



17 February 2021

### **LAWASIA STATEMENT ON EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION IN FIJI**

LAWASIA, the law association for Asia and the Pacific, reiterates the concern of the Fiji Law Society regarding the decision by Fiji's government to invoke the expedited legislative procedure under Order 51 of the Parliamentary Standing Orders to introduce and pass the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill 2021 and the High Court (Amendment) Bill 2021 on 11 February 2021.

The implications of both Acts are potentially significant. The Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act 2021 abolishes Fiji's assessor (or jury) system, whilst the High Court (Amendment) Act 2021 establishes a specialised Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court of Fiji.

LAWASIA does not express an opinion on the merits of the legislation. It does consider, however, that the introduction of fundamental changes to the administration of justice in any jurisdiction should, in the absence of a genuine emergency which necessitates the urgent passage of legislation in the public interest, be thoroughly considered by Parliament following an open and meaningful public consultation process.

Chunghwan Choi  
**President, LAWASIA**