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MEDIA RELEASE
FIJI-CUBA SEEK STRONGER COOPERATION
Fiji’s Ambassador to Cuba and the Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Dr. Satyendra Prasad, presented his credentials to His Excellency, Miguel Diaz-Canel, President of the Republic of Cuba, at the Presidential Palace in Havana, Cuba on Wednesday, this week.

Ambassador Prasad’s visit to Cuba also included meetings with officials from various sectors that could potentially yield benefits for Fiji. He said that Fiji will work towards organizing a visit to Cuba by Fiji officials to share lessons and experiences in terms of disaster management, sports, health and other development sectors.

Both the countries have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen bilateral engagements to advance the development priorities.

Ambassador Prasad expressed Fiji’s appreciation to Cuba for the annual allocation of placements for Fiji students to study a Bachelor’s Degree in Surgery and Medicine (MBBS) in Cuba given the shortage of doctors in Fiji.

There are currently 28 Fijian students studying medicine in Cuba while 3 Fijian students from the first batch have returned and are currently serving as interns in Fiji. He stated that the establishment of the Cuban Embassy in Fiji has further strengthened Fiji-Cuba relations.

Fiji and Cuba entered into diplomatic relations in 2002. Cuba currently has diplomatic relations with 14 small island states in the South Pacific. Cuba’s proven their relations in areas of health care and human resource training priorities. There are close to 100
students from the Pacific Islands currently studying medicine in Cuba with a great majority from the Melanesia countries – Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea.

Fiji aspires to enhance ties with Cuba to further strengthen the plight of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) countries in the international arena and broaden opportunities for people-to-people exchanges, trade and business relations.

Cuba is the most populous island in the Caribbean and home to over 11 million residents. Cuban economy is mainly based on the tourist industry although it also has other important export lines: tobacco, rum, sugar, nickel, coffee and more recently the pharmaceutical industry.

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(PHOTOS ATTACHED)

Caption:
Pic 1: Fiji’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador Dr. Satyendra Prasad (right) during the presentation of his credentials to His Excellency, Miguel Diaz-Canel, President of the Republic of Cuba.

Pic 2: (Pictured from left) Cuba’s Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Bruno Eduardo Parrilla, President of Cuba Miguel Diaz-Canel, Ambassador Dr. Satyendra Prasad, Third Secretary New York Eva Baleitilagica