Vanuatu
National Security Strategy

Secure & Resilient

Contents

Message from
the Prime Minister

Hon. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas

There can be no higher responsibility of a government than the protection of the nation – to maintain national sovereignty and border integrity; to ensure a peaceful and just society; and to nurture strong human security for all and national resilience in the face of natural disasters and other unforeseen events.

I am proud to present this document to the people of Vanuatu, our first-ever National Security Strategy. The Strategy outlines Vanuatu's security environment – the threats and opportunities – and establishes priorities. It outlines an Action Plan and the directions the government proposes to take to reinforce the security and resilience of our nation and people over the short and long term.

The Strategy underlines our national aspiration, set out in the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 to 2030, for a stable, sustainable and prosperous Vanuatu. It reinforces the foundation of our nation, as expressed in our Constitution, our culture, traditional knowledge and Christian principles.

We will use all the instruments of national power to manage and mitigate natural risks,

to further build our resilience, to prevent conflict and deter threats to our sovereignty, independence and society. We will commit to promoting a rules-based global system and maintain our non-aligned foreign policy. We reaffirm our commitment to human rights, justice and the rule of law.

Vanuatu must use its limited financial and other resources wisely. We are fortunate to have the strong support of a number of security partners as well as regional and international organisations, and we will work with them closely to build our security and prosperity.

We will give high priority to countering non-traditional but growing threats from cyber-crime, transnational crimes, money laundering and terrorism. We will guard against foreign interference and espionage. We will work with our communities to address domestic crimes.

We will reform the Vanuatu Police Force and build a robust intelligence service to meet our future security needs. We will maintain a small, affordable, defensive and offensive capability, and meet our global commitment to peace building.

In tandem with the development of this Strategy, in January 2019 the Government approved the establishment of a high-level National Security Council, comprising all the senior Ministers concerned, under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. This initiative addresses a long-standing gap in our government machinery by creating a high-level body to advise the Government on major national security issues on a strategic, whole-of-government basis.

The Strategy has been developed following a wide range of consultations with stakeholders in and outside ministries and government, including Chiefs, the Churches, civil society and the private sector. Consultations were held in Santo and Tanna as well as Port Vila. Maintaining security is a truly national endeavour, and our fate is in the hands of us all. In particular the Government looks forward to working closely with all sectors of society in the implementation of the strategy, and building a secure and happy future for all.

Hon. Charlot Salwai Tabimasmas
Prime Minister

Message from
the Minister of Internal Affairs

Hon Andrew Solomon Napuat

Vanuatu has many strengths, but also vulnerabilities, including our exposure to natural disasters and climate change, and our understrength national security forces. In our complex, challenging and fast-changing global and regional security environment, we must adapt and act accordingly.

The Government has now given national security its highest priority. This document provides a full strategy for national security alongside clear decisions about our country's priorities, the capabilities we need to achieve them and the resources we will allocate. It provides for the establishment of strong government machinery, under the new National Security Council, to deal with national security issues and to boost our intelligence and assessment capacity.

This strategy embraces the broad concept of security now widely accepted regionally and globally - covering not just traditional security concerns, but also issues like climate change and human security – and focuses on the security challenges most relevant to Vanuatu's circumstances.

A wide range of issues arose in consultations during the development of the Strategy. Including for example strong policing and law and order; climate change and natural disasters; border management and transnational crime; protection of our EEZ; cyber security; critical infrastructure; our external engagement and regional and global developments that might impact on Vanuatu; economic issues including debt levels, foreign investment, and tourism; land and customary issues; the banking system; background checks on a select range of foreign individuals seeking to obtain Vanuatu citizenship or otherwise engage with Vanuatu; and human security issues such as gender-based violence, health security and youth unemployment.

The Strategy also addresses the attributes and capabilities Vanuatu needs as a nation to safeguard national security, ranging for example from strong and effective institutions; to a resilient and well-managed economy; to stable government, good governance, transparency and accountability.

Finally, while some trends in Vanuatu's future security environment can be anticipated, inevitably there are many that cannot. It is vital that the Strategy remain under regular review, to be updated as circumstances and perceived risks change, and that the nation's security institutions retain the flexibility and resources needed to respond quickly to new challenges as they arise.

I look forward to playing my part, along with all others involved, in ensuring the successful implementation of this Strategy.

Hon Andrew Solomon Napuat
Minister of Internal Affairs

Vision

Safety and security for all our peoples, through a national security system that anticipates threats, protects the nation, builds resilience, and shapes our environment in Vanuatu's interests.

National Security Objectives

To ensure a safe, stable and prosperous society and protection of our values

To protect and strengthen our sovereignty

To secure our assets, infrastructure and institutions

To ensure our foreign policy and external engagement maximise Vanuatu's national interests

Executive Summary

There can be no higher responsibility of a government than to protect the nation. This document - Vanuatu's first-ever National Security Strategy - provides an integrated, overarching framework for our national security effort.

The Strategy identifies and prioritises threats and opportunities; provides for the establishment of strong government machinery under our new National Security Council to deal with national security issues and to boost our intelligence and assessment capability; and maps out the main Pillars for securing Vanuatu's future.

