



**World Humanitarian Summit**  
**President,**  
**His Excellency, Rev. Lonsdale Baldwin**  
**Vanuatu Government Statement**  
**Istanbul, Turkey**  
**May 2016**

**Mr. President**  
**Excellencies**  
**Distinguished Delegates**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

### Introduction

**Mr. President,** It is an honour for me to deliver this statement on behalf of the Republic of Vanuatu.

Let me at the outset extend my sincere gratitude to the Government and People of Turkey for their warm generosity and hospitality for hosting this important World Humanitarian Summit.

As we all know, addressing the humanitarian agenda at hand is not only a moral responsibility but it is a human necessity.

We all gain collectively by putting humanity first in our agenda.

### Global Environmental Landscape

**Mr. President,** this event is taking place at a defining moment.

Today we have over 60 million people displaced around the world by conflicts. This is a record since World War Two.

This number will only increase if we do not provide hope for humanity in our leadership and developments. It is therefore imperative that we invest now to prevent this from happening in the future.

We have started well already by adopting a number of important global agreements that formed the basis for our shared prosperity. Some of these are:

- The 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development,
- The Addis Ababa Action Agenda,
- The Paris Agreement, and
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Let me stressed that these agreements will become meaningless if the 60 million people will not benefit from these agreements. Their inclusion is paramount.

It is my hope that the outcome of this Summit will only strengthen these agreements.

**Mr. President,** as we all know, the current global development environment is not conducive to address most of humanities challenge.

Acts of terrorism and conflicts have increased markedly in recent years.

The world economic prospects remains bleak. Major economies are rebalancing their economies. At the same time, we are also witnessing world commodity prices at historical low.

These challenges have heightened the risks to global financial stability.

Record global temperatures due to climate change are now part of our lives. Natural disasters are becoming common place - as experienced in my country, Vanuatu, and also the recent Cyclone Winston in Fiji.

This unstable and hostile global environment means that effectively addressing most of humanitarian challenges remain daunting.

Going forward, our key goal is to rise above these challenges.

We must search for more innovative solutions that requires us to do more with less.

### **Challenges: Region and Vanuatu**

**Mr. President**, climate change remains the biggest threat to the future of all Pacific Island Countries.

Climate change long term consequence threatens the very core of our existence, culture, peace, security and the attainment of our sustainable development.

In terms of the 2014 World Risk Index, 4 of the Pacific Island Countries are listed in the top 10 of the table on the World's riskiest countries to natural disasters.

My country, Vanuatu, tops the list. It is one of my greatest concern.

The impact of climate change is not only a cause for concern for the Pacific Island Countries but it is a global concern. If it is not addressed carefully, the world will be facing more conflicts and experiencing greater influx of climate refugees in the future.

In the Pacific, some of our countries are already making plans to relocate; however, we have to ensure these forced migrations and displacements, if happens, are treated with dignity and compassion.

The recent adoption of the Paris Climate Change Agreement is welcomed; however we need to raise the level of our ambition. The current targets set by the Intended National Determined Contributions (INDCs) falls short and we have to do more.

We need to address the root causes of humanitarian challenges now.

This means that we need to invest in developments that are inclusive of the most vulnerable in our society – the women and girls, adolescents and youth and persons with disability.

We also need to strengthen the multilateralism system, especially the United Nations (UN), to ensure that we can work stronger collectively to address these global challenges.

In my country, Vanuatu, we have recently adopted the “Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016 – 2030”. It is our hope that with right partnership with our development partners, we will be able to invest in mitigating climate risks and avert any humanitarian calamities in the future.

The key challenge, as elsewhere, is to find appropriate financing to implement our plans. It is therefore imperative that barriers to accessing climate finance is addressed urgently.

### Concluding remarks

**Mr. President**, to conclude, let me state that the humanitarian challenges requires all our collective resolve. Above all, we need courage and strong political leadership to go forward.

It is also important that the humanitarian agenda at hand should not be diluted with politics but addressed with pragmatism and compassion.

Mainstreaming human rights and inclusivity principle in the humanitarian agenda is paramount.

It is in this juncture, that I urged the global community that we put the human agenda at the center of our attention. This is not only important but it reminds us of our noble responsibility under the UN Charter - ensuring that no one is left behind.

I thank you!