

Committees must be apolitical, A-G explains

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Acting Prime Minister, Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, yesterday discussed the standing committees need to be apolitical and to focus on its mandate and scope of work to have credibility and integrity.

Mr Sayed-Khaiyum spoke at the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Global Organisation of Parliamentarian Against Corruption in Nadi.

During discussions, which were facilitated by the UNDP, Mr Sayed-Khaiyum said it was premature to have a standing committee in Fiji on corruption because political maturity was lacking.

He said there has been a culture in Fiji of standing committees being used for political point scoring.

Mr Sayed-Khaiyum said this would not work for a standing committee on corruption, because "enquiries of corruption need to be dealt with apolitically and, with confidentiality.

"However, in the meantime to ad-



From left: Pacific Global Organisation of Parliamentarian Against Corruption chair John Hyde, Acting Prime Minister and Attorney-General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum and UN Peace and Development Advisor Sonja Bachmann during the UN Convention against Corruption and Global Organization of Parliamentary Oversight Workshop at the Novotel Hotel, Nadi yesterday. Photo: Waisea Nasokia

dress issues of corruption there should be focus be on independent bodies as provided for under the Fijian Constitution."

He also pointed out that the Constitution stated that institutions such as FICAC and the Transparency and Accountability Commis-

sion have a standing charge on Government finances.

On another note, he lamented the fact that there was still a lot of corruption within the private sector.

He said while private sector dealings with public office could be investigated by FICAC, in cases of

dealings between companies and employees in the private sectors it could not be, unless there were issues such as fraud. This is an area that more awareness needed to be created.

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