**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE AT THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) OF VANUATU AT THE 32ND UPR WORKING GROUP, 24 JANUARY 2019**

Mr President,

Singapore welcomes the delegation of Vanuatu to the 32nd UPR Working Group.

We welcome Vanuatu’s commitment to the UPR process, and commend it for being the first Pacific state to develop a National Implementation Plan for the UPR Recommendations. We also commend Vanuatu’s concrete efforts since its last review to advance the human rights of its people through the introduction of a wide range of strategies and policies, such as the “People’s Plan” or National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030, despite significant geographic, financial and human resource constraints.

We commend the Government’s efforts to implement the National Gender Equality Policy 2015 – 2019, which takes a comprehensive approach to improving women’s rights by targeting domestic and gender-based violence, improving women’s economic empowerment, promoting women’s leadership and equal participation, and building a foundation for gender mainstreaming. We **recommend** that the Vanuatu Government expands its existing partnership and collaboration with community leaders to reduce domestic and gender-based violence in the rural areas.

We commend the Government’s efforts to pursue development in an inclusive manner, bearing in mind the specific vulnerabilities and needs of persons with disabilities. We welcome the Government’s efforts to strengthen its policy framework to improve the rights of persons with disabilities through the development of the National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018 – 2025 and the inclusion of commitments and priorities concerning the rights of persons with disabilities within the Government’s 2030 National Sustainable Development Plan.

We **recommend** that Vanuatu ensures that its educators at all levels from pre-school to post-school education are adequately trained to facilitate learning of children with disabilities to support the Government’s inclusive education policies.

As a fellow small island state, Singapore wishes Vanuatu every success in achieving its development goals and enhancing the human rights of its people.

Thank you Mr President.

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