**45th Session o the Universal Periodic Review Working Group**

**UPR of Vanuatu**

Thursday 2 May, 09:00 – 12:30

Speaking time: 1 minute 45 seconds

Thank you Mr President.

Fiji welcomes the delegation of Vanuatu and thanks the delegation for the presentation of its national report.

As a fellow Pacific Small Island Developing State, Fiji understands the unique human rights challenges arising from the devastating impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

Despite being one of the most vulnerable nations in the world, Vanuatu’s commitment to and progress in addressing these challenges, including through the development of the Vanuatu Climate Change and DRR Policy and several in-depth post-disaster gender analyses – is commendable.

We acknowledge that the value of international cooperation and technical and financial support for the effective implementation of UPR recommendations, cannot be emphasised enough. Fiji will continue to assist Vanuatu in its implementation journey and we call on the international community to also do the same.

In the spirit of constructive dialogue, Fiji makes the following recommendations:

1. Strengthen efforts to ensure that persons in marginalized groups and in vulnerable situations, including women and children living in the outer islands, are meaningfully engaged and participate in decision-making processes concerning disaster risk reduction, post-disaster management and recovery and climate change actions and policies.
2. Enhance support services for victims of gender-based violence and prioritize the allocation of adequate resources for the training of law enforcement officials, lawyers, judges social workers, and health-care professionals of the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and children who are victims of gender-based violence;
3. Strengthen the full, effective and meaningful engagement with civil society in implementing its UPR recommendations and safeguarding human rights.
4. Protect the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls by ensuring their access to sexual and reproductive health information, commodities and services.

We wish the delegation a successful review. I thank you.

**291 words (130 words per minute)**

Climate Change and Environmental Protection:

1. Acknowledge Vanuatu’s vulnerability to climate change and its impact on human rights.

2. Encourage international cooperation to support climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development in the Pacific region.

Promoting Dialogue and Cooperation:

1. Recommend that Vanuatu engage in constructive dialogue with civil society organizations, indigenous communities, and other stakeholders.

2. Highlight the value of collaboration in addressing human rights challenges.

Human Rights Education and Awareness:

1. Suggest investing in human rights education programs for citizens, including schools, universities, and community centers.

2. Promote awareness campaigns to inform people about their rights and responsibilities.

Gender Equality and Empowerment:

1. Acknowledge Vanuatu’s efforts in promoting gender equality.

2. Encourage further steps to empower women economically, socially, and politically.

Indigenous Rights and Cultural Heritage:

1. Stress the importance of protecting indigenous rights, including customary land tenure.

2. Promote cultural preservation and respect for traditional practices.