**United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland**

**Statement**

**46th Universal Periodic Review – Vanuatu**

**Thursday 2 May 2024**

Thank you, Mr Vice President,

The UK welcomes Vanuatu’s leadership on climate issues, which helps to amplify the voices of Small Island Developing States on the global stage. Our mutual commitment to the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance unites our efforts to preserve our marine environment.

We stand ready to support Vanuatu in building its resilience to natural disasters and to improve its access to climate finance.

We share the following recommendations as a committed and honest development partner seeking to ensure that Vanuatu is a more secure and stable sovereign nation where democratic rights and values are protected:

1. Intensify efforts to combat violence against women and girls, including by strengthening the Department of Women’s Affairs; providing appropriate training for law enforcement and medical personnel; ensuring that perpetrators are duly prosecuted; and expanding collaboration with community leaders to help tackle domestic and gender-based violence in rural areas.

2. Enact measures to increase the participation of women in political and public life, such as in Parliament and diplomatic roles, including through the setting of targets.

3. Protect the rights to freedom of speech, expression, and the press in legislation; criminalise acts that supress such rights; and ensure adequate protection for members of the media, civil society and individuals who peacefully exercise their right to freedom of expression.

Thank you.