/articles/2007/nov24_f.html accessed 31st December, 2010.

⁹⁷ <http://goto-fiji.com/travel/14/foreign-relations-of-fiji.html> accessed 13th July, 2011.

In 2005 and in 2010, relations with Papua New Guinea became slightly strained due to the presence of Fiji nationals as mercenaries. Nine Fijians worked in Bougainville illegally training the pro-secessionist rebel group in armed combat. The Fijian ex-soldiers had had training in Iraq and Afghanistan. Fiji was embarrassed by this and arranged for the former soldiers to be repatriated back to Fiji⁹⁸. Similarly, in 2010, fourteen Fiji nationals were found to be employed by the Simberi Gold Mine Company on New Ireland without necessary work permits. There was speculation that the men may have been hired as mercenaries.⁹⁹ The Port Moresby mission prepared the necessary documents on their behalf and arranged their return to Fiji.

In 2004, the mission provided political reports and policy advice while it monitored the situation in Bougainville as concrete steps were made to set up an acceptable government.

It also worked with RAMSI in the Solomons as Fiji troops and police were part of the regional assistance mission (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 13)

Its economic role is to seek partnerships with potential investors. More recently, the high economic growth in Papua New Guinea with the development of liquid gas resources provides opportunities for Fijians to gain employment. This has impacted on the mission's consular services as rising number of Fijians are in employment in Papua New Guinea (Rowland, 2010: 4)¹⁰⁰.

Mr Sekove Naqiolevu was appointed High Commissioner in 1999, after having served as the Chief Magistrate, followed by a term as Deputy Secretary in the Prime Minister's office (Electronic interview Mr Sekove Naqiolevu). Ratu Inoke Kubuabola was appointed High Commissioner in 2002 to 2005.¹⁰¹ Ratu Inoke Kubuabola was a politician in the SVT Rabuka led government prior to his appointment. Ratu Isoa Tikoca was the ambassador in 2007 to

⁹⁸ 'Mercenaries 'threat to Bougainville peace' in <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/papua-new-guinea/news/article.cfm?id=79&objectid=10355598> accessed 14th July, 2011

⁹⁹ <http://www.connectme.com.fj/news/national/Fiji-nationals-could-be-security-guards> accessed 14th July, 2011

¹⁰⁰ Michael Rowland speaking notes. *Fiji in the Pacific context – doing business, trends and opportunities*, 8th November, 2010. ANU & Lowy Institute for International Policy Fiji and Vanuatu Update 2010.

¹⁰¹ 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia official website in <http://www.kh.gov.my>

2009 and was previously the Commissioner Western¹⁰². In 2011, the Head of Mission's position was held by Dr Niumaia Tabunakawai. Dr Tabunakawai was previously the Permanent Secretary of Fisheries and Forests.¹⁰³ The mission is comprised of two diplomatic staff, the High Commissioner and Second Secretary.

4.6.3 Jakarta

The Jakarta mission was established in April, 2011 in the context of Fiji's 'Look North' foreign policy although Fiji established diplomatic relations with Indonesia in 1974. Indonesia signed a trade deal with Fiji after Filipe Bole's trade mission in 1987 where it agreed to 'trade deals of Indonesian rice, petroleum products and other products in exchange for Fiji's sugar (Howard, 1991: 337).' Politically the Indonesian government was reluctant to recognise the unconstitutional Rabuka regime in 1987 but it gave assistance to private business.

The mission's key roles are to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries which for Fiji now have the potential to reach \$80 million. There is scope for a small island state like Fiji to learn from Indonesia's agriculture, science, technology, defence, tourism, culture and education (Fiji Focus, April 16th 2011: 2). The Fiji delegation to Indonesia to mark the opening of Fiji's embassy was also given a presentation on the Indonesian electoral process (Fiji Focus, April 16th 2011: 3). Fiji has applied for observer status to the Association of South East Asia Nation (ASEAN). This is to strengthen Fiji's ties with Malaysia and Philippines and further afield to Cambodia, Singapore, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand (Fiji focus April 30th 2011: 10).

The embassy in Jakarta was opened by Prime Minister Bainimarama. In his address, Prime Minister Bainimarama stated that the opening of Fiji's embassy in Jakarta was a 'consolidation of its Look North' foreign policy. It was also an important development in Fiji's foreign policy of reaching further afield as Indonesia was a 'founding member of ASEAN, a leading member of Non-Aligned Movement and G20'. Indonesia he added was also one of the fastest growing economies in Asia (Opening of Fiji Embassy, Jakarta,

¹⁰² <http://www.regdev.gov.fj/contact.htm> accessed 14th July, 2011

¹⁰³ 'Tabunakawai is Fiji's chief envoy to PNG' in <http://fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=123865> accessed 14th July, 2011

Indonesia 6th April, 2011).¹⁰⁴ Fiji has appointed seasoned diplomat Ratu Tui Cavuilati to be its ambassador, indicating the value it places on its bilateral relations with Indonesia.

4.7 Conclusion

The establishment of Fiji's overseas missions since 1970 have been to represent Fiji's foreign policy priorities in the host nations and the multilateral organisations they are accredited to. The first generation missions aimed to maximise Fiji's economic benefits through preferential trade agreements. The Brussels mission promoted Fiji's economic and commercial relations along with other ACP member states with the then EEC and EU to formulate the Lome, Cotonou and European Partnership Agreements. This evolving trade relationship has required the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to send their best qualified staff to this mission.

The New York and London missions represented Fiji to the United Nations and Commonwealth respectively. Fiji's diplomats along with other small island developing states concerned about their vulnerable environments and limited resources negotiated the Third UN Law of the Sea Convention. In New York, Fiji's diplomats have lobbied for some of the crucial positions in the Decolonisation Committee, Law of the Sea Convention and Peace building Commission to name but a few. Through group diplomacy with the Asian group, AOSIS, Forum Island Countries, PSIDS and MSG Fiji's diplomats have highlighted the crucial issues that define SIDS vulnerability. The promotion of the Pacific's vulnerable environment particularly with respect to Climate Change continues to be a major issue at multilateral fora. They have also expressed opposition to nuclear testing in the Pacific, encouraged human rights and decolonisation.

All of Fiji's overseas missions are tasked with promoting economic and commercial relations for Fiji's exports, and as a tourist destination. In Canberra and Kuala Lumpur, the establishment of mutual business councils aims to pursue business opportunities for Fiji's export industries. Similarly, the Washington and Tokyo embassies with the assistance of Fiji's trade officers pursue export opportunities. In London and Washington, remittances from Fiji citizens serving in the British Army and as caregivers in USA have increased economic benefits for Fiji.

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmyj5MZ4FD8> accessed 14th July, 2011.

Fiji's diplomats have negotiated the provision of overseas development assistance but over time were impacted somewhat by the political crises. The political crises have placed added pressure on Fiji's diplomats to justify Fiji's position and provide plausible arguments of Fiji's democratic process. In 1987, Fiji established a diplomatic mission in Kuala Lumpur in the wake of diplomatic sanctions from its traditional neighbours, Australia and New Zealand. Following the 2000 coup d'état, Fiji announced its 'Look North' foreign policy as it sought partners in Asia. The establishment of Fiji's embassies in Beijing and New Delhi was an indication of this new policy. China's foreign policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of a state has helped Fiji find friends when it has been isolated. The post-2006 political crisis has led to the redefining of Fiji's foreign policy as it has not succumbed to political pressure from Australia and New Zealand but has sought to strengthen its 'Look North' and regional foreign policy as well as establish overseas embassies further afield. As a result, new overseas missions have been established in Jakarta, Brasilia, Pretoria, Seoul, and Abu Dhabi. Fiji has also sought membership of other multilateral organisations such as the Non-Aligned Movement and is seeking observer status at ASEAN. In the wake of its isolation by the Pacific Islands Forum Fiji has re-engaged with the Pacific Island countries and strengthened its membership in the Melanesian Spearhead Group in engaging the Pacific partners.

