

His Excellency

**Peter Thomson**

Permanent Representative of Fiji to  
 the United Nations

Ambassador Peter Thomson took up office as Fiji's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in February 2010. He serves concurrently as Fiji's Ambassador to Cuba. He held office as Vice President of the UN General Assembly for the 2011-2012 session and as President of the Assembly of the International Seabed. For the duration of 2013, he chaired the United Nation's largest negotiating bloc, the Group of 77 and China. From January 2014 January 2015, he served as President of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS. He is currently the President of the Council of the International Seabed Authority for its 2015-2016 session.

The Government of Fiji posted him to Tokyo in 1980 as Chargé d'Affaires. He remained in Tokyo thereafter as First Secretary Economic until 1984, when he was appointed Fiji Consul-General in Sydney. In 1986 he returned to Fiji to become Permanent Secretary of Information. In May 1987 he was appointed Permanent Secretary to the Governor General.

He has been a board member of the

Fiji Visitors Bureau, Fiji TV and Fiji Broadcasting Commission. From 1988 to 2009 he worked in private enterprise as a company director and investment/management consultant specializing in Pacific affairs. He was a founding director of Tabua Investments Ltd, the Denarau Island Resort development company.

He is a founder member of the executive committees of the Australia-Fiji Business Council and the New Zealand Fiji Business Council, and in 2007 was made a life member of the latter council. He is a published author, with one of his books, 'Kava in the Blood', being the winner of a Montana book award for non-fiction. In 2014 he was made an Officer of the Order of Fiji, an award bestowed by the President of Fiji recognizing contributions and achievements by Fijians to the nation.

Born in Suva, Fiji, Thomson graduated from Auckland University (B.A. Political Studies) in New Zealand, and Cambridge University (Post-Grad Diploma in Development Studies) in the United Kingdom. He married his wife Marijcke Thomson and has two children and three grand-children.

*"We are greatly honored to have Ambassador Peter Thomson at our university. He comes to us with vast international business and diplomatic experience. We look forward to this opportunity for him to share his thoughts and insights on the recent UN General Assembly with our students.."*

**Associate Vice President  
 for UVU International  
 Affairs & Diplomacy,  
 Rusty Butler**

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**WHO WE ARE**

The Office of International Affairs & Diplomacy actively supports UVU's global engagement efforts by advancing UVU's presence and prestige in the International community; helping UVU students become globally competent graduates; promoting cultural literacy and diversity both on campus and in the community.

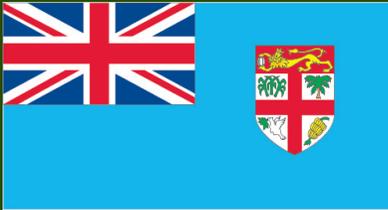
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## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT

# Fiji

## THE FLAG OF FIJI



## MEANING

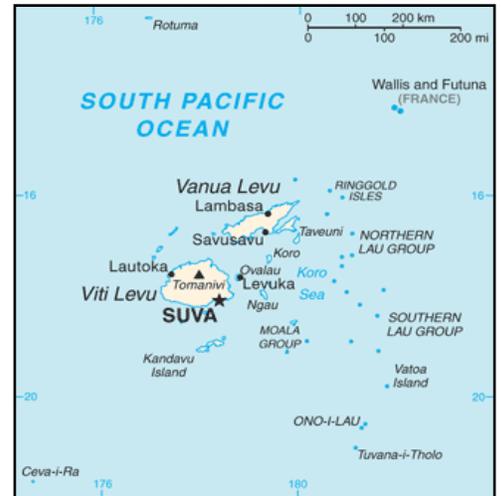
The flag of Fiji is light blue with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant and the Fijian shield centered on the outer half of the flag; the blue symbolizes the Pacific ocean and the Union Jack reflects the links with Great Britain; the shield - taken from Fiji's coat of arms - depicts a yellow lion above a white field quartered by the cross of Saint George; the four quarters depict stalks of sugarcane, a palm tree, bananas, and a white dove.

<https://www.cia.gov> ; [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiji](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiji) ; [www.go-fiji.com /](http://www.go-fiji.com/) ; [www.fijiembassy.be](http://www.fijiembassy.be) ; <https://en.wikipedia.org>

- Fiji is in the process of replacing their 45 year old flag with a new flag representing an Independent and democratic republic of Fiji.
- The majority of Fiji's islands were formed through volcanic activity starting around 150 million years ago.
- Fiji has been inhabited since the second millennium BC, and was settled first by Austronesians.
- Europeans visited Fiji from the 17th century and, after a brief period as an independent kingdom, the British established the Colony of Fiji in 1874. Fiji was a Crown colony until 1970, when it gained independence as a Commonwealth realm.



- The sulu, is the traditional clothing in Fiji worn by men (sulu vakataga) and women (sulu-i-ra or sulu jaba.)
- Fiji is situated on the International Date Line (on the 180 degree meridian), which means that it is one of the first places in the world to usher in a new day. There is a particular spot on Taveuni Island where a person can stand with one foot in the current day and one foot in the day before.
- If one counted every single island that belongs to the Fijian archipelago, this number would be in thousands. Still, only about 322 are seen as big enough to support human habitation. These 322 islands, only 106 are inhabited.



- Yaqona, otherwise known as kava, is an infusion prepared from the root of Piper methysticum, a type of pepper plant. 'Having grog' is used for welcoming and bonding with visitors, for storytelling sessions or merely for passing time.
- English is the official language. However, Fijian and Hindi are also taught in schools as part of the school curriculum.
- More than half of Fiji's population are Christians (52.9%), Hindus (38.1%), Muslim (7.8%), Sikhs (0.7%), others (0.5%).
- The Sri Siva Subramaniya temple is a Hindu temple in Nadi, Fiji. It is the largest Hindu temple in the Southern hemisphere.