The Strategy, which was developed following a wide range of consultations, underlines our aspirations for a stable, sustainable and prosperous Vanuatu, as set out in the People's Plan 2016-2030. It is fully aligned with Vanuatu's national, regional and international goals and commitments.

The Strategy embraces the broad concept of security now widely accepted regionally and internationally, which in addition to traditional security issues includes challenges such as climate change and national disasters, cyber security, and human security.

We will build our capacity and resilience to mitigate security risks, and to deter threats to our sovereignty, independence and society. We will work with our communities to address domestic crimes, and will reform our security forces. We are committed to human rights, justice and the rule of law, and to our non-

aligned foreign policy and the promotion of a rules-based global system.

Vanuatu must use its limited resources wisely. We are fortunate to have the support of a number of security partners as well as regional and international organisations, and will work with them closely.

The Strategy equips Vanuatu to succeed in this volatile world. Globally, the strategic environment is increasingly uncertain. Change is unpredictable, rapid and often large-scale, bringing with it both threats and opportunities.

Vanuatu has a strong interest in a secure and prosperous Pacific Islands region. While the region is relatively peaceful and stable, it faces a number of challenges, some of which are becoming more acute.

The region is becoming more complex as competition for influence grows.

Our country shares many of the vulnerabilities of its Pacific Islands neighbours. At the same time, it has a number of strengths, notably strong social cohesion underpinned by traditional values.

The Strategy sets out 10 Pillars, covering security challenges and capabilities, which capture what we are doing to meet our national security objectives, and what further action we need to take. Under each pillar are listed "Action Plan" items, which outline specific government commitments for action to be taken in the near term, and "Government Directions", which outline the broad approach being taken to strengthen security in relation to that issue.

The 10 Pillars are:

1. National security forces that are able to protect the nation and provide security for all citizens
2. Effective monitoring and protection of Vanuatu's borders and its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
3. Justice and rights for all
4. Resilient national systems for disaster preparedness, response and recovery; and climate change adaptation
5. Protection of individuals, government and the private sector against cyber crime and other malicious cyber activity
6. Robust human security for individuals and families
7. Political stability and strong governance of institutions, including the security sector
8. Effective promotion and defence of Vanuatu's external interests and engagement
9. A strong, well-managed and resilient economy
10. Well-coordinated and effective government machinery to manage national security issues, and a high-quality intelligence and assessment capability.
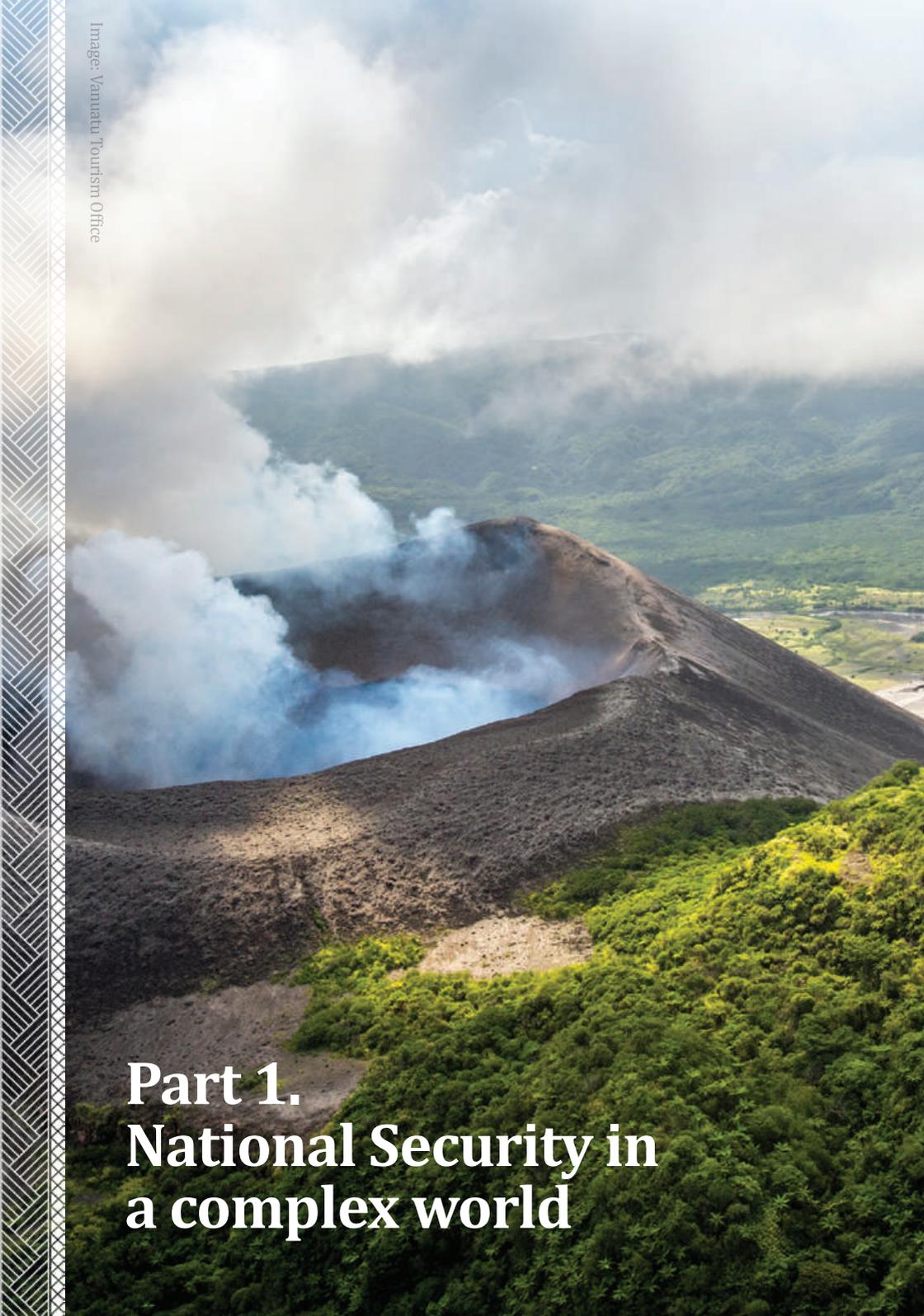
Part 1.
National Security in
a complex world

