

**Statement delivered by Sumbue ANTAS,**

**Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva**

**39**th **Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea**

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Madam President,

Vanuatu welcomes the delegation of Papua New Guinea to its third review and thanks it for the presentation today.

We commend actions taken by the Government of Papua New Guinea in strengthening the enjoyment of all human rights, through policies such as the ‘National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence (2015-2025),’ laws to protect girls and women, as well to improve nutrition, mental health and address HIV.

Vanuatu recommends to Papua New Guinea the following:

1. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and enforce measures to increase awareness on gender-based violence, especially against women and penalise infractions adequately;
2. Ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
3. Increase health care funding and facilities even in rural areas to provide medical assistance to people living with HIV.
4. Implement a solid policy to combat climate change, and advocate for climate action by all nations.

Vanuatu wishes the Independent State of Papua New Guinea a successful review.

Thank you, Madam President.