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Minister for Industry, Trade, Tourism, Land and Mineral Resources

WELCOMING REMARKS – ILEANA D'CRUZ

Grand Pacific Hotel

Thursday 1 June, 2017

Suva

1500 Hours

Our invited Guest and Bollywood celebrity, Ileana D'Cruz;

Fiji Airways Executive General Manager Communication Government, International Relations and Fiji Link, Shaenaz Voss;

Tourism Fiji Chief Executive Officer, Matthew Stoeckel;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Bula vinaka and a very good afternoon to you all.

Today, this task of introducing our guest of honor is a great privilege, noting her notable accomplishments. I know this may be challenging, but the thought that she is a woman of virtue and simplicity, I feel elated to introduce her this afternoon. After all, she is a living inspiration to everyone. If one takes a closer look at the alchemy of the achieving person, two distinct virtues pop up – perseverance and hard work. Yes, we are indeed thrilled to host Ileana D'Cruz and have her explore all that Fiji's beautiful isles and famous warm hospitality has to offer.

Ileana is a prominent star in Bollywood and has acted alongside some big names like Akshay Kumar, Shahid Kapoor, Saif Ali Khan and Varun Dhawan to name a few. In previous years, as some of you may recall, Bollywood films such as '3G and *Table Number 21*' which were shot here, have reinforced Fiji's ability to host and cater such big productions.

Therefore, it is my hope that film makers in Bollywood and Hollywood would, without a doubt, after watching your travelogue, opt to film their block buster movies in Fiji in years to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ileana won the Filmfare Award for the Best Female Debut – South for the 2006 Telugu film Devadasu. And in 2012, she made her Bollywood debut with Anurag Basu's critically and commercially successful 'Barfi', for which she received critical appreciation and the Filmfare Award for Best Female Debut.

Ileana is currently filming travelogue for Times of India owned 'Times Now Channel', which is the highest viewed 24 hour English channel in India and has an impressive 7 million followers on social media.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ileana's work in Fiji will raise the profile of Fiji's tourism industry in the Indian market, which is one of Fiji's fastest growing market in terms of tourist arrivals. Her visit will no doubt strengthen tourism relations and will further enhance the already existing strong bilateral relations we have with India, which was demonstrated by the recent visit of the Minister of State for External Affairs, General (Ret'd) Vijay Kumar Singh.

Ladies and Gentlemen

With those words, I warmly welcome you Ileana to Fiji – where happiness finds you.