Chapter 1. Vanuatu's National Security

Objectives of the National Strategy

This National Security Strategy – "Secure and Resilient" – provides an overarching framework for our national security efforts. It describes the strategic context for Vanuatu and for those in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and wider Government agencies who are involved in developing long-term plans, policies and capabilities. It sets priorities for the coming years, articulates Vanuatu's national security agenda, and sets in motion reforms to strengthen the national security community. The Strategy creates an integrated, overarching framework for, but does not duplicate, other security policies and strategies in key government areas.

As well as providing a strategic context, the Strategy identifies long-term threats and opportunities likely to be of particular relevance for Vanuatu over several decades.

An enduring truth, however, is that Vanuatu will continue to face unexpected threats and challenges, for which the government and our security forces and institutions must be prepared to act. Uncertainty and complexity will remain the enduring characteristics of our future operating environment. What is important however is that, whatever the future may hold, the nation is resourced with high-quality institutions, personnel and assessment capability to anticipate and respond effectively to emerging risks.

Our National Security Strategy is in two parts. The first part explains the national security framework and sets out our vision for national security and our objectives to make that vision a reality. It also outlines the strategic environment, in particular the current trends that are shaping the global and regional security context.

The second part of the Strategy maps out the main Pillars, ten in all, for securing Vanuatu's future. It notes current capabilities, and outlines what is needed in the future. Under each Pillar, the Strategy identifies specific initiatives for the near term (the "Action Plan"), where appropriate, and in addition outlines more generally a number of the main directions the government will take to safeguard national security under that Pillar ("Government Directions").

What is National Security?

The overall security of a nation is intimately linked to economic stability, resource efficiency, good governance and social cohesion.

National security is a broad and evolving concept. It is concerned with how we shape our environment, and how we prevent and prepare for threats to our sovereignty, people, assets, infrastructure and institutions. National security is also concerned with how we respond to such threats and recover from any event which may occur. Under the expanded concept of security now widely accepted, national security also includes threats such as climate change and natural disasters, cyber security and elements of human security.

Vanuatu can draw on the three elements of its security forces (Police, Maritime Wing and Vanuatu Mobile Force) as well as other government departments and agencies to fulfil its national security responsibilities.

Our national security capability has played an important role in responding to natural disasters and has contributed to regional and United Nations peace keeping services.

Alignment of the National Security Strategy

The Strategy takes full account of Vanuatu's governance and developmental context and is aligned with Vanuatu's national, regional and international goals and commitments.

At the national level, the Strategy flows from the responsibilities of the State set out in the Constitution and complements the aims of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2016 - 2030

At the regional level, the Policy is aligned with Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) policies, most notably the Framework of Pacific Regionalism, adopted by PIF leaders in 2014, and the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, agreed by Pacific Islands leaders at the Nauru PIF in 2018.
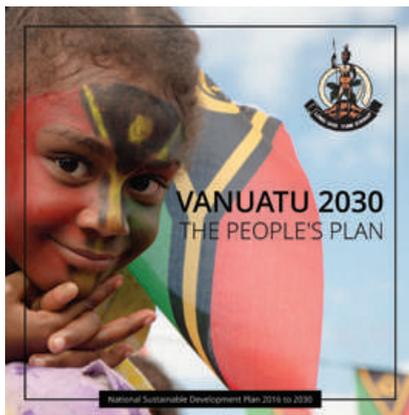
The Vanuatu's People's Plan, or the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030, is the fundamental document charting Vanuatu's future. The National Security Strategy supports all the objectives of the Plan but is aligned most directly with Society Pillar 5 on "Security, Peace and Justice".

