



Intervention by the Vanuatu Prime Minister

Hon. Charlot SALWAI

UNSG_PIF Leaders Meeting

21 September 2019

Allow me to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you, Mr. Secretary General, and your team for meeting the Pacific Leaders.

The Pacific Island Leaders Forum Communique outlines important broad priorities for the region to focus on. The UN will remain an important partner to implement the Leaders priorities. One of the Leaders priorities is human rights.

West Papua remains an outstanding concern for Pacific Leaders. The recent troubling events in the region has seen escalating human rights violations and this needs to be urgently addressed. Human rights is one of the key pillars of the UN and we urge the UN High Commissioner for Human rights to visit the region and provide an evidence-based

report on the situation. We welcome the invitation of the Indonesian Government for the Commissioner to visit the region. As you know, Vanuatu will assume the Chairmanship of Forum next year and we hope that a report can be produced on West Papuan human rights situation and be presented to the Leaders prior to the Leaders meeting in Vanuatu.

I would also like to call upon your good office to monitor the situation closely.

Mr. Secretary General, as you know, Vanuatu will be graduating from the Least Developed category in 2020. Other Pacific Islands such as Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu are currently being discussed by the UN for graduation. Samoa already graduated and are doing very well. I would like to sincerely ask you about any UN plans for vulnerable countries like Vanuatu who will be graduating next year.

Mr. Secretary General, I thank you for your attention.