Through public diplomacy, Fiji's diplomats promote cultural exchanges, and friendly relations with the host nations. With the assistance of the Fijian settler communities, Fiji Day celebrations, and the Pacific Night in Washington are examples of events where missions actively participate.

Chapter 5: Evaluating the Role of Overseas Missions in Fiji's Foreign Policy

5.1 Introduction

In the international arena, small island developing states have stressed their vulnerability to natural disasters, poor economies of scale, and the adverse impact of a competitive world market. They have sought understanding and consideration from large developed countries such as their former colonial powers and major trading partners to provide aid and to sustain their economies through favourable trade ties and development assistance. It is difficult for small states to push their own agenda in the international arena but there are various strategies that can be adopted by their overseas missions as instruments of the small state's foreign policy. Fiji's overseas missions have placed increasing importance on their economic role. Their consular roles have also become more important with the increasing number of Fijians residing overseas and who send remittances back home, as well as the promotion of tourism and foreign direct investment. The missions' political roles have also been challenged by the political upheavals in Fiji and the resultant sanctions by their bilateral and multilateral partners. This chapter will evaluate the role of overseas missions by reference to their achievements and weaknesses or constraints.

As a small island developing state, the use of group diplomacy has been a notable achievement as a means of promoting certain objectives. Other notable successes include advocacy for international law to protect the vulnerable environment of small states, and commercial diplomacy in the acquisition of Overseas Development Assistance. The access to niche markets to achieve economic resilience has also achieved a measure of success. The second part of this chapter will discuss some of the challenges, weaknesses and problems facing Fiji's overseas missions. These include staffing, the appointment of diplomats, and training and preparation which underscores the importance of having qualified diplomats and negotiators to represent Fiji at various fora on issues such as the erosion of trade preferences. Overriding these challenges has been the added difficulty of maintaining Fiji's representational role during periods of political instability. The evaluation of these factors will draw from a range of examples from Fiji's overseas missions, and are by no means exhaustive.

5.2 Yarrow Report

The Yarrow Report in 2002 was the first comprehensive review of the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which examined the Ministry's ability to meet the challenges of globalisation and technological challenges of the twenty-first century. Its purpose was to review the work of the ministry and provide recommendations for improved efficiency and effectiveness.

The Yarrow Report recommended that the offices of the Fiji Visitors Bureau and the Fiji Trades and Investment Board be co-located in the overseas missions, according to available resources, and that Fiji utilise the services of its Honorary Consuls fully. It also recommended that the Ministry be restructured and renamed into three major divisions: economic, international relations, and corporate management and protocol. With respect to the Ministry's Planning Process, the report recommended that the Ministry's Strategic Plan be reviewed annually; that the Heads of Missions Consultation be held triennially; and that the Ministry implement a systematic work programme.

The greatest number of recommendations was made with respect to staffing.¹⁰⁵ These included proposals for the creation of new posts, relocation of posts to appropriate divisions, appointments of graduate trainees, establishment of a career foreign service, training and induction programmes, appointments of contracted Locally Engaged Staff, the use of a relevant Ministry based Performance Management System and consideration for spouses of Fiji diplomats to seek employment in their host country.

The Yarrow Report also made significant recommendations with respect to the Ministry's systems. It suggested that the Ministry set up an 'inter-Ministry communication network' between Ministry officers and their designated officer in other sectoral ministries to allow for ease of 'information and coordination.' It was also recommended that communication from missions be addressed within a 24 and 72 hours turnaround time; that a uniform fax communication forms be used; that senior officials of the Ministry also sit in on the boards of Fiji Visitors Bureau and Fiji Trades and Investment Board; information technology and internet network services be improved; that an 'inter-Ministry Membership Management Committee be established...to better manage Fiji's membership of international organisations

¹⁰⁵ Eighteen in total (Yarrow Report, 2002: Staffing). Please note that the pages are not numbered.

and conventions,’ and that the Ministry set up a similar small scale Membership Management Committee; that ‘Fiji’s conventions / treaties list be updated’ and disseminated widely¹⁰⁶; and that an internal audit and review be undertaken.

The Yarrow Report’s final recommendation stated that ‘consideration be given to the enactment of a Foreign Affairs and External Trade Act which would cover several key issues, including the: important role and functions of the Ministry; establishment of a career foreign service and the need for clear criteria in the appointment of overseas representatives, in particular Heads of Missions. The Ministry had by 2004 begun the implementation of the Yarrow Report recommendations by working with the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Public Service Commission and the Solicitor General’s office. This working committee had formulated a Draft Foreign Affairs Bill that was then forwarded to the Solicitor General’s office and Public Service Commission for their response. The Cabinet was kept informed of developments in this regard (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 37). However there were delays in its implementation due to concerns subsequently raised by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Kaliopate Tavola in the 2005 Ministry’s Annual Report (Parliamentary Paper No. 45, 2006: 9).

In July, 2011 issue it was reported that Cabinet would be discussing a new Foreign Affairs Decree, stipulating the development of a diplomatic cadre and a Foreign Service Institute (PM calls for strong foreign service’ Fiji Focus July 9th 2011).

5.3 Achievements and Successes

5.3.1 Group Diplomacy

Since 1970 Fiji’s overseas missions have exercised group diplomacy which has placed Fiji at the forefront of some major international organisations and issues. This is indicative of the active role Fiji has played in international relations. Fiji’s group diplomacy with the ACP, Pacific Islands Forum, AOSIS, MSG and PSIDS has been effective in gaining favourable trade terms, or through advocacy gained international recognition of the special problems and constraints faced by small island states. It has enabled them to devise common positions and

¹⁰⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation website displays this comprehensive list and is grouped into three categories – multilateral agreements, bilateral agreements, Fiji’s International Agreements and Convention.

with strength of numbers has given them a voice at multilateral fora. Group diplomacy has also been successful in achieving key appointments for Fiji nationals on international bodies such as the UN Committee on Law of the Sea Convention and ECOSOC.

The Brussels and New York missions have been instrumental in exercising group diplomacy. Fiji's diplomats at the Brussels mission have represented Fiji along with ACP states in negotiating favourable trade terms with the EEC under the Lomé convention and the Cotonou in 2000 with the renamed EU. In 1974 Fiji was instrumental in negotiating the Stabilisation of Export (STABEX) scheme for ACP countries with the EEC, where the EEC agreed to transfer to ACP states funds to supplement loss of export earnings given their vulnerable economies (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 39).¹⁰⁷ Continuing talks and negotiations occurred between the Brussels mission staff and the ACP / EEC representatives. Ambassador Kaliopate Tavola in 1990, along with the then Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr Berenado Vunibobo was able to obtain recognition and agreement from EEC member states of the 'special problems of the region in particular the economic constraints affecting small island states, their fisheries and environment (Parliamentary Report No. 22, 1992: 12).' Following discussions on the Lome IV Priorities, Fiji was reappointed to the Bureau of the Joint Assembly representing the Pacific as well as the working party on Intra-ACP Trade (Parliamentary Report No. 22, 1992: 13).

Diplomats in the Brussels mission in matters of trade work closely with Small and Vulnerable Economies (a specific group in the WTO) and the Pacific Islands Forum office in Geneva in formulating group positions to the WTO (Electronic interview Yolinda Chan 11th April, 2007). The former Forum Trade Policy Adviser, Mrs. Mere Falemaka explained that the Forum Island Countries Working Group assisted member states with their common interests and formulated a common strategy to the WTO negotiations (Electronic interview, 4th April, 2007). Group diplomacy for Forum Island Countries has assisted member states to devise common positions at a multilateral level particularly with the complex WTO trade regime that covers trade in goods, services and intellectual property (Electronic interview Mrs Mere Falemaka, 4th April, 2007). Discussions and negotiations at this level require technical and expert trade and negotiation skills. Because small island developing states have limited

¹⁰⁷ Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara however provides a firsthand account of being ill-prepared for the talks and that by stressing the vulnerability of small states economies was able to obtain EEC approval for the establishment of STABEX (Mara, 1997: 131)

resources, group diplomacy through the Forum's Trade Policy Adviser has allowed them to share limited financial and human resources.