Notably, the Boe Declaration adopted an expanded concept of security, which encompasses "a wider range of security issues, both traditional and non-traditional, with increasing emphasis on human security, environmental and resource security, trans-national crime, and cyber security." This is the approach taken by the Government in the National Security Strategy. The Boe Declaration includes a commitment by member countries to develop a national security strategy - Vanuatu is one of the first regional countries to adopt such a strategy.

At the global level, the Strategy is aligned with the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Strategy also directly complements the attainment of objectives under the UN-supported Small Islands Developing States Accelerated Modality of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, adopted in Samoa in 2014.

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders at their annual meeting in Nauru, September 2018. The PIF is the pre-eminent regional body, comprising the island nations of the Pacific as well as Australia and New Zealand, with a number of Observer members and Dialogue partners. At the Nauru summit, Leaders concluded the land-mark Boe Declaration on Regional Security which among other things embraced the principle of "non-interference in the domestic affairs" of member countries and outlined an expanded concept of security as the basis for future regional cooperation.

The SDGs are enunciated in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1 of 2015 "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The National Security Strategy is most directly aligned with SDG 16 - "Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions"

Our Vision and Objectives for National Security

Our vision for Vanuatu's national security as we journey through the next decades is for safety and security for all our peoples, through a unified national security system that anticipates threats, protects the nation, builds resilience, and shapes our environment in Vanuatu's interest.

Our national security objectives to realise that vision are:

To ensure a safe, stable, and prosperous society, and protection of our values:

- The protection of all people in Vanuatu, ensuring their safety;
- Maintenance of justice and the rule of law, balancing the formal and traditional justice systems;
- A high level of human security;
- Development that is sustainable;
- A resilient population and nation, able to anticipate and respond to disasters and climate change.

To protect and strengthen our sovereignty:

- Independence of our decision-making;
- Control over our territory and resources, including in our EEZ;
- Exclusion of organised crime and malicious non-state actors.

To secure our assets, infrastructure and institutions:

- Safeguard critical infrastructure, supply chains, intellectual property, information technologies, communication networks and Vanuatu's natural resources;
- Security institutions which are respected, practical, modern, and well-governed.

To ensure our foreign policy and external engagement maximise Vanuatu's national interests:

- Strong promotion and defence of Vanuatu's interests regionally and internationally
- close cooperation and coordination with external security and development partners which maximises Vanuatu's national interests.
- Vanuatu is respected as an active, principled and responsible player.

Chapter 2.
The Evolution of Vanuatu's Security Environment and Outlook. Risks and Opportunities.

Vanuatu has direct interests in geo-strategic developments in the Pacific; in the dynamic Asia Pacific where important shifts in power are taking place; and at the global level.

Globally, the strategic outlook is now more uncertain than it has been for some decades. Key assumptions are being called into question. Change is unpredictable, rapid and often large-scale, bringing with it both opportunities and threats. Strains in the rules-based global order are evident, and tensions and rivalry between the major powers are on the rise. The shape of what is to emerge is not clear.

Vanuatu is at the heart of the vast Pacific Ocean and sits across important lines of communication. The Second World War underlined the strategic importance of the Pacific. After some years of relatively little attention, external powers are increasingly seeking influence in the region.

The United Nations Security Council meets to discuss North Korea. The rules-based international order has served the world well since the end of the Second World War, but is now under strain.

There are also uncertainties about the global economy, fuelled by major trade tensions. While countries like Vanuatu have little direct influence on these developments, they do underline the importance of maintaining a strong and resilient economy, to guard against external shocks. The Global Financial Crisis had ripple effects for years.

Vanuatu, as with all countries, needs to be flexible, and to assess and respond to this fluid environment as best it can. It is also important, as competition for influence grows, to guard against those who seek to exert inappropriate influence and potentially undermine sovereign institutions.

The Asia Pacific region has been undergoing profound economic transition. Strategic rivalry has also increased. China has emerged as a global power, and the United States, while still the largest power globally, is seeing a shift in its long-held strategic dominance in East Asia. Meanwhile tensions around the Pacific Rim, such those centred on the South China Sea, and North Korea, have highlighted the potential for instability in the region, should they escalate.

At the same time, other trends are changing our world. Globalisation and technology are changing the way we communicate and do business, although with an ever-growing threat of malicious cyber activity. Transnational and organised crime is becoming more sophisticated, while profit shifting and other forms of tax evasion across borders pose increasing challenges for national governments. Terrorism is a constant reality in some parts of the world, and as the brutal attack in Christchurch in 2019 demonstrated, no country is immune, no matter how safe it normally is. Climate change and environmental degradation and the increased demand for food, water and energy carry with them the risk of political, economic and social disruption. Vanuatu will have to navigate more turbulent times.

The "Blue Pacific" identity was endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2017 as the core driver for collective action for advancing the Leaders' Vision under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. At a time of increasing attention from both new and old development partners, the concept is seen by some as a collective determination by Pacific people to decide their own development agenda.

