

I had hoped that the schedule for the Committee would come out during the weekend. In any case, the latest:

As of 8/7/15, the "Rotuma Petition" (RP) has deferred (hopefully stopped altogether) any discussion on the 2 bills in Parliament. The new scenario:

1. The Committee on Social Affairs now has 2 issues:

(a) RP; and

(b) 2 Bills.

The RP asks Parliament to STOP AND DEFER any further reading on the bills and the PASSING INTO LAW of the two current bills until Rotumans have fully & widely discussed them. Very important also is every Rotuman person's "OBLIGATIONS TO ALL ROTUMANS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE". In my cover page (attached) I had specifically mentioned youth consultation, also a priority & the need for transparency & accountability.

My understanding is that the Committee will now concentrate on the Petition first i.e. find out whether people were really not consulted, is there a need for them to be consulted? If members are satisfied that there was no transparency & accountability that Rotumans want to be consulted then the bills will be returned to the people for new submissions altogether. That would give us more time, weeks & even yrs to decide on what Rotuma Island & Rotumans need.

I will update you once I have the relevant info from Parliament. I will also be in a better position to have a schedule & travel within Fiji & Rotuma to explain possible scenarios & justifications that Rotumans could have instead of those in the 2 bills.

alalum

rosie

Public Petition for Parliament for the Attorney General to defer further reading and the Passing Into Law of the two current Bills before Parliament with respect to Rotuma and Rotumans, namely ROTUMA BILL 2015 (Bill No. 6 of 2015) and ROTUMA LANDS BILL 2015 (Bill No.7 of 2015)

BACKGROUND

**WHAT WE
ARE ASKING
FOR:**

Rotuma Bills

The provisions of the Bills are Fundamental and Central to the Rotuman People, for they relate to Rotuma Island, their Ancestral Home and Heritage.

A Review Committee was appointed to review existing acts in 2010 but its deliberations were never published. However, the two Bills before Parliament are purportedly the outcome of that review. In the interest of *transparency and accountability*, it is noted that the majority of Rotumans¹; some of whom had made submissions, had neither examined nor discussed the final drafts and are therefore concerned at the haste to present them in Parliament. **Rotuman youths of 18years** who voted in the 2014 National Election would have been 14-15yrs at the time, consequently they **were not consulted**. The outcry and disunity that the bills have created, necessitates further consultation and discussion to also allow young Rotumans to participate fully.²

AFTER ALL, THESE PROPOSED LAWS have far reaching cultural, social, economic and legal implications to Rotumans and their future generations.

“We, the undersigned, Rotumans and Friends of Rotumans petition the Parliament of Fiji that the ROTUMA BILL 2015 (Bill No.6 of 2015) and ROTUMA LANDS BILL 2015 (Bill No.7 of 2015) be deferred from further reading and the PASSING INTO LAW UNTIL these bills have been fully and widely discussed by the Rotumans in Rotuma, Fiji and elsewhere.

SO THAT they can give their **FULL AND INFORMED CONSENT TO BE GOVERNED BY THESE LAWS** as **IT IS THEIR RIGHT** under the **CONSTITUTION** and **INTERNATIONAL LAW** and their **OBLIGATIONS TO ALL ROTUMANS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.**

¹ Approx. 10,000; 2007 Bureau of Statistics Census figures

² In 2 weeks, this petition has been signed by Rotumans in NZ, Australia, Canada, PNG, Fiji and Rotuma (telephone authorisations) with USA, Alaska and parts of Fiji to email later.