



communiqué

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SITUATION IN FIJI

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark stated today that the Government of Canada "recognizes the Governor General of Fiji, Sir Ratu Penia Ganilau, to be the sole legitimate source of executive authority in Fiji."

As Canada recognizes the Governor-General as the head of government, the Governor-General or his representative would be welcome at the Vancouver Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. As far as we are concerned Fiji is still a member of the Commonwealth.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs noted that he had been "heartened" by the meeting which took place between the coup leader, Colonel Rabuka, the Governor General, the leader of the opposition, Dr. Bavadra, and former Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara on September 30. The meeting was clearly a step in the right direction towards solving the crisis presently gripping Fiji. "It is with profound disappointment therefore that I learned of the decision by Colonel Rabuka to abrogate the 1970 Constitution and proceed with plans to declare Fiji a republic" said Mr. Clark.

All Canadians hope that the process of dialogue and reconciliation started by the Governor-General can resume and we continue to fully support him in his efforts to return Fiji to a parliamentary democracy that respects the rights of all Fijians.