Meanwhile, the Pacific Islands region is becoming more complex as competition for influence grows. On the one hand, the growing interest over recent years from a range of new governments, development partners and civil society organisations has brought greater opportunities for partnerships and access to financing. On the other, this increased attention calls for some caution. In the words of the Pacific Island Forum Leaders at their summit in Nauru in 2018, "leaders acknowledged the dynamic geopolitical environment that has led to an increasingly crowded and contested region and reaffirmed the need to strengthen collective and cohesive action to effectively manage the regional security environment in a proactive manner".

Vanuatu has a strong interest in a secure, stable and prosperous Pacific Islands region. Overall, the region has enjoyed an image of peace and stability, although this has tended to obscure the many challenges the region faces, a number of which are becoming more acute.

A permanent challenge is the vast expanse of the region and huge EEZs, sparsely populated by mostly small island states remote from each other. It is characterised by small formal economies, great distance from major markets, high costs and heavy reliance on development assistance.Other challenges include rising inequality, expanding and restive youth populations, gender-based violence, resource constraints and depletion of natural resources, illegal fishing, weak borders and increasingly sophisticated trans-national crime. Added to that is the constant threat of natural disasters, now compounded by climate change.

External aggression in the Pacific Island region is unlikely, as is the return of the type of conflict and instability seen in past decades in Bougainville, New Caledonia and Solomon Islands. New pressures however mean low-level instability, with the potential to impact on neighbouring countries, cannot be ruled out.

Vanuatu shares many of the challenges of its Pacific Islands neighbours, the most acute being natural disasters and climate

change. It has a narrowly based economy and relatively few natural resources apart from agricultural products and fish. It is also facing a number of social pressures resulting from a rapidly growing youth population, land issues, and a growth in the number of foreigners engaged in businesses, in competition with local people. Political instability and poor governance have held the country back, although these issues are being addressed.
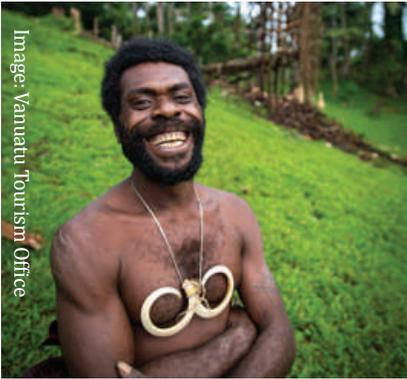
Image: Vanuatu Tourism Office

Vanuatu's greatest asset is its people - resourceful and resilient, still drawing strength from traditional knowledge and practices.

Vanuatu has a number of strengths not shared by many countries. Traditional values of kastom continue to underpin society. Chiefs and communities continue to play an important role in enforcing the rule of law and standards in rural areas, and, along with the Churches, maintain an impressive level of social cohesion in such a diverse nation of far-lung islands. Vanuatu is a safe and happy place, where people have the freedom and choice to

enjoy our way of life and pursue our interests. As a small democratic country Vanuatu is receptive to adopting new ideas, to becoming more open, and to engaging actively internationally.

Law and order is relatively good, despite shortcomings in the security services, and despite the growing challenge of cyber and financial crimes, and transnational crime more generally. Levels of violent crime, with the major exception of domestic violence, are low. Civil disturbances have been relatively infrequent, at least in recent years. Foreign incursions or aggression remain highly unlikely, although border security more generally is a major and growing challenge as organised crime becomes more widespread and sophisticated.

The prelude to independence in 1980 was a difficult time. Papua New Guinean troops played an important role in putting down the revolt in Santo, the first and only insurrection experienced by Vanuatu.
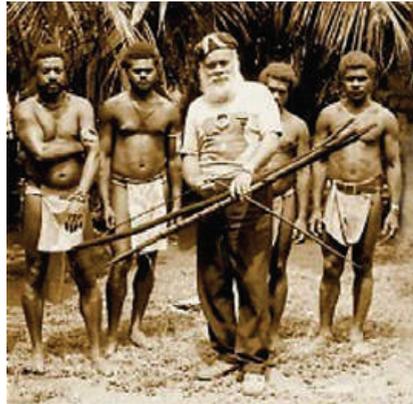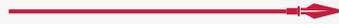
Part 2.
Building a Happy and
Secure Future.

Chapter 3 .
Pillars of Vanuatu's National Security

Threats to national security can be external or internal, and short-term or enduring, and are often inter-connected. They call for well-resourced, flexible and coordinated strategic management.

Vanuatu is unlikely to face conventional military threats. The types of issues raised during consultations tended to focus on other external risks - border security for example and threats linked to global change, such as climate change and cyber security - as well as risks more specific to Vanuatu's internal condition such as personal and human security.

National security threats are constantly evolving, presenting an increasingly complex set of challenges. Dealing with these requires a range of capabilities and a conducive enabling environment.

The 10 Pillars set out in this chapter, covering security challenges and capabilities, capture what we are doing to meet our national security objectives, and what further action we need to take. In some areas, we are already performing well or have useful initiatives in train, while in others more work needs to be done.

Under each pillar are listed:

1. Action Plan items, which outline specific government commitments for action to be taken in the near term.
2. Government Directions items, which outline the broad approach being taken to strengthen security in relation to that issue.

