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PRESS RELEASE

Swift Action Imperative After the Collapse of Pyramid Scheme - Council

In the wake of the collapse of EbayShop Online Recruitment scheme, which has left countless consumers grappling with the loss of their hard-earned money, the Consumer Council of Fiji (CCoF) is calling for the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) and the Fiji Police Force to launch rigorous investigations into the individuals and organizations behind this fraudulent pyramid scheme.

This call for action comes as consumers from all walks of life reel from the financial aftermath of their involvement in EbayShop Online Recruitment, a pyramid scheme that duped them into investing their precious savings, pushing many into the throes of debt and despair. Whilst consumers ignored the multiple alarms sounded by the Council over the course of last few months, we must ensure that such schemes do not rear its ugly head in the future – by setting deterrence through enforcement action.

The Council unequivocally condemns the unscrupulous individuals and entities responsible for promoting, acting as agents, and administering this fraudulent scheme, often resorting to coercion to recruit innocent victims.

Seema Shandil, CEO of the Consumer Council of Fiji, has expressed her outrage and concern about the situation: "The collapse of EbayShop Online Recruitment is a stark reminder of the insidious nature of pyramid schemes and the devastating impact they have on the lives of ordinary consumers. We urge the enforcement bodies to take swift and decisive action to bring those responsible to justice."

The Council also raises a stern reminder to media organizations, who play a crucial role as the cornerstone of public confidence and information dissemination. While the freedom of the press is sacrosanct, it carries an equal responsibility to ensure that information shared with the public is accurate and does not harm or mislead. Unfortunately, one media organization, in its Breakfast Show, amplified the deceit by promoting EbayShop Online Recruitment, featuring consumer testimonials, and disseminating information that lent an aura of legitimacy to this illegal scheme. Despite repeated warnings from the Council that EbayShop Online Recruitment was a pyramid scheme, the said media organization chose to ignore the facts, possibly causing more Fijians to invest, unwittingly walking into financial ruin.

The Consumer Council of Fiji urges media organizations to exercise utmost diligence and responsibility when disseminating information to the public, particularly in cases where the financial well-being of Fijian consumers is at stake.

It is not just the promoters and administrators of this pyramid scheme who must face justice. The Council insists that the recruits, who actively campaigned and promoted this fraudulent



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scheme, must also be thoroughly investigated and held accountable for their role in causing financial turmoil among their fellow Fijians.

The Council stands unwaveringly by the side of the consumers affected by this egregious scam. If you or someone you know has fallen victim to the EbayShop Online Recruitment pyramid scheme, please contact the Consumer Council of Fiji on the toll-free line 155 or email complaints@consumersfiji.org immediately.

Ms Seema Shandil

Chief Executive Officer