Group diplomacy at the UN, through the Asian group, AOSIS and PSIDS has seen Fiji gain key seats on various committees. In the late 1970's Mr Berenado Vunibobo was appointed President of the Asia Governing Council of UNDP (Personal Interview, Mr Winston Thompson: 1st April, 2007; Personal interview Mr Berenado Vunibobo: 24th November, 2006). Fiji's work with the Decolonisation Committee led to the appointment of Mr Berenado Vunibobo to head the UN observer mission to Cayman Islands, the US Virgin Islands and Vanuatu (Vunibobo, 2005: 11; Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65). In 2000, Fiji's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Mr Amena Yauvoli, was elected to sit on ECOSOC and was one of two SIDS countries represented at this forum.¹⁰⁸ In this role, Mr Yauvoli was 'lead negotiator for a number of General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions (Electronic interview: 22nd November, 2010).' As a SIDS representative, Fiji diplomat Yauvoli spoke for small states issues at the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development in 2001, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. Yauvoli then represented the Pacific region as the Senior Policy Adviser from SPREP at the ten year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS in 2005, in another capacity of formulating common positions for the region (Electronic interview, 22nd November, 2010).

5.3.2 International Law

Law of the Sea

Small states need to be active in negotiations and discussions at multilateral level so that their voice is heard. Fiji diplomats at the New York mission have been successful in highlighting the vulnerable environment of small island states. Fiji's submission to the Third Law of the Sea Conference is a notable success. Fiji was the first country to ratify the Convention in 1982 (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 62). Fiji was the only Pacific island UN member country in 1973 when negotiations began at the UN. It was crucial for Fiji to support the

¹⁰⁸ Jamaica was the other SIDS to gain a two year term on ECOSOC (Electronic interview, Mr Amena Yauvoli: 22nd November, 2010).

convention because of the importance of the oceans to its territorial sovereignty as well as its economic survival.

'For developing island states like Fiji, it is vital that distant water fishing countries like the United States, (which did not sign the Treaty) should recognize our exclusive jurisdiction to the marine resources in our economic zone. We all need to work together because as developing countries we lack the technology to exploit to the full the fish and mineral deposits in our resources alone. But the pre-condition must be an acceptance by the technologically advanced countries of the exclusive jurisdiction of island countries to these resources (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 63).

Because of Fiji's contribution to the Law of the Sea Convention, Fiji's former New York diplomat, and former Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mr Satya Nandan was appointed Secretary General of the International Seabed Authority (Vunibobo, 2005: 10).

Human Rights

Fiji has effectively portrayed herself as an international citizen upholding international instruments of human rights. In the 1970's and 1980's Fiji's diplomats at New York highlighted Fiji's position of upholding human rights. It was a reflection of the Fiji government's national interest of depicting itself as a peaceful, multiracial democratic newly independent country. In 1981 Fiji was elected to the UN Commission on Human Rights (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 65). Fiji also stated its opposition to racial discrimination and sent a delegation to attend the world conference at Geneva marking the 'Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination' in 1978. The world conference submitted recommendations opposing Apartheid in South Africa and called for the 'elimination by Government of all discriminatory laws and practice laws to punish dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, and promotion of the rights of indigenous people and migrant workers (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 64).'

Following the 1987 coups, the Fiji government's interest lay in upholding indigenous rights to reflecting the policies of the post-coup government. Fiji's 1990 constitution had inbuilt parameters for greater representation of the indigenous Fijian people in keeping with the ethno-nationalist tone of the coups. Fiji's overseas missions were tasked with disseminating information to the UN, ILO and EEC on the constitutional process. Some of the overseas

missions were able to obtain the services of constitutional experts (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 7). Addressing the UN General Assembly in October 1988, Mr Viliame Gonelevu, Minister of Primary Industries, stated that ‘Fiji would not institutionalize racism but the needs of the indigenous Fijians must be looked after if peace and stability were to be assured (‘Gonelevu Puts Race Case to UN,’ Fiji Times 14th October, 1988).’

The Fiji government organized a committee to prepare Fiji’s report to the International Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2003 for submission in 2006 (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 19). Fiji’s diplomats in New York through the Ministry’s communication were kept informed of these developments. In 2005, Prime Minister Qarase reinforced Fiji’s position in his address at the UN General Assembly in stating that while Fiji ‘acknowledges the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights...Indigenous Pacific island communities see a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as being vitally important for the international recognition and acceptance of our right to self-determination and, indeed, to our very survival as ethnically and culturally distinct peoples (Foreign Affairs Bulletin Issue 2 February 2005: 3).’

After the political crisis in 2006 and the constitutional crisis in 2009, Fiji’s overseas missions have had to explain Fiji’s position on human rights. Reported incidents of violations of human rights were highlighted in the local and international media. Fiji’s ambassador to Brussels, Peceli Vocea, stated Fiji’s position in light of these developments in June 2010, indicating that Fiji was meeting most aspects of the recommendations for the restoration of constitutional rule, rule of law, and the lifting of public emergency regulations, in line with its Roadmap to Democracy, and was seeking its own solutions to create a lasting democratic system.¹⁰⁹ This statement has not been well received by Human Rights Watch and the other international organisations that have opposed human rights violations in Fiji.

Peacekeeping

Fiji’s role in UN Peacekeeping missions has portrayed its image of a tropical small island developing state, sending its brave men to uphold peace in trouble spots throughout the world and has ‘become a powerful instrument of international politics (Goiran, 2009: 6).’ Fiji

¹⁰⁹ ‘Statement by Ambassador Peceli Vocea to 14th Session of the Human Rights Council’, June 11th 2010 in <http://www.fiji.gov.fj> accessed 25th July, 2011.

portrays itself as an internationalist and its contribution to peacekeeping is by far the largest per capita (Annual Review of Global Peace Operations, 2012: 2). Opposition to Fiji's involvement in peacekeeping has emerged from Australia and New Zealand during periods of political upheavals. The New York diplomats have successfully ensured that Fiji's military is still utilised for UN peacekeeping operations. The engagement of Fiji's troops at UN peacekeeping operations received international recognition when in 1988, UN Peacekeeping forces were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize ('Govt delighted over peacekeeping award,' Fiji Times 1st October, 1988). In 1991, Fiji's police and army officers were part of the UN contingent to Iraq and Kuwait in UNIKOM, and senior army officers were also assigned to peace-monitoring duties in Afghanistan (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 10, 11). Fiji continued to send its security forces despite arrears in re-imbursement payments from the UN (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 10).

Australia and New Zealand after the 2006 coup made strong statements and called for the 'ban of future deployments of the well-trained and well-regarded Fijian troops as a means of denying Fiji's flagging economy precious income from lucrative UN pay checks (Bennett, 2009)¹¹⁰.' The UN peace keeping statistics records that in November 2011 Fijian troops at peace keeping missions total 333 comprised of 49 Police, six Military Experts on Mission and 278 troops¹¹¹. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the September 2011 Forum meeting, backed the use of Fiji troops because there was no other option, but added that a stringent checking system on each soldier was put in place to ensure that they did not hire soldiers guilty of human rights violations (Watkins, 2009)¹¹².

Fiji's contribution to peace keeping and the negotiation and lobbying carried out by the New York based diplomats led to Fiji's election to sit on the UN Peace Building Commission for a two year term and Ambassador Savua made the following statement:

¹¹⁰ 'Exporting Fijian Forces', International Relations and Security Network in <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch-Archive/Detail/?lng=en&id=101406> accessed 21st December, 2011.

¹¹¹ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml> accessed 21st December, 2011.

¹¹² 'Ban Ki-moon backs UN use of Fiji soldiers' in <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/5577793/Ban-Ki-moon-backs-UN-use-of-Fiji-soldiers> accessed 21st December, 2011.

'All member countries of the UN were eager to be pioneer members of this important commission, one of the key institutions established under the UN reform initiative and for a very small country like Fiji to assert its position among the bigger nations speaks volumes of the international support Fiji has in the area of international peace and stability (Foreign Affairs Bulletin, Issue 6, June 2006: 1).'

