



VICE-CHANCELLOR'S WEEKLY MESSAGE

5 October 2026

Bula vinaka, FNU Vuvale,

We begin this week with great excitement as Fiji National University hosts its Pre-COP31 Engagement today at the Hilton Fiji Beach Resort & Spa in Denarau, bringing together Pacific leaders, researchers, policymakers, development partners and experts for an important conversation on our region's future.

Under the theme "Investing in Natural Capital: The Pacific Opportunity," today's engagement focuses on our blue and green natural capital, water, and the custodianship of Pacific peoples. Importantly, the discussions will contribute towards a combined Pacific Statement on Natural Capital to inform COP31.

I am delighted that the Tui Macuata, Ratu Williams Maivalili Katonivere, joins us as Chief Guest. His presence is particularly meaningful because this conversation is about our people, our land, our ocean and the responsibility we carry as Pacific people to protect what has sustained us for generations.

Among the other distinguished speakers is the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Honourable Matthew Wale. We are also honoured that the Prime Minister of Fiji, Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka, will close today's engagement. Their presence reinforces the importance of Pacific leadership in advancing our shared priorities on natural capital and climate action.

We are privileged to bring together traditional leaders, government representatives, researchers, policymakers, development partners and investment experts. Together, we will explore innovative partnerships for a blue and green Pacific, investment in natural capital, and practical opportunities for our region.

For me, what is especially important is that the Pacific continues to speak for itself.

We know our islands. We know our oceans. We know our forests, rivers and mangroves. Our communities have lived with and cared for these resources for generations. As we look towards COP31, the knowledge, experiences and aspirations of Pacific people must be part of the global conversation.

FNU has a responsibility to help carry those voices forward.

As Fiji's national university, we must be part of the conversations that shape the future of our country and our region. We have our academics and researchers generating knowledge, our students who will inherit

the decisions we make today, and our communities who are already living with the realities of a changing climate.

Our responsibility is to bring these voices together and ensure that our research and knowledge contribute to practical solutions for our people.

Today's programme will conclude with a call to action on the Pacific Statement to be carried forward to COP31, and I am honoured to deliver the Vote of Thanks on behalf of Fiji National University.

While this week begins with this significant engagement, I also want to acknowledge the many activities that brought our FNU Vuvale together last week.

We celebrated our diversity through the CBHTS Cultural Night on Friday and the FSMEDSA Cultural Night on Saturday. I thank our students, staff and organisers who made these celebrations possible. Our cultures and identities are part of the richness of FNU, and it is always wonderful to see our students proudly sharing who they are.

Our students and staff at the CBHTS Nasese Campus also marked World Environment Week through a campus clean-up and activities exploring waste-to-food practices. These practical initiatives remind us that sustainability must not remain only in our classrooms and discussions. It must be reflected in the way we live and the choices we make.

FNU was also represented at the two-day Ministry of Education and Higher Education Commission Fiji TVET Skills Fair and Careers Expo 2026 at Fulton Adventist University, where we had the opportunity to showcase our TVET programmes and the education and career pathways available through FNU.

Last Thursday, I was also pleased to join the FNU Council at our Bonunaqwele, Nadi Campus, followed by engagements with our Western campuses. These visits allow us to listen to our people, understand what is happening on the ground and ensure that the decisions we make as a University remain connected to the needs of our campuses, staff and students.

As we begin another busy week, I thank our Senior Leadership Team, our academics and staff, and especially our students for continuing to do your part.

We are now in the final quarter of 2026, and there is still much to be done. Let us remain focused, look after

one another and continue giving our best in whatever responsibility has been entrusted to us.

Fiji Day

And as this week comes to an end, we will have another special occasion to celebrate together as a nation – Fiji Day.

On behalf of Fiji National University, I wish our staff, students, families and all Fijians here at home and around the world a Happy Fiji Day.

As part of our Fiji Day celebrations, I am also pleased to share that this Friday, 9 October, will be a half-day for all FNU staff, allowing our people time to prepare for the Fiji Day holiday and, importantly, to spend time with their families and loved ones.

I hope that as we leave our workplaces on Friday, we take with us not only the excitement of the long weekend, but also a moment to reflect on what Fiji Day means to each of us.

As we celebrate our nation, let us remember the responsibility we each carry in building a Fiji that our children and future generations can be proud of. As Fiji's national university, we have a special role in that journey through the education of our people, the knowledge and research we produce, and our service to communities across the country.

There is a lot happening across FNU, but behind every event, every class, every research project, every partnership and every achievement are our people. Every contribution matters.

Let us continue to work together, value the diversity that makes us who we are, and contribute in whatever way we can to the progress of our nation.

To our FNU Vuvale, enjoy the time with your families and loved ones, celebrate safely, and take pride in the nation we all call home.

Happy Fiji Day, FNU Vuvale. May God continue to bless Fiji and all her people.

Vinaka vakalevu, and I wish you all a good week ahead.

Professor Unaizi Nabobo-Baba

**Vice-Chancellor
Fiji National University**