



**Vanuatu Country Statement on ICPD Beyond 2014 presented at the
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By Hon. Rialuth Serge Vohor, Minister of Health, Vanuatu**

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellency's, Colleague Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to take this opportunity to offer Vanuatu's humble words of appreciation to the Secretary General for his three reports to this important Session of the Commission on Population and Development and UNFPA leadership in the Global Review of the ICPD Programme of Action to inform the Framework of Action for ICPD beyond 2014, which is consistent with the General Assembly Resolution 65/234.

Mr. Chairman, I reaffirm Vanuatu's support to the Moana Declaration of 2013 and also the Asia Pacific Population Conference Ministerial Declaration. The outcomes of these two documents are testimonies of Vanuatu's contributions as well and we stand to uphold their inclusion in the post 2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairman, since 13th September 1994 when the UN General Assembly approved the Program of Action of the ICPD endorsed as resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994 and further reinforced by the Cairo ICPD, there has been a marked improvement in the lives of the general population based on the reports presented which we ought to acknowledge. Indeed there are still challenges and weaknesses experienced in many countries but as a united force we will continue to take a strong stand and express our concern regarding activities that go against expressed dignity and human rights of the individual.

Mr. Chairman, Vanuatu is one of the small island states in the Pacific basin. The country has over 70 percent population living in the rural. Vanuatu shares the common issues raised and experienced by the other pacific island nations.

As a sovereign state, we have contributed to the common course of actions to uphold the dignity and human rights of the individual. We are also party to regional forums and organizations where we have contributed to address the growing and diverse needs of populations.

Mr. Chairman, at the country level, the Vanuatu Government is fully committed to implementing its international obligations. On the part of ICPD Beyond 2014, the Vanuatu Government is guided by the following documents:

1. The Vanuatu Government Priorities Action Agenda of 2006 – 2015. The national policy document is being reviewed to provideway forward for the ICPD Beyond 2014.
2. Vanuatu National Population Policy of 2011 – 2020 in 2012. The population policy identifies thematic policy areas which will be used to address population issues.
3. Vanuatu continues to lead and recognize the partnership and participation of multi-lateral and bilateral partners as key drivers of rights based Sexual and Reproductive Health including Family Planning and integrated HIV/AIDs programs, and adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health services and information. More so, the government will continue to commit in this effort.
4. The Vanuatu Government is committed to implementing the MDGs and endeavors to improve its MDG 5b indicator by introducing MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) in the process of its implementation.
5. The Government of Vanuatu is instituting a health reform to re-emphasize “door to door approach” complementing Primary Health Care. This new reform would greatly improve the lives of all people to ensure an increase in economic growth due to healthy population, regardless of their age, gender, dwelling, sexual orientation or gender identity.
6. While the Department of Women Affairs undertakes policy development for women in Vanuatu and acts as the sounding board for children rights, gender equality and human rights, Vanuatu has a multi-sectoral approach to advancing women’s rights.

7. The Vanuatu Government recognizes the importance of addressing the rights and needs of the youth. A Youth Symposium has been developed under Department of Justice with a purpose to familiarize youth people with Judicial Systems. The Human Rights is an integral component of this initiative for youth orientation and advocacy. Comprehensive Sexuality Education is currently being taught in primary and high schools and youth friendly services are being expanded to also reach disadvantaged youth people.
8. Vanuatu joins the other Pacific small islands development states (PSIDs) to consider climate change impacts as a major concern and threat both on health and population.
9. The Vanuatu Government has also established the following entities which provide specific roles and responsibilities to promote, advocate and address youth issues. They include:
 - a. Vanuatu National Council of Chiefs
 - b. Vanuatu Christian Council
 - c. Vanuatu National Council of Women
 - d. Vanuatu National Youth Council.
 - e. Parliamentary Secretariat

Mr. Chairman, these are some of the commitments that the Vanuatu Government has put in place and will continue to institute reforms where appropriate to assist in the common cause that we all share in addressing the issues of population and development that we have before us.

Indeed, the issues of population and development are a regional and global agenda. Vanuatu alone cannot solve them. We are indebted to many of our Development Partners and apart from UN, Global Fund, Australia, Japan, I would also like to thank those who have contributed in addressing population and health issues in Vanuatu.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your attention.

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