Pillar 1. National Security Forces

National security forces that are able to protect the nation, provide security for all citizens, and protect the EEZ.

Modern and professional security forces are essential for the protection of national sovereignty and territory, and internal security. Their principal tasks are to prevent crime and maintain law and order; control civil unrest; provide surveillance and control of Vanuatu's waters and EEZ; protect the nation against illegal exploitation of resources; guard against any attempt to coerce Vanuatu through the organised use of force; protect critical infrastructure; and support other government agencies in controlling points of entry at the border. The Vanuatu security forces also play a major role in responding to natural disasters, and in the provision of services to remote areas.

Our security institutions need to be well-led, resourced by highly-trained and well-equipped personnel, be well-governed, provide good geographic coverage of the nation, and work well with local communities and other stakeholders.

Vanuatu is a relatively safe and peaceful country. The threat of external aggression is extremely low, while internally Vanuatu does not suffer from the high levels of gun and other violence and civil unrest seen in many other countries.

In addition to its own security resources, Vanuatu is a strong supporter of international law and norms. It is an active member of a range of regional and international organisations which focus on security cooperation, and has the support of a number of bilateral security partners.

Nevertheless there are a number of current and emerging challenges which call for a significant step-up in the capability of the Vanuatu security forces. The level of crime has been increasing in recent years, with gender-based violence, theft and robbery, assault, destruction of property, and alcohol-fuelled violence and other anti-social behaviour some of the more common offences. Border security and the threat of trans-national crime is becoming more complex and a growing challenge in this increasingly globalised world.

While a number of agencies have security responsibilities, the Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) is the principal national security force, and plays a key role in upholding and promoting the rule of law.

Members of Vanuatu Mobile Force during riot control training. There has been no major civil unrest in Vanuatu for several years, but in 1988 there were riots, looting and destruction of businesses in Port Vila; further riots in 1998 due to concerns with the Vanuatu National Provident Fund; and riots in Port Vila in 2007 triggered by disputes between different sets of islanders and exacerbated by a growing young and unemployed urban population.

The Maritime Wing's patrol boat RVS Tukoro, the principal asset of the Police Maritime Wing (PMW). The function of the PMW is to operate as the primary resource for the implementation of Maritime Policy, and to: detect, monitor and respond to illegal fishing activity; support the Immigration, Customs and Biosecurity Departments; assist with disaster relief and medical evacuations; conduct salvage operations; support remote area policing; carry out maritime search and rescue; participate in interoperability missions with the maritime elements of neighbouring nations; and participate in joint exercises. It currently numbers 39 personnel.

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

Raid of marijuana plants by the Police Drug Unit. The Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) is mandated by the Police Act Cap 105. Its core functions are to preserve peace and the maintenance of order; protect life and property; enforce the laws; prevent and detect offences and bring offenders before the courts; and others duties as prescribed by law. It currently numbers 400 personnel.

Headed by the Commissioner of Police, the VPF comprises three arms - the Police (general duties regular police officers); the Vanuatu Mobile Force (VMF); and the Police Maritime Force (PMF).

The difficulty of policing distant, isolated island populations has been a perennial challenge for the VPF. In rural areas there is the need for a balanced strategy which draws on the strength of the traditional system while providing the direct police support that is required.

Building institutional capacity is an ongoing priority to ensure the force is adequately resourced to meet community expectations and relevant performance targets.

The VPF Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and other government documents and forums have identified a range of problems which the VPF has faced over a number of years. These include limited human resources, lack of community trust, poor governance, low levels of discipline, lack of strong leadership from the executive and middle ranks, fractured relationships within the Senior Executive, lack of strategic direction, financial and management and Human Resources shortcomings, weak intelligence capacity, underrepresentation of women in the force, and political interference. The poor state of equipment, particularly vehicles, has been identified as another shortcoming.

Another challenge for the VPF is to equip itself to combat non-traditional and increasingly sophisticated crimes, such as cybercrime, money laundering and other financial crimes.

A further issue is the VPF structure, for which there has never been an adequate rationale over the years, and is a cause of continuing concern and debate. One school of thought favours the separation of the VMF and PMV from the VPF, to create a separate national defence force. Others believe there is no compelling case for such a force, and that it would be too costly. There would be value in conducting a review of the pros and cons of separation, to inform future decision-making.

There have been a number of valuable initiatives in the VPF in recent times, such as the successful introduction of the Police Information Management System, which has been a major step forward for the VPF in managing incidents. Most significantly, a number of major upgrades of the VPF are now in the pipeline, including the recruitment of 320 additional personnel, infrastructure upgrades for the VMF (Cook Barracks in Port Vila and Tiroas Barracks in Luganville) and the PMW, and the establishment of a School of Excellence at Luganville focusing on leadership and disaster response capacity, and additional training opportunities.

Image: Vanuatu Daily

Vanuatu police made a valuable contribution to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The VPF participated in UN peacekeeping in East Timor and a number of African countries between 2000 and 2016. Vanuatu's first peacekeeping experience was the VMF's contribution to operations in Bougainville in 1997. Vanuatu will develop its future peacekeeping capacity, commensurate with its resources and the domestic demands on the VPF.

