

**Statement by Mr. Frank Davis, Chargé d’Affaires, a.i.,
Permanent Mission of The Bahamas to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva**

**at the 32nd Session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
*Presentation of National Report by the Government of Vanuatu***

**24 January, 2019**

Thank you [Mr./Madame] [Vice] President.

The Government of The Bahamas warmly welcomes the delegation of Vanuatu to this Session of the Working Group.

We commend Vanuatu for its considerable accomplishments in the protection and promotion of human rights despite the constraints and challenges faced as a fellow Small Island Developing State, including as a result of the effects of climate change.

The Government of The Bahamas highlights Vanuatu’s achievements in relation to women’s rights, particularly increased resources and staffing capacity in the Department of Women’s Affairs (DOWA), as well as the establishment of a Gender Officer in the DOWA. We also congratulate the Republic of Vanuatu on being the first Pacific State to develop a National Implementation Plan for the UPR recommendations. In addition, we welcome the steps taken by Vanuatu to bolster resources to the courts, such as increasing the number of judges and magistrates and implementing an automated case management system to track the life of cases from registration to completion.

With a view to supporting further progress, the Government of The Bahamas respectfully recommends that the Republic of Vanuatu:

1. continues its current efforts to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD);
2. adopts legislation to make primary and secondary education compulsory and ensures access to quality education for all and
3. seeks technical assistance, in accordance with Vanuatu’s particular needs, so as to enhance the country’s capacity in the field of human rights.

I thank you.