**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago**

**to be delivered at the**

**Fourth Cycle Universal Periodic Review of Vanuatu**

**46th Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group,**

**Thursday 2 May 2024, 09:00 – 12:30**

***Time allotted: 1 minute and 45 seconds***

Thank you, Mr. President.

Trinidad and Tobago thanks the Government of Vanuatu for its comprehensive report and robust engagement in this fourth cycle review process.

Notwithstanding evident challenges and constraints occasioned by the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, several natural disasters such as the three Tropical Cyclones in 2023, and the ever-deepening climate crisis, Vanuatu has made meaningful progress in its efforts toward the promotion and protection of human rights since its last review. As a fellow Small Island Developing State, similarly positioned vis-à-vis converging global crises, we recognise the key actions taken by Vanuatu relating to health, education, the rights of women and girls, and the right to a clean and healthy environment. We highlight, in particular:

* the elaboration and implementation of the Vanuatu Non-Communicable Disease Policy and Strategic Plan 2021-2030; and
* the strengthening of the legislative, policy and institutional framework regarding the protection of women and girls through, for example, the National Gender Equality Policy 2021-2030.

On the multilateral front, we commend Vanuatu for its astute leadership in lobbying for climate justice, which resulted in the adoption in 2023 of the landmark UNGA resolution on seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on States’ obligations in respect of climate change.

As Vanuatu continues to pursue policies to improve the implementation of its human rights obligations, Trinidad and Tobago offers the following recommendations:

1. Pursue technical cooperation opportunities, including with the OHCHR, to bolster efforts in fulfilling human rights treaty body reporting obligations; and
2. Continue to strengthen implementation of legislation and policies relating to the protection of women and girls.

We wish the Delegation of Vanuatu a successful review.

Thank you.