



Thank you Mr President.

*Alo mo welkam long delegation blong Vanuatu long Geneva*

New Zealand warmly welcomes the delegation of Vanuatu to Geneva, and to this Council. We welcome the positive developments in Vanuatu over the past four years, and the clear commitment of the Government of Vanuatu to protecting and fulfilling its human rights obligations.

Mr President, New Zealand is however concerned by the high rate of violence against women and girls in Vanuatu, particularly intimate partner violence. Unfortunately, this a problem seen in all too many places across the Pacific, including in my own country New Zealand. We welcome the Government of Vanuatu's increased focus on the prevention and protection of women and girls from violence, including through the implementation of the Family Protection Act.

- **New Zealand recommends Vanuatu further extend education and publicity programmes to all regions in order to inform women, particularly women with disabilities, of the availability of the protection orders, counselling services and education under the new law.**

We welcome Vanuatu's continuing work to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including through the establishment of a Disability Desk Officer within the Department of Women's Affairs. In order to ensure full implementation of the Convention,

- **New Zealand recommends Vanuatu ensure all relevant domestic laws include disability as a prohibited ground of discrimination.**

New Zealand further welcomes improvements in conditions of detention and correctional facilities, including the oversight and transparency provisions for planned new prisons and plans to provide better services for youth in detention facilities.

- **We recommend the Government continue efforts to introduce a criminal justice process for youth in Vanuatu, which improves outcomes for offenders, victims and their families.**

Finally, as one of our closest neighbours, we welcome the opportunity to continue our discussion with Vanuatu on these important issues. We encourage Vanuatu to continue its commitment to improve its human rights situation in this second cycle.

Thank you Mr President.