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New opportunities for Pacific collaboration discussed
Prime Minister Hon. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama and World Bank Vice President for East Asia and Pacific Axel van Trotsenburg will meet Monday to discuss the reinvigorated partnership between the World Bank and the Fijian government following last Novembers election. Van Trotsenburg and a team of World Bank officials also will meet with the Minister of Finance, other development partners, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.
"Todays meeting is a chance to strengthen our engagement with Fiji and discuss Prime Minister Bainimaramas development objectives for the country," van Trotsenburg said. "I congratulate Fiji, and Prime Minister Bainimarama, on the recent democratic elections and stand ready to continue our role as a long-term partner for development in the Pacific region."
The World Bank has previously acknowledged its plans to support the Fijian governments development priorities, including transport infrastructure repairs, fostering private business growth and investment, improving livelihoods in rural areas and helping Fiji become more resilient to natural disasters. "Fiji welcomes Mr. van Trotsenburg and the World Bank delegation", Bainimarama said. "We are eager for continued constructive dialogue on the areas this government has identified as most important for the nations development and the people of Fiji."
The visit also will provide an opportunity for Mr. van Trotsenburg to consult on a planned report titled Pacific Possible that will analyze key development opportunities with significant potential for long-term and robust impact. The project covers six focus areas - tourism; ocean resources; knowledge economy; labor mobility; working together, and threats. Pacific Possible will examine the potential increases in income and living standards that could be achieved through regional policies supported by Pacific Island countries, along with partners around the broader Pacific Rim (Australia, Japan, Korea and others).
"Pacific Possible will provide sustainable recommendations that can deliver transformational differences to smaller Pacific Island countries, including Fiji," van Trotsenburg explained. "The World Bank has experience using data and analysis to produce reports to support development in countries including China and Vietnam, Pacific Possible will apply this approach to help generate policy opportunities for Pacific Island countries."
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