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## TC Winston and protection monitoring

On 20 and 21 February, Category 5 severe Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston cut a path of destruction across Fiji's islands. It was one of the most severe cyclones to ever hit the South Pacific. As the cyclone's eye tracked west across the country, it caused widespread damage across the country. According to the Fiji Government, up to 350,000 people (170,000 female and 180,000 male) have been affected by the cyclone – approximately 40 per cent of the country's population. These figures include 120,000 children under the age of 18 (58,000 female and 62,000 male) and more than 3,100 persons with disabilities. According to official figures, 44 people have lost their lives as a result of the cyclone, significantly more than Tropical Cyclone Pam that struck Vanuatu in March 2015.

Since TC Winston, OHCHR Pacific and partners have conducted several field trips to conduct protection assessments. From these initial visits, a number of protection concerns have been identified. There have been tensions at some evacuation centres due to alleged unequal access to food rations. Some villages have not received much needed assistance. As usually during humanitarian emergencies, there is a tendency that persons with disabilities and LGBTI persons become further marginalized but to which extent this also applies to Fiji needs to be confirmed through additional monitoring visits.





# OHCHR Freedom Poster Competition

OHCHR Pacific participated in a global poster competition for children to illustrate what freedom means to them. Samoa's winning entry has been selected as the overall winner for the poster competition and will be made into one of the posters for the 50th Anniversary of the Human Rights Covenants, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Alexandria Slaven, age 11, from Samoa is the winner of the 5 to 11 age group with a picture depicting people holding hands and standing by a luxuriant coconut tree.



**ALEXANDRIA SLAVEN - Primary | Age 11 - Samoa**

This poster won an international competition among children aged 5-11 under the auspices of the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) as part of the celebration of 50 years of the UN Human Rights Covenants.



**OUR RIGHTS  
OUR FREEDOMS  
ALWAYS**  
50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
HUMAN RIGHTS COVENANTS



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**“My poster illustrates how freedom comes with responsibilities and children and adults should understand this,”** Alexandria wrote to explain the design. **“The growing coconut tree with various rights and freedoms written on it symbolizes the growth of a person.”**



# Human rights education and information session

**OHCHR Pacific** visited **Dudley Intermediate School** in **Suva** to conduct a human rights education and Information session. The session was designed to help students gain a critical understanding of human rights, and to develop the attitudes and behaviors to apply human rights in everyday life. (18 Feb 2016)

**“It was such an educational and awesome session! I enjoyed it!”**

**Grace Qovu,**  
*Dudley Intermediate School*



# Treaty Body Capacity Building Programme

The Treaty Bodies are a fundamental pillar of the international human rights protection system. They are independent expert committees that monitor the implementation by States of international human rights treaties. In 2015, OHCHR launched globally a new Capacity Building Programme on Treaty Bodies, recognizing that many States continue to face difficulties in living up to their multiple reporting obligations. Under the Treaty Body Capacity Building Programme, the OHCHR Regional Office for the Pacific offers, for example, support to States in the following areas:

- **Establishment of National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRFs);**
- **Preparation of Common Core Documents and of treaty-specific reports, for example on the human rights situation of women, children, persons with disabilities or on the implementation of the Convention against Torture (CAT).**

As part of the programme, OHCHR Pacific organized the following activities in the first quarter of the year:

## ***Training on reporting to treaty bodies for the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) of Samoa and Fiji***

The UN Human Rights Office in the Pacific held a two-day training to build treaty body reporting capacity of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). By bringing three members from the Ombudsman's Office of Samoa and eight members from the Fiji Human Rights and the Anti-Discrimination Commission together for the two-day event at the end of January, the participants were able to enhance their reporting skills and to exchange information on the challenges and achievements they have experienced when reporting to treaty bodies.



**“The training was very relevant to my work. The terminology is often hard to follow, and the training helped me to understand the terminology”**

**Trainee, OOS**



## ***CEDAW mock session in Vanuatu***

From 2-4 February, the UN Human Rights Office co-facilitated a training on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) for the Government of Vanuatu and a mock session ahead of Vanuatu's review by the CEDAW Committee on 24 February in Geneva, Switzerland.



## ***UPR Follow up in Samoa***

OHCHR is closely involved in Samoa's second Universal Periodic Review, scheduled for 3 May 2016. It placed a UPR coordinator in country to help coordinate the stakeholder and State submissions and prepare review at the Human Rights Council Geneva. A mock UPR session is scheduled for the week of 18<sup>th</sup> April before the delegation travels. Steps are also being taken to establish a National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-Up in Samoa which would facilitate the preparation of future reports to international human rights mechanisms and the respective implementation of recommendations.

## ***UPR Mock session for Solomon Islands***

OHCHR the Secretariat of the Pacific-Community - Regional Rights Resource Team (SPC-RRRT) organised a UPR mock session for the government of the Solomon Islands delegation led by H.E. Milner Tozaka, Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade. The 2nd UPR review of the Solomon Islands took place on 25 January.





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