



Rear-Admiral (Ret'd) Hon. J.V. Bainimarama, CF (Mil), OSt.J, MSD, jssc, psc

Prime Minister of Fiji and Minister for iTaukei Affairs and Sugar Industry

Remarks at the Launching of New Sugars of Fiji

Fiji Sugar Corporation Packaging Plant
LAUTOKA

Mon. 21 Oct., 2019
1800 Hours

The Permanent Secretary for Sugar, Yogesh Karan;
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
FSC Chief Executive Officer and Staff;
FSC Board Members;
Fiji Sugar Industry Stakeholders;
Sugarcane Farmers;
Invited Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Bula Vinaka and a very good evening to you all.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Fiji is a name that matters in the world. It stands for something permanent and valuable and inherently good. There was a time when most of the world thought of us as an exotic island paradise, and we seized that image to create one of the world's most successful and prized tourist destinations.

But today Fiji is much more than that. We have a voice on the world stage. We are a Leader in the fight against climate change. We have a first-rate national airline. We have world-class athletes and produce world-class fashion. We are an attractive place to invest.

The Fiji brand today is modern. It stands for innovation and creativity. It stands for good management. It stands for strength and beauty. And above all, it stands for quality.

Now that we have established this brand, we have to defend it.

We have a duty to make sure that everything that carries the name of Fiji is of the highest possible quality and holds true to all of the things that Fiji stands for: a clean natural environment, warm hospitality, and a spirit of innovation and creativity. In this way, all of the products and services that bear the name Fiji will reinforce each other and open doors for each other.

Today, we take one more step in bringing everything we do under one true Fiji brand as the Fiji Sugar Corporation is reborn as Sugars of Fiji. Our Sugar Industry has earned the right to wear the Fiji brand, and we can now recognize the Industry's successes and wholeheartedly embrace a future of quality, efficiency and global prestige. This future doesn't just belong to the Fiji Sugar Corporation. It belongs equally to our many growers and to all the stakeholders that are a part of our vast Sugar Industry.

This rebrand is more than just a name change, and we have arrived at this point after working for many months to evaluate our standing in the world, strengthen the Fiji Sugar brand globally, and seek ways to leverage Fiji's unique brand position to support Fiji's oldest export product.

'Fiji' as a brand has grown stronger and stronger over recent years. Not too long ago, we rebranded our National Carrier to Fiji Airways, Fiji Visitors Bureau was rebranded to Tourism Fiji, and Airports Fiji Limited, which manages our critical gateway to the world—was rebranded as Fiji Airports. We used to have the Fiji Trade and Investment Bureau, which sounded like a sluggish government office, but now we have Investment Fiji. These institutions are all part of a seamless projection of Fiji as a modern and vibrant place for business under one name and one strong ethic of quality.

Sugars of Fiji is the latest piece of this important commercial structure we are building. Everywhere we export our sugar, it will be perceived and known as the sweet tasting, high-quality sugar from Fiji.

We first harvested sugar in Fiji in 1882, and we have been manufacturing and selling high-quality sugar worldwide for more than a hundred years, which is a point of great pride for us. People seek out our sugar for its quality and its unique taste.

And sugar has been critical to the development of our nation. For many decades, it was the largest export and gave us an identity and a heritage as a sugar-producing nation. Today, about a quarter million Fijians either directly or indirectly benefit from this Industry, and it is a mainstay of our economy.

But our Sugar Industry is now at a very significant crossroad. Faced with significant global competition that has forced us to become more efficient—to modernise, to streamline, to use fewer resources and reduce waste, and to capitalise on our strengths.

I am proud to say that we are doing all of those things. We have mechanised the Industry with more than seventy mechanical harvesters and thirty new tractors, and we have added more than a hundred six-wheeler trucks to our existing transport fleet.

A modern industry demands a modern brand and a modern visual identity. The new Sugars of Fiji brand adopts the colour of our noble banner blue, which is dear to all Fijians. It is by now a colour that is recognized worldwide as belonging to Fiji.

Fijian sugar is still the best quality and the sweetest tasting sugar around, and now every package of Fijian sugar will proudly show where it comes from.

I want to congratulate the FSC team on this milestone. We have a brilliant future before us—because, as I said, a brand change is not just about changing a name or developing colours and a logo. Those are just the external signs. But those external signs communicate something deeper and more important: that Fiji sugar will compete with sugar from around the world in quality, in efficient production and in profitability. Sugars of Fiji—the only sugar milled in the Pacific—is one more way that Fiji is building its commercial reputation and strength across the Pacific and around the world.

Vinaka vakalevu – Thank you.