Environment

Fiji's response to global issues at the UN is an indication that it is part of the 'international discourse' and their participation in issues with their bilateral and multilateral partners (Barston, 2006: 21). Fiji as well as other Pacific island states has emphasized the importance of protecting its vulnerable environment from the impact of climate change, over exploitation of its marine resources, or the testing of nuclear weapons or transit of nuclear weapons across the Pacific Ocean. The New York mission was involved with the establishment of the Committee for Sustainable Development and was instrumental in the 1992 Rio and 1994 Barbados International Meeting on Sustainable Development. The New York mission has effectively engaged itself in ongoing discussions to place Small Island Developing States concerns on the international agenda. Earlier in 1986, the South Pacific Forum agreed to a convention calling for the 'Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 13).'

The convention outlined a number of toxic substances such as mercury, oil and the dumping of harmful substances such as nickel and lead. South Pacific Forum member countries also opposed all forms of nuclear testing in the region (Parliamentary Paper No. 7, 1991: 13). The importance of protecting the Pacific region's vulnerable environment continues to be upheld by the Pacific Islands Forum. Fiji's diplomats at New York together with their Pacific counterparts highlight these issues at the UN and more recently have emphasized the protection of the Pacific's blue or oceanic economy.

In 2005, the New York mission together with headquarters staff in an international meeting drew up an Action Plan for the implementation of the Mauritius International Meeting (MIM) on Sustainable Development. The New York mission was tasked with sourcing potential donors (Parliamentary Paper No. 45, 2006: 13). Fiji's international role was further enhanced when it was asked to 'lead the team to look into ways the region can pursue and implement the Mauritius International Meeting strategy (Parliamentary Paper No. 45, 2006: 13).'

Similarly, the London mission in its multilateral role of representing Fiji to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change continued to push for funding to compensate for environmental destruction faced by vulnerable small states (Fiji Focus, August 14th, 2010: 7). These missions are effectively engaging in issues of concern to vulnerable small island states and are at the forefront of drafting international conventions.

Ambassador Thomson in December, 2010 addressed the UN General Assembly's meeting on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, highlighting the Pacific SIDS position on their inter-dependence with the oceans and its immediate environment. It was because of this that,

*'Pacific Islanders took very seriously their task of serving as custodians of the oceans. As such they were alarmed by the increasingly evident risks of overfishing through illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, and other irresponsible fishing practices such as bottom-trawling and shark-finning. Coral reefs are under increasing stress from climate change and ocean acidification ...that the survival and sovereignty of many Pacific Islands were at risk from rising sea levels (Fiji Addresses UN on Behalf of PSIDS, 7th December, 2010).'*¹¹³

Ambassador Thomson at the UN sessions has highlighted the Pacific's unique and vulnerable environment by calling on the international community to recognize and protect its 'Blue economy':

*'This Pacific imperative is rooted deep within the communities and cultures of our island nations, who have long depended on ocean's sustainability for food security, basic livelihoods and for cultural identity.'*¹¹⁴

5.3.3 Commercial Diplomacy

The major export destinations shown in table six and seven indicate that trade to Australia and United Kingdom remained high soon after the establishment of overseas missions in Canberra and London respectively. Similarly trade to Japan and New Zealand gradually increased following the establishment of overseas missions in the 1980's. Trade to Malaysia

¹¹³ News release in <http://www.fijiiprun.org> accessed 6th January, 2011.

¹¹⁴ 'Fiji Delivers Pacific Islands Statement on Oceans at UN' in http://www.fijiiprun.org/index/php?option=com_content&view=article&id=241:oceans-fiji-12062011&catid=28:press-releases&Itemid=9 accessed 21st December, 2011.

was at its highest in 1990 but the statistics show that there has been a gradual decline up to 2000 where there is no record of export statistics, an indication of the pressures on Fiji's sugar industry as it adjusted to trade liberalisation conditions. There are no records of exports to Malaysia for 2000 to 2003. Recently, Malaysian company, NAIM Cendera assisted Fiji's road construction¹¹⁵.

On the other hand exports to USA have gradually increased since 1990 and have exceeded those to the United Kingdom, formerly Fiji's major export destination, and in 2003 were close to export levels for Australia, Fiji's major export market. This is an indication in part, of the effectiveness of the Washington mission, established in 1985 and Trade office in Los Angeles in its promotion of Fiji's export industries. Government reports indicate that the Washington mission worked with the FTIB, FVB and NMA in 1987 – 1989 to tap into the large US market (Parliamentary Paper No. 13, 1992: 21).

Consistently high trade statistics for Australia indicate the close trade ties between the two countries prior to 1970 and are an indication in part of the investment patterns and finance.

By 2000 all Fiji missions assisted with the promotion of mining of gold, harvesting of mahogany and export of fresh fish. In 2007, the Washington mission noted a nine fold increase in exports of Fiji Water, canned tuna, vegetables and fresh fish to Canada¹¹⁶. Major exports to US include tuna loins, artesian mineral water, mahogany, sugar and molasses, fresh and whole fish, beverages, garments (knitted), body oils and lotions, root crops and vegetables, corals and shells¹¹⁷. The missions also promoted governments' initiative of encouraging the telecommunications industry with the development of call centers.¹¹⁸ In this period as well, the export of bottled mineral water, Fiji Water, achieved remarkable market access, when by 2005 exports had amounted to US\$68 million a year.¹¹⁹ Palmwood furniture was also a new export item for this period. It was also important for the overseas missions to

¹¹⁵ 'The Official opening of the Waito-Wailotua road project by Malaysian Company (NAIM Cendera) in Fiji' in www.kln.gov.my accessed 25th June, 2012.

¹¹⁶ 'Nine fold increase in exports to Canada' in <http://www.fijiembassydc.com/default.asp?contentID=722> accessed 21st December, 2011.

¹¹⁷ Fiji Trade Commission Los Angeles in <http://www.fijitrade.com/trade.asp> accessed 21st December, 2011.

¹¹⁸ 'Fiji: An Established Regional Trading Partner' in <http://www.fijiembassydc.com> accessed 27th June, 2006.

¹¹⁹ 'Fiji: An Established Regional Trading Partner' in <http://www.fijiembassydc.com> accessed 27th June, 2006.

facilitate increased exports of other items following the erosion of trade preferences after 2000. Pure Fiji's better quality 'Sovu ni Viti' is exported to Japan and has also found a niche market in the United States. The overseas missions work in securing niche markets will enable Fiji to develop greater economic resilience (Bertram & Poirine, 2007:331).

Similarly promoting the growth of the tourism industry is a key task of all overseas missions, and is assisted by the FVB offices in Auckland, Sydney, and Los Angeles. Former Deputy Head of Mission at the Tokyo mission, Mrs Litia Mawi stated that a diplomat's role on a daily basis is to promote Fiji's image and improve appreciation of Fiji in their host country. A notable achievement in 2004 and 2005, for the Tokyo mission was the 'Bula future tourists' program on Fridays between 9am to 1pm at the mission which targeted primary and secondary students (Personal Interview, Mrs Litia Mawi 30th June, 2006).

Overseas Development Assistance

Fiji's diplomats help identify sources of overseas development assistance provided by their host governments. Through discussion and negotiation with headquarters and line ministries, and through the submission of essential reports and submissions these are accessed for Fiji's development needs (Desk Officers, Mataitoga Lectures, December, 2011).

Since the establishment of the Canberra and London overseas missions, significant ODA has been received from Australia and UK which was a major priority for these missions. While, ODA from UK declined to F\$3.7 million in 1991, this was an indication of increased ODA from EU. Australia was Fiji's largest donor from 1970 to 2010 (See Table 1 to Table 5). This is despite strained relations between Fiji and Australia during periods of political upheavals and is significant in view of the scaled down size of the mission. In 1991 Australia donated F\$11.6 million the highest for that year, while New Zealand donated F\$3.7 million (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 21). Australia's ODA levels to Fiji are an indication of Australia's strategic interest as well as foreign policy of maintaining development assistance levels so as not to unduly disadvantage ordinary citizens.

