

**Statement delivered by Sumbue ANTAS,**

**Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the United Nations and UN Agencies in Geneva**

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

**Review of the Republic of Marshall Islands**

09 November 2020

Thank you, Madam President,

Vanuatu warmly welcomes the delegation of Marshall Islands to this review and thanks for the

comprehensive presentation today.

As a fellow Small Island Developing State (SIDS) we note the efforts towards protecting and defending the human rights of your people. Vanuatu notes the Government of Marshall Islands have taken positive steps to implement in its legislative framework many Human Rights principles embodied in the international Treaties.

We also note the engagement of the Government of Marshall Islands in the call for climate action for adaptation, mitigation and prevention recognising the huge danger for SIDS which are paying a heavy price of climate change impact yet they do not cause it.

Vanuatu recommends Marshall Islands:

1. Continue strengthening its mechanisms and policies to eradicate violence against women and girls and to promote a gender equality in order to encourage women’s access to the key roles in the society;
2. To incorporate into its national law the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recommendations of its Committee to protect children from discrimination, in particular all groups that are marginalized and vulnerable, such as children living with disabilities and those in rural areas;
3. Consider acceding to the international treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons especially considering that the effects of several nuclear tests conducted in the past have affected the environment as well as the health of Marshall Islands people, in particular, women and girls reproductive health.

We wish Marshall Islands every success at this Review.

Thank you, Madam President.