



For Immediate Release:

## Vanuatu Ready to Defend Climate Change Interests in Doha

15 November 2012

Vanuatu is now ready to defend its national interests at the 18th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC from Monday, 26 November to Friday, 7 December 2012 in Doha, Qatar. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental treaty designed to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

Each year since 1995, all members of the treaty have met to assess progress in dealing with climate change. Vanuatu has always attended these negotiations, and generally aligns itself with a negotiating block of countries known as Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). AOSIS was formed in 1990 with Vanuatu as its chair, to consolidate the voices of low-lying coastal and small island countries to address global warming.

This year the meeting will be discussing a new legally binding agreement to limit the greenhouse gas emissions (of CO<sub>2</sub> and other gases) of all countries. Vanuatu produces less than 0.03% of global emissions, but it is more severely impacted by climate-related disasters than any other country in the world. The impacts of climate change and climate variability on our national development, well-being and economy are too great to ignore.

In order to ensure that Vanuatu's interests are heard at the international level, the Government has recently concluded a pre-COP briefing and position-making retreat in Port Vila. This is the first time that the government has held such a positioning meeting to take the views of government agencies, regional partners and civil society. Vanuatu will be standing up to the rich, developed, industrialized countries that want to emit more dangerous greenhouse gases to say "NO". There is no compromise that Vanuatu and its people are willing to make when it comes to the very survival of our agriculture, forestry, fisheries, health, environment and development sectors.

At last week's pre-COP briefing, the government was pleased to include locally-based civil society organizations like Oxfam, World Bank and Red Cross as well as regional partners like SPREP, SPC & GIZ to present on and answer questions about the technical issues of climate finance, loss and damage, Kyoto and REDD+. As an outcome of the briefing, a positions paper was developed which will form the basis of Vanuatu's negotiations at the UNFCCC.

Travelling to Qatar on the weekend, the Vanuatu delegation seeks to bring Vanuatu's national interests into the global spotlight and help our people better cope with climate change.