

FRIDAY 06TH JUNE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL STATUS AND OPERATION OF THE CONVENTION.

Intervention by Vanuatu.

Mr. Co Chairs,

Vanuatu is pleased to report that a legislative workshop was undertaken on 8th and 9th January 2008 with the assistance of Ms Nicholl Hogg of the ICRC in Sydney Australia to draft a domestic legislation on land Mines.

The workshop was attended by officers from the Paramilitary Force, the State law Office of the Attorney General and Foreign Affairs.

This draft legislation covers six main parts such as:

(1)Preliminary; this section provides for the name of the Act and the Interpretations.

(2)Prohibitions and offences; This part provides for prohibited acts and offences and penalties and furthermore provisions for extra-territorial application which outlines the extend to which the prohibited acts apply to Vanuatu citizens and bodies corporate in Vanuatu and to persons and bodies provided that as a result of the conduct occurs wholly or partly in Vanuatu. There are also provision for exceptions under this part of the draft legislation.

(3). Notifications and Destructions of Anti-personnel Mines; this part of the draft legislation provides for notifications when a land mine is located for collection and destruction

(4). Fact Finding Missions; this part provides for fact Finding Missions if Vanuatu is suspected to have Anti personnel Mines.

(5). Information Gathering Powers: This part gives power to the Minister of Internal Affairs to collect information if he or she has reason to believe that a person has relevant information in relaetion to Land Mines.

(6). The Administration of the Act. This part gives power to Minister of Internal Affairs to regulate and give effect to the Act

Mr. Co Chairs,

This draft legislation has gone through the first round of consultations known as the Development Committee of Officials (DCO) and will go before the Council of Ministers before it will be presented to Parliament for enactment. This process may not be complete by the end of 2008 as we will be having our national elections on 02nd September this year.

We are looking forward and positive that the new Government after September 2008 will complete the legislative process to enact our domestic Land Mine Act.

Our main argument in our consultations is to support the cause of humanity and to take a proactive approach even if we are not yet affected as we do not know what the future holds as we also take part in peacekeeping exercises and our forces may be affected in the future.

Thank you Co Chairs.