The primary role of the VMF is to assist the general duties branch of the VPF to restore and maintain law and order as necessary; and the secondary role is to provide a limited but first line of defence against external aggression in the event of an external threat. Tasks include internal security duties including riot control, counterinsurgency and counter terrorist operations, if needed; land-based search-and-rescue and search and clear operations; disaster relief operations; close personal protection of VIPs; peace operations and peace building; operating the national fire service; community development projects including limited engineer construction tasks; and regimental duties including guards of honour, credentials ceremonies, and quarter guards. The current strength of the Vanuatu Mobile Force is 189.

> **Vanuatu's security partners provide valuable support in training, infrastructure, equipment and logistics.**
>
> *Australia is Vanuatu's principal security partner. Other important security partners are New Zealand, France, China, and the United States. The FRANZ network (France, Australia, New Zealand) provides disaster relief in the region. The Melanesian countries, notably Papua New Guinea and Fiji, provide training and other support.*

Given the ongoing concerns with the VPF, and the current upgrades now underway with the support of development partners, it would be timely to undertake two reviews:

1. In the first instance, and as soon as practicable, an independent Organisational Performance Study. The objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of policing in Vanuatu and its capabilities and functions; and to consider changes (positive and negative) in the state of policing, backed by year-on-year analysis. This will inform future planning and prioritisation for the VPF.

2. Secondly, a longer term Strategic Security Review of the VPF, under the oversight of the new National Security Council, leading to a new VPF Strategic Plan. This full review, the first since 1997, will examine the overall force in light of the external and internal strategic outlook and likely challenges, as well as any other matters flowing from the National Security Strategy. Public consultation for this far-reaching review will be valuable. Potential issues include the future role of the VPF, VMF and the PMV, and the case for and against separation of the VMF; the future VPF force structure and needs; acquisition priorities (for example a landing craft for the PMV) in light of resources; and other issues such as Vanuatu's role in peacekeeping missions, and the need to expand the VPF's role in the protection of critical infrastructure and government assets.

Action Plan

- Prioritise and properly fund timely and sustainable implementation of recent initiatives to upgrade the VPF, particularly the recruitment and training of 320 new officers, the VMF and PMW infrastructure upgrades, and the establishment of the School of Excellence.

- Conduct, as soon as practicable, an Organisational Performance Study of the VPF.

- Carry out, in the second half of 2019, a Strategic Security Review of the VPF, leading to a new VPF Strategic Plan.

- Carry out a study of the pros and cons of separating the VMF/PMW from the VPF.

- Reactivate peacekeeping activities abroad, and provide appropriate training, with deployments commensurate with Vanuatu's resources and domestic demands.

Government Directions

- Work closely with security partners to ensure assistance is well coordinated, aligned with national objectives, and sustainable.

- Continue to coordinate closely with chiefs and communities, to maximise the effectiveness of the security services in the rural areas.

Pillar 2.
Border Security

Effective monitoring and protection of Vanuatu's borders and its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

Border security is a fundamental responsibility of the state, to safeguard national land, air and sea space. Further, a well-managed border connects a country to the world, and enables it to manage risks while benefitting from the flow of people and goods that are essential to prosperity and social exchange.

However, significant world-wide increases in the movement of people and goods and the rapid increase in the number and reach of new and more sophisticated external threats mean that Vanuatu's border protection will require closer attention than it has received in the past. Current and emerging threats include transnational crime, illegal fishing, human trafficking, terrorism, the introduction of diseases and exotic pests, and smuggling and other attempts to evade the payment of taxes and excise.

Managing border security involves a number of government agencies – often in cooperation with commercial aviation and shipping operators (see BOX). Close cooperation is essential. Moreover, most border threats are transnational, and can only be adequately addressed by members of the region working closely together and sharing information, including through regional and international organisations. This is particularly the case in the Pacific, a vast region comprised of small, remote island countries with limited resources of their own.

Experience around the world demonstrates that transnational crime has the potential to undermine political processes, weaken security, harm communities, fuel corruption, inhibit economic development, and impede

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

Internal Affairs Minister Andrew Napuat processes the first passengers at the November 2018 launch of the new Automated System for Customs Data (ASCUDA) passenger processing module at Bauerfield Airport, which is improving the efficiency and security checking of arrivals.

Vanuatu was admitted to INTERPOL in November 2018. This will assist the police in sharing and receiving vital policing information instantly from around the world in relation to crimes such as human trafficking, drug smuggling, cybercrime and terrorism. It will also be a major and much-needed step forward in conducting background checks on a range of people seeking Vanuatu citizenship, wishing to do business with Vanuatu, or entering the country for other reasons.

good governance. With crime becoming increasingly complex and global, there is a need for increased cooperation with partners, to share information and intelligence and to respond collaboratively.

Organised crime is on the increase in the Pacific Islands, as criminals seek to exploit the region's vulnerabilities – long and porous maritime borders, patchy law enforcement capabilities, and a geographic location between major sources and destinations of illicit materials, principally narcotics. This growth has taken place despite improved awareness, cooperation and operational responses by law enforcement agencies in the region.

