

## Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum

Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum is the Fijian Attorney-General and the Minister for Economy, Public Enterprises, Civil Service and Communications. Prior to his appointment as a Cabinet Minister following the first-ever truly democratic election in September 2014, he was the Fijian Attorney-General and the Minister for Justice, Anti-Corruption, Public Enterprises, Communications, Civil Aviation, and Tourism, Industry and Trade and the Minister responsible for Elections under the Bainimarama Government.

Since joining the Bainimarama Government in 2007, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum has initiated a comprehensive program to modernise Fiji's laws in such areas as domestic violence, corporate governance and criminal code. To give teeth to the Bainimarama Government's campaign against corruption, the Attorney-General oversaw the formation of the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption, the first of its kind in the country and in the region. The Attorney-General led the preparations for Fiji's return to parliamentary democracy by implementing a new system of electronic voter registration, formulating Fiji's new political party and electoral laws and coordinating international aid and assistance for the election. He oversaw the work to finalise a new Fijian Constitution that provides the legal foundation for a common and equal citizenry while protecting indigenous land ownership and rights. The Constitution breaks new ground in a number of areas, including the establishment of an independent Accountability and Transparency Commission – to which all public office holders will be accountable – and an electoral system that will give all Fijians an equal vote.

The Attorney-General has been a leading proponent of forging public-private partnerships in a number of key sectors – including roads, ports, state-owned enterprises and the mahogany industry – as the best way to deliver quality, value, investment, job creation and transparency. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum oversaw the establishment of a long-term investment partnership with Aitken Spence PLC to develop and enlarge Fiji Ports Corporation Limited's asset base. This resulted in the sale of 59% of shares in Fiji Ports Corporation Limited at a value of more than FJ\$100 million, with the majority of shares held between the Government and the Fiji National Provident Fund. He also launched the Fijian Made and Buy Fijian Campaign to support Fijian businesses and promote Fijian products. Since the launch of the campaign in 2011, participating businesses have seen – on average – a 5% increase in production levels.

As the Minister for Economy, he reformed the Fijian taxation system to decrease the costs of everyday items for ordinary Fijians and grant consumers more choice. The VAT was reduced from 15% to 9%, and a number of duties were reduced. These actions are expected to lower the overall cost of living for Fijians by at least 4.5%. As the Minister for Communications, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum liberalised the telecommunications industry in Fiji, increasing access to mobile services, extending coverage to 95% of the country, and making

mobile connectivity more affordable.

Chief amongst the Attorney-General's reforms of the communications sector – which have garnered international acclaim – has been the establishment of community "Telecentres," which has exceeded expectations, providing free Internet access to more than 800,000 Fijians – including 8,000 school children.

To position Fiji as the IT leader in the region and as a preferred hub for data processing services, the Attorney-General is overseeing the digitalisation of Government services. Fiji has already made remarkable progress over the past 5 years to improve its telecommunications and ICT regulatory environment, resulting in Fiji receiving the ICTs in Sustainable Development Award from the International Telecommunications Union.

Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum is currently overseeing the implementation of the digital television broadcast, which is expected to be completed nationwide by the end of December 2017. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum attended Marist Brothers High School. He completed his Masters of Law at the University of Hong Kong. As part of his Masters program, he completed a thesis titled, "Cultural Autonomy-It's Implications for the Nation- State." He also holds a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the University of Wollongong in Australia. He obtained his Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree at the University of New South Wales (Sydney), Australia. As part of his LLB degree, he completed a thesis on "Constitution Making in Divided Societies – Fiji a case study." He attained his Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia, majoring in political science and development studies. He also completed a 6-month internship at the Australian Federal Parliament with a former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

He is admitted to the Supreme Court of New South Wales and to the High Courts of Australia and Fiji. Prior to his assuming the position of Attorney-General, he was the General Manager, Group Legal & Compliance and Company Secretary of the Colonial Group of Companies in Suva, Fiji. Besides working as a Senior Legal Officer at the Director of Public Prosecutions Office in Suva, Fiji, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum has also practiced law with Minter Ellison Lawyers in Sydney, Australia.