The high levels of ODA from the EU can be viewed as evidence of the effectiveness of the Brussels mission. ODA statistics for 1986 (Table 2) indicate a remarkable ODA increase from Japan that suggests the effectiveness of the Tokyo mission. Commentators have also suggested that Japan's increased levels of ODA to Fiji are due to Japan's concerns for

developing the Pacific's regional 'hub.' Japan's ODA from 2000 – 2010 (Table 5) indicate the highest level of ODA in 2009.

Government reports indicate that prior to the establishment of the Tokyo mission in 1981 the Japanese government was one of Fiji's major aid donors. In 1979 Japan gave a grant of \$1.78 million for the development of the fisheries industry, and a significant increase was noted in the 1980's. It also gave technical expertise and an additional grant of \$463,000 for several projects (Parliamentary Paper No. 63, 1983: 71). Overseas Development Assistance from Japan has steadily increased. In 1990 the Japanese government had donated F\$9.8 million in grant (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 21). From 2004 to 2008 Japan's Grant in Aid ranged from 1.65 (100 million Yen) to 6.78 (100 million Yen), while Technical Cooperation ranged from 5.72 (100 million Yen) to 8.69 (100 million Yen) ('40th Anniversary of Fiji's Independence and Diplomatic Relations with Japan')¹²⁰. These are significant not only for Fiji but also for the region, as Japan also provides technical assistance to regional organisations and institutions via its bilateral aid to Fiji, such as the ICT Center and the Marine Studies Facility at the University of the South Pacific. Experts have stated that Japan's increased aid diplomacy in the region is a reflection of Japan's interests in the region's fisheries resources and of diplomatic support at multilateral fora (Tarte, 1998: 12)

The ODA levels for 2000 – 2010 show significant increases in ODA from China in 2007 and 2008 when the Bainimarama government strengthened relations with China. The Beijing mission was established in 2001 and with the increased visit diplomacy of China and Fiji's leaders, successfully secured an increase in ODA for that year as indicated in table 5.

5.4 Challenges, Weaknesses and Problems

5.4.1 Staffing and Appointment of Heads of Missions and diplomats

The Fiji government tended to make ad hoc appointments for its Heads of Missions and diplomats. According to Howard, Ratu Mara promised diplomatic postings to leaders that were not given an Alliance ticket to run in the 1987 elections (1991: 128). It was seen to be a political reward. The Fiji Public Service (Diplomatic and Consular Services) Regulations 2005 stipulates that the selection and appointment of Heads of Missions is made by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. If the appointee is a career civil servant then

¹²⁰ Newsletter from www.fijiembassy.jp accessed 25th June, 2012.

the Prime Minister consults the Public Service Commission prior to recommending the incumbents name to the President (Public Service (Diplomatic and Consular Services) Regulations 2005, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Legal Notice 80/2005: 7 - 8). Heads of Missions terms of office are for duration of four years and this term of service may be extended (Diplomatic and Consular Services Regulations 2005: 8). These regulations for appointments of Heads of Missions have been in existence since independence that has led to ad hoc appointments from the civil service, the military and the private sector. While these senior civil servants have carried out their representational role, they are often not retained in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which impacts its institutional memory (Vunibobo, 2005). According to the Director Political and Treaties, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Sainivalati Naivote, this underscores the importance for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop a diplomatic corps, or a 'nuclei of cadres who would become diplomats to carry the nation's interests abroad (Fiji Focus, 8th July, 2011).'

Heads of Missions have mostly been appointed from high level experienced civil servants. Most of these Heads of Missions and diplomats are not retained in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the end of their term but are absorbed into other government ministries. This is due in part to the Ministry's lack of resources to develop and retain a diplomatic corps. Since Fiji has increased its overseas missions, there are challenges on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs resources. In 2003 more officers from within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were posted to the overseas missions. However, it has been challenging for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have officers that are equipped with specific technical skills.

The 2004 Annual Report highlights this challenge.

'The recommendation in the Yarrow report for the re-establishment of a diplomatic cadre has received lukewarm reaction from PSC and Ministry of Finance and National Planning. This is a major disappointment for the future development of a professional diplomatic corps for Fiji. Without the specific recognition of this need, Fiji foreign policy delivery will be manned by personnel with generalist background. Without dedicated training and specialist skills in WTO rule making, trade negotiations, international relations etc for our diplomats to serve in our Overseas Missions, the high expectation we place on them is misplaced and unfair (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 40).'

Papua New Guinea on the other hand has, since it attained independence in 1975, developed a diplomatic corps. According to former Papua New Guinea ambassador, Mr Peter Donigi, the Australian government assisted with the establishment of PNG's Foreign Service and provided their diplomats with training and attachments to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Canberra. A core group of diplomats is posted to Papua New Guinea's overseas missions over a period of time (Personal Interview Mr Peter Donigi, 10th April, 2007).

5.4.2 Training and Preparation

The level of training and preparation for diplomats posted to overseas missions instituted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has relied on overseas training through bilateral arrangements, while the in-house preparation has been an orientation program. The month long orientation program involves briefings and familiarization with the Ministry, and other institutions such as the Fiji Development Bank (FDB), Fiji Sugar Corporation (FSC), FTIB, FVB, and Reserve Bank (Electronic interview Mr Solo Mara, 11th October, 2006).

Since the 2000 period officers have been sent to attend short courses and specialized training programs have been provided for Fiji's diplomats. The Ministry does not have an institutional training program for its officers and diplomats, largely due to budgetary constraints as well as differences of opinion from government leaders who feel that Fiji can continue with its current system of ad hoc diplomatic appointments. Instead the Ministry has sent officers to diplomatic training courses to Oxford in the early 1970's for developing countries (Nair, 2007: 2)¹²¹, to Malaysia in the 1980's and in the 1990's and 2000 period to trade negotiation courses organized by the WTO, and other short courses organized by various host countries (Personal interview J. Kotobalavu: 4th November, 2007; Electronic interview N. Katonitabua: 16th November, 2006; Electronic interview Amena Yauvoli: 22nd November, 2010).

Diplomats in the 1970's and 1980 received specialized training through practical experience by spending up to six months attachment with the New York mission. Mr Jioji Kotobalavu, spent three months attached with the UN Security Council, and three months with the New York mission. Officers also received specialist training at Oxford during this period where

¹²¹ Robin Nair, 'Diplomacy Skills Training for Small Island States; Case Study Paper on Fiji' – Paper delivered at the International Conference: Diplomacy of Small Staqttes, Malta 8 – 9 February, 2007.

they were trained in subjects such as International Economics, International Politics and the French language (Personal interview Mr Jioji Kotobalavu: 4th November, 2007). Mr Ross Ligairi was also a recipient of this training and scholarship at Oxford University, where following studies in International Politics, International trade and finance, International Human Rights Law, Diplomatic Protocol and Practice was posted to the UN mission in New York as Second Secretary (Personal Interview Mr Ross Ligairi, 2006). In the 1980's Mr Winston Thompson received a sponsored study tour of US foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region (Personal Interview, Mr Winston Thompson: 1st April, 2007). There have been similar training courses provided for Ministry officers by the UN as part of its Fellowship Program.¹²² In the 1990's and 2000 period, officers have received their training in Malaysia. First Secretary Ray Baleikasavu at Fiji's Washington embassy and Mr Simone Durutalo, Principal Administrative Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs completed their Masters degree in International Relations majoring in Strategy and Diplomacy.¹²³ Other officers have received short courses in diplomacy during their posting. A diplomat at the Beijing mission for example attended a one week workshop for Pacific Island Senior Diplomatic Training in Beijing (Electronic interview, Mr Naipote Katonitabua: 16th November, 2006). Two officers attended the in-house training provided by the Australian government in the early 1990's for Pacific island countries (Nair, 2007: 2).

