

Universal Periodic of VANUATU, 30 January 2014
Intervention by the delegation of Estonia

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of the **Republic of Vanuatu** to the UPR's 18th session. We thank the Republic of Vanuatu for their work in preparing the national report presented earlier and also for the additional information given in the opening speech.

We positively note the active engagement of civil society to the preparations of the report.

Estonia is glad to recognize the significant progress Vanuatu has achieved in many human rights areas since the last review. Estonia welcomes the accession of the Republic of Vanuatu to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, as well as the ratification of the UN Convention against Corruption and the UN Convention against Torture with its Optional Protocol. We would like to further invite the Government of Vanuatu to ratify the Kampala Amendments to the Rome Statute and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court.

Estonia appreciates the progress made in implementing the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Family Protection Act to guarantee gender equality and women's rights. We encourage Vanuatu to continue this work, including by fully incorporating the CEDAW principles into domestic legislation. We commend the work of Vanuatu's Department of Women's Affairs and hope for speedy endorsement of the National Women's Development and Gender Policy. We invite the government to provide the Department with capacity and resources to enable effective fulfilment of its tasks.

We commend Vanuatu for its endeavors in addressing gender equality and empowerment of women and hope the relevant policy will be integrated into Vanuatu's Education Road Map soon. We encourage the Government of Vanuatu to continue its efforts in ensuring equal opportunities for quality education for all in the whole territory of the country.

Finally, Estonia would like to make the following recommendations:

- to approve the **Right to Information Bill** and **National Media Policy** and decriminalize defamation in accordance with international standards;
- to strengthen the justice system in order to avoid loss of faith and respect in the judicial system among citizens, including to raise the efficiency of **birth registration system**;
- to accede to the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** and the **Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**.

Estonia would like to wish the delegation of Vanuatu a successful review meeting.

Thank you!