

13 May 2009

Response to the recent Fiji blogs reporting on tensions between the military and the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma.

1. UnitingWorld is in close open communication with the leadership of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma (MCF) and is regularly briefed on the unfolding situation. This close communication will continue.
2. The MCF has determined to pursue a path of dialogue with the military leadership of Fiji.
3. In the absence of a free and uncensored media much of the news coming from Fiji originates from unofficial blogs. Information purporting to be news may be based on rumours and cannot always be authenticated
4. We are reliably advised that the reported detention of Reverend Manasa Lasaro, former President of the MCF, has not occurred at this time.
5. A statement reported to have been made by the Methodist Consultative Council in the Pacific (MCCP) immediately after Easter is not from the MCCP.
6. We continue to stand in solidarity with the leadership of the Methodist Church in Fiji who we believe have acted responsibly and carefully in very difficult circumstances.
7. We invite members of the Uniting Church in Australia to uphold the President, the Reverend Ame Tugae, the General Secretary, the Reverend Tuikilakila Waqairatu and the Deputy General Secretary, the Reverend Tevita Banivanua, in prayer.
8. The Uniting Church in Australia must allow the MCF leadership to manage their response and not exacerbate a very complex situation.

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