While these short courses and post-graduate studies were useful, it indicated the challenges the Ministry has in training and preparing its diplomats in the area of Fiji's foreign policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004 Annual Report indicated that discussions had been held with the Public Service Commission and the Prime Minister's Office to set up a Fiji Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 40). However, this was shelved because of lack of funding (Diplomacy School Proposal Shelved, Fiji TV News 12th November). It also reinforced one of the major recommendations of the Yarrow Report. The Ministry in 2005 in conjunction with AUSAID funding organized the first Diplomatic Craft and Negotiation Skills workshop in Suva, that was designed to train civil servants from various line ministries who were attending international conferences as Fiji representatives

¹²² First Secretary at the Washington mission, Mr Ray Baleikasavu was a recipient of this training program in <http://www.fijiembassydc.com> accessed 28th July, 2011.

¹²³ 'Embassy Staff' in <http://www.fijiembassydc.com> accessed 28th July 2011; Bula Maleya News Volume 2 Issue 3 page 4.

and to prepare civil servants who were to be posted to the overseas missions (Foreign Affairs Bulletin, Issue 3 May 2005: 11). The workshop was specifically designed to suit Fiji's needs. The then Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Mr Kaliopate Tavola in opening the workshop stated,

'The holding of the workshop demonstrates the new focus by government in developing diplomatic skills, intellectual capacity building and training in basic negotiations skills, to better equip our diplomats to effectively carry out their work, here at home, or in the various global forums out there. As a small island developing country, Fiji depends a great deal on the ability of our home-based or overseas based diplomats to articulate our foreign policy priorities and to also defend the interest of our government in whatever forums we attend (Foreign Affairs Bulletin, Issue 03, May 2005).'

In recognition of the challenges of preparing diplomats to meet the complex issues in international relations, the University of Fiji in 2006, established a Centre for International and Regional Affairs (CIRA) with the assistance of Australia's former diplomat, Mr. Robin Nair who recognized the need for Fiji's foreign affairs ministry to have the assistance of a think-tank on international and regional affairs (Nair, 2007: 3). CIRA in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, and the Australian National University Asia / Pacific School of Diplomacy, organized a Diplomatic Skills and Negotiations Course for Fiji's civil servants.

The University of the South Pacific's Pacific Diplomacy Program at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance in 2006 also organized a course for potential diplomats and regional negotiators ('Grooming Regional negotiators', Fiji Times 2nd October, 2006). The course was designed to better equip regional negotiators in regional and international diplomacy with the Pacific Plan, WTO and APEC. It received assistance from the East West Centre in Hawaii ('Grooming Regional negotiators', Fiji Times 2nd October, 2006). This course highlighted the pertinent issue of training diplomats from Pacific small island states to be better equipped with international relations, international law, and the complexities of the global economic and trade regimes. With this in mind, in 2011 the University of the South Pacific launched its Graduate Studies in Diplomacy and International Affairs that addresses the need for formal graduate qualifications indicated by the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs.¹²⁴ These university programs underscore the need for specialist skills but these are not confined solely to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as recent developments in international relations have seen other line ministries and non-government organizations becoming involved in the negotiations of international regimes.

Another form of training that has been instituted by the Ministry is the Heads of Diplomatic and Consular Missions Consultation, where the heads of missions gather to evaluate foreign policy and equip them with a full understanding of government's policies for political, economic and social development. The holding of Heads of Missions conferences was recommended in the Yarrow Report to be scheduled every three years. Financial constraints have kept these conferences from being scheduled regularly and are a challenge for the ministry in keeping the heads of missions trained and prepared for the developments and coordination of foreign policy and the governments' economic policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Annual Reports record that since independence there have only been four Heads of Missions Consultations – 1983, 1990, 2004 and 2012.

The impact of non-state actors on international relations and foreign policy was discussed by the former CEO of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Isikeli Mataitoga in 2004, when addressing the Heads of Diplomatic and Consular Missions Consultation. He highlighted the incidence of non-state actors in diplomacy as one of the many changes occurring in the conduct of diplomacy in executing foreign policy. Many of these non-state actors are experts in their field and indicate that 'issues such as human rights, trade and development, nuclear disarmament, climate change adaptation' are no longer the sole responsibility of the state apparatus. Non-state actors also wield political influence (Mataitoga lectures, December, 2011). Other challenges facing the Ministry in its conduct of foreign policy were:

- 'The increasing role of Department and Ministries other than the Foreign Ministry directly involved in negotiations and meetings at international level.
- Increasing incidence of 'Summit Diplomacy' involving Heads of States and Government.
- Increasing incidence of Group Diplomacy, involving the grouping of states sharing common objectives and purpose

¹²⁴ Graduate Studies in Diplomacy and International Affairs' in <http://www.usp.ac.fj> accessed 1st August, 2011.

- Erosion of parliamentary powers as the sole law maker for nation states and the increasing roles of law making emanating from the United Nations and its other agencies
- The impact of Information Technology on delivering Diplomatic Services outcomes
- Senior Executive Service Reforms Corporate Planning and Work Programmes (Mataitoga in Foreign Affairs Bulletin Issue 1 October 2004).’

These developments underscore the need for formal training in diplomacy and international relations and the appointment of specialists to overseas missions as foreign policy issues become more complex and regulated by international conventions.

5.4.3 Financial Management

The overseas missions of small states operate on a tight budget and the challenge for their officers is the need to always look for ways to reduce costs (Gilbert-Robert, 2007: 4). Staff at these overseas missions also need to know the competitive nature of the cosmopolitan city environments where they are based and will rely on the guidance and assistance of locally engaged staff (Gilbert-Robert, 2007: 4). Similarly, Gilbert-Robert warns that overseas missions need to be mindful of entering into contractual arrangements that may be expensive in the long term.

It was noted by the Fiji Auditor General’s report for 1981, that a comprehensive review of accounting processes was needed to be incorporated into the Fiji Overseas Service Regulation so as to control officers’ expenditure with regards to travelling expenses, accommodation and other benefits, and that as public servants diplomats should also note that the Public Service General Orders need to be applied (Report of the Auditor General on assets of Government of Fiji for 1981, Parliamentary Paper No. 28 1982: 16). In the previous year the Auditor General’s report for 1980 had found that an overseas mission had incurred telephone charges to Fiji of \$800 a month to telephone numbers that had ‘nothing to do with government relations abroad, its foreign policy or with the missions work (Report of the Auditor-General on assets of Government of Fiji for 1980, Parliamentary Paper No. 4 of 1981: 21).’ For example, in 1980 a Head of Mission’s official residence acquired since 1970 under a contractual agreement was to end that year. Legal opinion was obtained that the lease arrangement could have been extended for up to three years but because the officer

responsible did not act on it, the Head of Mission was housed in an apartment with a higher rent (\$2130 more than the original) and incurred extra charges for removal and furnishing of the new apartment which totalled \$29,637 (Report of the Auditor General on accounts of Government of Fiji for 1980, Parliamentary paper No. 4, 1981: 22).

Prudent financial management is important for diplomats at Fiji's overseas missions that operate on a limited budget relative to large states and the Head of Mission is responsible for upholding this standard. Mr. Winston Thompson stated that staff at overseas missions need to be regularly reminded of their salary, post allowances which are significant, child allowance, a high standard of furnished quarters and educational costs where their children are sent to expensive schools. Mr. Thompson added,

'They need to work doubly hard, and they need to prove that Fiji is getting value for money. They need to be proactive rather than just working the social gatherings of cocktail parties and golf greens (Personal Interview Mr. Winston Thompson, 1st April, 2006).'

