



ADB OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific

Combating Corruption In the New Millennium

The Secretariat

FORMAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTION PLAN FOR ASIA-PACIFIC (Tokyo, 30 November 2001)

VANUATU

**Name of speaker: Mr. Jimmy ANDENG
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Ministry of Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP)**

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen. Firstly let me thank the ADB and the OECD for organising this third Conference on Anti-Corruption and extending the invitation to Vanuatu to attend. Also the Japanese Government for hosting the conference.

This is the first time that I am participating in such an important series of Anti-Corruption meetings but I am sure it will not be the last for Vanuatu.

Vanuatu also endorses the Anti-Corruption Action Plan because we believe the Action Plan is in line with the principles of our reforms and should reinforce existing laws. In particular, the penal code for serious offences (Confiscation of Proceeds Act, Mutual assistance in Criminal Matters Act, Financial Transactions Reporting Act and the Leadership Code act).

As a small developing country, Vanuatu is susceptible to corruption. Due to lack of capacity and financial resources, leaders and officials are sometimes tempted to accept bribes, as people tend to easily know each other.

So far the existing laws have acted as a strong deterrence. However, there is current investigation of some leaders, who if found guilty of the offences, will be prosecuted.

We believe that for the Action Plan to work, there has to be a strong commitment of political leaders, NGOs and Civil Society in our Countries and a better co-ordination and sharing of information between enforcement agencies in the countries, as well as a good legislative framework.

In terms of pillars 1 and 2, we believe we have some relevant laws in place.

With regard to pillar 3, Vanuatu has a long way yet to go. While there is some debate and public discussion on corruption, this is done in an ad-hoc manner. There is also limited access to information and a general lack of public participation.

Mr. Chairman, I am very happy to report that this morning I received confirmation from my Government that it approved the Action Plan. Therefore on behalf of the Vanuatu Government, with the authority given to me, I endorse the Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific. My Government is committed to implement the three pillars of action being recommended by this Action Plan.