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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 18th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Vanuatu

Statement by Australia

Australia commends Vanuatu for its progress towards implementing the recommendations from its UPR in 2009, including acceding to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and working to promote gender equality through community awareness programs and legislative change. Australia also welcomes Vanuatu’s free and fair elections in 2012.

Australia commends initiatives to promote gender equality and reduce violence against women, particularly the establishment of Family Protection Units and promotion of women’s participation in municipal councils. However, we remain concerned at prevailing high rates of domestic violence. **Australia recommends Vanuatu take prompt action to implement the Family Protection Act, and consider initiatives to raise community awareness of the Act.**

We acknowledge Vanuatu’s ratification of the Convention against Corruption in 2011. **Australia recommends its prompt implementation.**

Australia commends Vanuatu’s progress towards implementing the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. **Australia recommends Vanuatu continue its work in this area, including through prompt implementation of the new Building Code for the Public Works Department to ensure buildings and amenities are disability-friendly.**

We welcome Vanuatu’s Universal Primary Education Policy, which aims to provide free education for primary school-aged children and improve participation of children with disabilities and gender equity in primary schools. **Australia recommends Vanuatu develop a compulsory education policy for primary school-aged children and continue to promote the importance of education.**