Mr. Lote Buinimasi recalls that when he was appointed First Secretary to New York, it was so that he could perform multiple tasks. Not only was he responsible for administration and accounts but he was also required to be the driver (Personal interview 3rd July, 2006). According to Dietrich Kappeler, because small state overseas missions have few staff, these diplomats need to be 'versatile (2007: 1)' as most operate on a restricted budget. Former ambassador to Tokyo, Mr Robin Yarrow recalls that the embassy's driver was not employed to work on weekends as a cost-saving measure. This meant that as ambassador, he would have to make his own travel arrangements for weekend engagements (Personal interview, 30th October, 2006). Gilbert-Robert argues that small states overseas missions must always look for cost-saving measures ('Diplomacy of Small States E-book' DiploFoundation 2007 - 8: 4). It is a challenge for diplomats at overseas missions to be innovative and perform their duties within the restricted budget allocation. The bulk of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs budget is allocated to its overseas missions. In 1990 26% of the \$7,837,300 actual expenditure was utilised by headquarters, while 74% was used by the overseas missions (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 6).¹²⁵ In 1991 the Ministry was allocated \$6,401,600 but it exceeded this with an expenditure of \$9,160,157. Headquarters used 33.32% of this sum while overseas missions used 66.68%. Increase in spending was attributed to staffing

¹²⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs budget was initially \$5,841,500 but it exceeded this allocation.

transfers, the purchase of a residence in Brussels and protocol spending for official state visits (Parliamentary Paper No. 22, 1992: 6). In 2004, 73% of the \$15,936,700 expenditure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade was spent on allowances and operation costs of overseas missions (Parliamentary Paper No. 75, 2005: 43). The 2012 Budget allocation for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is \$28.9 million which is 14.45% of the total government budget. This indicates the importance the current government places on increasing Fiji's foreign policy of 'Enhancing Global integration and international relations' (Mataitoga Lectures, December, 2011).

The Fiji government also purchased a number of properties as these would appreciate in value and add to government's assets. It was also seen that this would be cost effective over rental properties. Government aimed to purchase properties when and where it was able to given the strain on its budget allocations. Since Fiji has and will continue to have a voice at the United Nations, it highlights the need to have a property in New York. The Fiji government purchased a property in the early 1980's but this was later sold in 1999. Rental properties for offices and apartments at the heart of New York City are expensive by small island state budgetary standards.

5.4.4 Political Stability

It has been argued that a state lacks political resilience if it does not allow for democratic processes of good governance. Political resilience and stability exist where there is 'freedom of speech and assembly, some means of voicing criticism against government at whatever forum or media; also that there is a democratic process allowing political leadership to be changed peacefully, and respect for human rights (Sutton, 1987: 17).' The lack of political stability has invariably impacted the work of overseas missions. The political upheavals in 1987, 2000 and 2006 have led to the imposition of trade and other forms of sanctions from the international community that upholds democracy and the rule of law. This has posed a challenge to overseas missions where they have had to exercise damage control and communicate the government's plans for its return to democracy.

Mr Kaliopate Tavola states that political problems create uncertainties in the minds of diplomats who uphold principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance. Since 1990 democracy, human rights and the rule of law have been promoted as international values inclusive of good governance. Political upheavals following coup d'états result in the

Fiji government's loss of credibility with their international partners because they acquired power illegally and undemocratically. In addition, multilateral agreements with the European Union stipulate political conditions of democracy, human rights and the rule of law as essential for continuance of trade preference. As a result of the 2006 coup Fiji has not been able to access aid to Fiji's key sugar industry.¹²⁶ Political instability creates new challenges that need to be overcome.

The political upheavals have strained relations with major bilateral partners such as Australia and New Zealand and have led to a reduction of diplomatic staff such as in Canberra after the 1987 and 2006 coups. As these are small missions with up to three staff, the roles and expectations for managing diplomatic relations become more challenging.

The three political upheavals have led to the reduction or suspension of overseas development assistance and trade agreements. This poses an added challenge for overseas missions. The negotiations and discussions, and agreements are affected by political upheavals. The Wellington mission for example in 2002 was negotiating a temporary work scheme that was then approved as the Labour Mobility Scheme for Pacific Islands.

'We were very persistent with this issue taking it to all levels. We also formed a Pacific Island Diplomatic Group for the Pacific Island diplomatic missions in New Zealand to have a combined voice (Electronic interview Ms Mere Tora, 11th April, 2007).'

However, New Zealand sanctions post-2006 coup excluded Fiji from this scheme.

The political upheavals adversely impact on the commercial diplomacy and economic goals overseas missions have worked on. Overseas development assistance after 1987 for example experienced a temporary decline as a result of the political upheavals. Fiji's trade agreement with the EU was affected by the political upheaval in 2000 and only after the Cotonou conditions for presenting its case were met, and were determined to be credible, did trade resume. The Brussels mission staff worked with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Mr Kaliopate Tavola on presenting Fiji's case to the EU (Personal interview, Mr Kaliopate Tavola, 18th May, 2010).

¹²⁶ <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/fiji-diplomacy.3xf/?searchterm=None> accessed 7th January, 2011.

The staffs of overseas missions are also challenged by travel advisories that impact on the flow of tourists to Fiji after political upheavals. They have had to work closely with the Fiji Visitors Bureau on marketing campaigns to convince the tourism market that Fiji is still a safe place to travel despite the political upheavals. Tourist arrivals in 2000 experienced a decline from 409,955 to 294,070. Similarly there was a drop in tourist arrivals from 2006 to 2007 from 548,589 to 539,881 (Visitor Arrival Statistics)¹²⁷. Fiji's mission in Tokyo met with Solution Marketing Inc to discuss the potential for targeting specific sectors such as senior citizens who are part of the Long Stay Foundation and would be keen to visit for two to three weeks (Embassy News 4th November, 2011)¹²⁸. Political instability thus impacts significantly on the work of overseas missions creating an important role in carrying out damage control.

The political upheavals have placed immense pressure on diplomats at the overseas missions. They have had to exercise damage control, negotiate and lobby with the host government to ensure that bilateral and multilateral agreements are maintained. Diplomats have had to promote Fiji's exports and Fiji's viability for potential investors, during periods of political upheavals. This poses challenges for diplomats as the groundwork for commercial diplomacy can be easily undermined following a political upheaval. It therefore makes their role and goals harder to achieve. Fiji's foreign policy is economically driven and in line with this overseas missions are established at strategic locations. The work of overseas missions is now vitally important in establishing and strengthening economic and commercial relations with its international partners. During periods of political instability overseas missions are challenged to conduct damage control, reassure Fiji's bilateral and multilateral partners and project a favourable image of Fiji.

5.5 Conclusion

The work of overseas missions since 1970 has seen some significant achievements and successes. In group diplomacy, the New York mission has been able to obtain for Fiji important positions in the UN. Group diplomacy has helped the Brussels mission formulate common positions for trade and share resources and skilled personnel. The overseas missions

¹²⁷ Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics in http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/Tourism/Visitor_Arrivals.htm accessed 21st December, 2011.

¹²⁸ <http://www.fijiembassy.jp/news/11/20111104.html> accessed 21st December, 2011.

have also been successful in negotiating international law such as the UN Law of the Sea convention, recognising the importance of oceans for territorial sovereignty as well as economic survival. Other international law that have been highlighted include human rights although the 2006 political upheaval has raised questions about Fiji's record. The significant outcomes for Fiji's overseas missions are the deployment of Fiji's troops to UN peace keeping missions which has generated much revenue and helped to reduce unemployment. The New York mission has also been successful in negotiating the deployment of Fiji's troops to peacekeeping missions, as well as Fiji's membership of the Peace building Commission. The work of overseas missions has also been significant in promoting Fiji's exports into large and powerful economies such as Australia, New Zealand, United States and Japan to name a few. Export promotion has seen the overseas missions working with Investment Fiji. In addition the overseas missions have worked with Fiji Visitors Bureau in tourism promotions. Reflecting the overseas missions' economic role, the missions have also been successful in their exercise of commercial diplomacy for niche markets and accessing overseas development assistance. However, Fiji's overseas missions have also faced challenges, weaknesses and problems.

While the ad hoc appointments of heads of missions were initially a challenge for the ministry, it has benefited from the appointment of senior civil servants. The lack of training and technical expertise for Fiji's diplomats was provided by bilateral training agreements. Because of financial constraints it has relied on bilateral training arrangements, and other courses organised by the University of Fiji's CIRA and the University of the South Pacific's Diplomacy and International Affairs section that would have designed their respective courses. Attempts to set up a Fiji Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations have stalled due to lack of funds. More recently, the Public Service Commission has provided Diplomacy Training for civil servants to better prepare them for postings to overseas missions. Two of these were facilitated by Fiji's Ambassador to Japan, HE Isikeli Maitaitoga in December, 2011 and June, 2012. Another challenge facing the work of overseas missions is the lack of skilled negotiators to multilateral discussions such as WTO. The WTO talks are ongoing and it is crucial that skilled negotiators raise the issues of concern to Fiji at these international talks. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has attempted to address this by sending its officers to

short courses in trade negotiations offered by WTO. However, since 2010 the government newspaper, Fiji Focus has provided coverage of the work of Fiji's overseas missions.¹²⁹

Small states have restricted budgets for the operation of its overseas missions. Financial management skills are important for diplomats to be accountable of the allocation to each mission, given that the overall costs for maintaining overseas missions for a small island state can be substantial. Fiji's overseas missions are located at major cosmopolitan cities where living costs are quite high.

One of the major challenges for the work of Fiji's overseas missions has been the recurring political upheavals. Fiji's diplomats have had to brief host governments and accredited international organisations on the government's progress to democracy and the rule of law. They have had to re-negotiate international agreements and provisions for overseas development assistance in light of the political developments in Fiji. For some diplomats the political upheavals have been frustrating as they see the negotiations and agreements they have helped to shape collapse before them because of the political crises at home. Diplomatic staff have had to work doubly hard to assure tourists and investors that Fiji is still a safe place despite the political setbacks. According to Mr Kaliopate Tavola, the political upheavals send mixed messages to the international community about Fiji's observance for constitutional rule and democracy (Personal interview 18th May, 2010).

¹²⁹ A written request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to access the overseas missions' monthly reports was denied. Monthly and annual reports are kept in the Ministry and not available at the National Archives.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Fiji's International Role

Fiji's overseas missions have played a crucial role in establishing Fiji's position in the international arena as an independent sovereign state, and sought partnerships that would help it to cope with its challenges and constraints. Fiji's international role is quite prominent for a small island developing state or micro-state. Fiji has led Decolonisation committee missions and has been particularly vocal in highlighting the vulnerability of Pacific island environments by opposing nuclear testing. Fiji has also played a significant role in the Law of the Sea conferences that have established conventions governing SIDS Exclusive Economic Zones. It continues to highlight the importance of maintaining sustainable development for the region's vulnerable resources, and raised crucial issues at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change particularly funding to compensate for environmental destruction. Fiji's internationalist role of supplying troops to UN Peace keeping and observer missions has gained worldwide recognition.

6.2 Fiji's Foreign Policy

The main features of Fiji's foreign policy have been to promote friendly relations with other countries and with regional and international organisations in line with Fiji's national interests. The acquisition of preferential trade terms was particularly significant from 1970 to 1990. With trade liberalisation, Fiji continues to highlight its challenges and constraints in securing favourable trade terms with United States of America, Europe and Asia. It has continued to establish diplomatic relations with other member countries of the United Nations. Fiji is a regional hub for the Pacific region, and has been a leading state in the region. It helped to establish the Pacific Islands Forum, but has been suspended because of the political crisis.

Despite the diplomatic and political sanctions imposed after 2006, Fiji's foreign policy agenda is aimed at 'Enhancing Global Integration and International Relations', which is Pillar 11 of Fiji's Roadmap to Democracy. It aims to 'increase the level of Fiji's diplomatic relations worldwide; establish relations with new regional groups in the international community and to widen Fiji's network of friends beyond the Commonwealth and South Pacific Forum Island Group; Deepen the Look North policy by widening its scope to move

beyond political relations and development cooperation towards trade and economic cooperation; increase regional and multilateral engagement to promote Fiji's visibility worldwide (Mataitoga Lectures, December 2011).'

Fiji therefore continues to strengthen its ties with the region through the Melanesian Spearhead Group and Pacific Small Island Developing States. Fiji has also strengthened its relations with international organisations. Despite being suspended from the Commonwealth, Fiji is now a member of the Non-Aligned Movement and is seeking observer status with ASEAN. It continues to participate actively with the ACP regional grouping in its trade discussions with the EU.

One of Fiji's foreign policy agenda is to gain economic benefits for Fiji's vulnerable economy. This has required market access to a number of vibrant economies. While Australia remained Fiji's major trade partner, the opening of overseas missions in Washington, Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur in the 1980's sought diversification of Fiji's growing export industries. More recently, Fiji has opened overseas missions in Beijing, New Delhi, Pretoria, and Brasilia, and the Tokyo mission is also accredited to Russia in order to tap into the emerging economies otherwise known as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

Fiji's foreign policy has also aimed to assist Fiji citizens residing overseas as remittances have been a major foreign exchange earner. Fijians working in the British Army, as security personnel in the Middle East, in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand continue to send money to their loved ones, or help in community projects that assist Fiji's economy.

6.3 Fiji's Overseas Missions

Fiji has developed a relatively high level of international representation through its overseas missions. Fiji in 2012 has sixteen overseas missions and two consulates, (with the exception of Papua New Guinea), the largest for a small island developing state in the Pacific. This is comparable to Guyana, in South America, a similar Small Island Developing State which as of March, 2012 has sixteen overseas missions. In 2012, Fiji increased its overseas missions with the establishment of the Seoul and Abu Dhabi overseas missions. Studies have shown that the number of overseas missions a state has is an indication of its level of involvement in world affairs (Mohamed, 2002: 15).

6.4 Role and Purpose of Overseas Missions

In accordance with the Vienna Convention (1961), the roles of overseas missions are to 'represent the sending state to the host state, protect in the receiving state the interests of the sending state and its nationals, within the limits permitted by national law, negotiate with the government of the receiving state, ascertain by all lawful means conditions and developments in the receiving state, and reporting thereon to the government of the sending state, promoting friendly relations between the sending state and the receiving state, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations (International Law Commission, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961).

The overseas missions have carried out these roles through representation, promoting friendly relations, negotiation, lobbying, clarifying intentions, information gathering, political reporting, providing policy advice and consular service. These roles have required specialist training for Fiji's diplomats prior to posting.

Commercial diplomacy has been an important purpose for Fiji's overseas missions. Working in conjunction with Fiji's trade officers, these embassies have sought market opportunities for Fiji's export industries. Notably the high freight costs impact trade, and Fiji's diplomats and trade officials have negotiated for reduction of costs with their counterparts. Tourism promotions by the overseas missions in conjunction with the Fiji Visitors Bureau have significant economic benefits. Investment opportunities have also been promoted by the overseas missions working with Investment Fiji, formerly known as Fiji Trade and Investment Board. Fiji's diplomats have also identified overseas development assistance.

Fiji's overseas missions have had to deal with the fallout from the political crises at home. Special envoys have been appointed to visit Fiji's strategic bilateral and multilateral partners, and assure them of Fiji's transition to democratic rule. Where trade sanctions have been imposed, Fiji's diplomats have had to re-negotiate terms according to the Fiji government's guidelines. This has also posed a challenge for the overseas missions, and has created an impetus to further expand and diversify foreign relations.

6.5 Fiji – Challenges and Constraints of a Small Island Developing State

Like all Small Island Developing States, Fiji has to contend with challenges of vulnerability due to their limited geographical size and location, and weakness compared to middle and

large powers. It is also constrained by political instability, high economic dependence on imports and exports, high dependence on capital inflows and a lack of natural resources (Commonwealth Briefing Note – Small States).

It has sought to overcome these by forming group diplomacy within the region and beyond to highlight common foreign policy issues. Through group diplomacy, Fiji and other Small Island Developing States are able to project a stronger voice and powerful lobby group particularly at multilateral forum such as the United Nations. Fiji's leaders and diplomats have presented Fiji's Roadmap to Democracy highlighting the inherent issues in Fiji's politics. Fiji has also diversified its foreign relations with other countries that have not interfered in Fiji's internal politics. Fiji has overcome economic constraints by encouraging foreign investment into industries that have diversified Fiji's export industries away from sugar, and have enabled it to tap into large export markets.

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