Regionally, the main transnational criminal activity has involved narcotics smuggling (principally transhipment to Australia and New Zealand), illegal fishing, arms smuggling, money laundering, human trafficking, and cyber-crime, increasingly with criminals from outside the region seeking to develop partnerships with Pacific Islanders.

The largest ever drug seizure in the region was in 2013 in Port Vila from this yacht while in transit to Australia. 750 kilograms of cocaine worth approximately AUD$370 million was seized, following collaboration between Australia, the US, Vanuatu, the Cook Islands, New Caledonia and Tonga.

Key Agencies with border responsibilities are the VPF (including the Transnational Crime Unit, the Maritime Wing, and the VMF); Immigration Department; Department of Customs and Inland Revenue; Department of Biosecurity; Quarantine and Inspection Service; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade; Ports Vanuatu; and Airports Vanuatu. Close cooperation between these agencies is essential.

Emerging issues are commercial espionage, threats to intellectual property rights, and the infiltration of outlaw motorcycle gang members known to have links to organised crime. Terrorists have not established a foothold in the Pacific, but Vanuatu along with other countries needs to be alert to this possibility, particularly if in the future terrorist groups perceive the region to be a "soft" target.

Vanuatu's fishing sector contributes to food security, and social and economic development. As noted in the Vanuatu

Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and Inspection Plan, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities contribute to overfishing and depletion of fish stocks. The Pacific is the world's largest tuna fishery, and vessels from several Asian countries in particular are engaged across the region, including Vanuatu, in legal fishing under license, with a number also involved in IUU activities.

Fisheries crimes are highly organised, complex, and mobile transnational crimes. International cooperation as

Monitoring and protecting Vanuatu's 650,000 square kilometre EEZ is essential for economic, environmental and sovereignty reasons. A priority is resolving Vanuatu's EEZ boundary with New Caledonia - Vanuatu has a long-standing difference with France over a large area of EEZ - and with Fiji, in line with the commitment by Forum Leaders to resolve outstanding maritime boundary claims.

well as effective national measures are essential to combat this problem. Vanuatu has a number of measures in place to combat IUU fishing, but these need strengthening.

The transition to the new patrol boat in 2021 will provide a good opportunity for Vanuatu to review and strengthen the policing of illegal and unauthorised activity in Vanuatu waters and the EEZ by fishing vessels, ships and private yachts.

Vanuatu's history has illustrated the importance of robust health and quarantine controls.

Pandemics have been a rising security threat world-wide, particularly Ebola, Zika, influenza and H1N1. Meanwhile air links, and the prospect of direct flights from new points of origin, particularly in Asia, underline the need for effective Point-of-Entry screening and a strong commitment to comply with International Health Regulations. Vanuatu has been strengthening border controls in recent times, for example by upgrading the screening of passenger arrivals, and of the enforcement of the rules for overstayers and foreign workers. However significant vulnerabilities remain and, while difficult to quantify, there is evidence of illegal or unauthorised entry by vessels, people and goods into Vanuatu and its waters. A comprehensive review of this sector would be timely. Areas of focus should include any gaps in legislation and institutional frameworks such as management plans, MoUs and operating procedures; personnel and training; equipment; whole-of-Government coordination; and engagement with regional and international organisations

and development partners.

Close working collaboration and exchange of information between border agencies is essential. There are useful mechanisms already in place, such as the 2018 MoU between the VPF and the Immigration Department, and semi-regular joint meetings of agencies. However, whole-of-government

The Forum Fisheries Agency, based in Honiara, is the lead agency in the region for surveillance of IUU fishing activities. It is one of a number of regional agencies, under the umbrella of the Pacific Islands Forum, which are vital for security and border management cooperation between member countries. Agencies include the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre (PTCCC); the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO); the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC); and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP) organisation.

coordination needs to be strengthened. It is proposed that a Border Sub-Committee, meeting at head of agency level, be established under the proposed National Security Officials Committee, outlined in Pillar 10.

Image: Australian Department of Defence

Vanuatu participates in the Australian-funded, region-wide Pacific Maritime Security Program (PMSP). The program is a AUD$2 billion commitment over the next 30 years, with three components: Pacific Patrol Boat replacement; integrated regional aerial surveillance; and efforts to strengthen regional coordination.

Under the program Vanuatu's patrol boat, the PVS Tukoro, will be replaced in 2021 by a larger and more capable Guardian Class patrol boat, one of 19 such new vessels in the PMSP (see above).

In addition, Vanuatu, along with Samoa, is one of the primary operating bases of the two FFA aircraft engaged in the upgraded PMSP maritime surveillance system.

Image: Vanuatu Tourism Office

Tourism is a key plank of Vanuatu's economy. Of the annual 280,000 tourist arrivals, approximately 200,000 are cruise ship passengers. Good security is crucial, both to provide a safe environment for tourists, and to ensure proper monitoring of passengers and goods.

Action Plan

- Conduct a comprehensive review of border agencies, focusing on human and other resources.

- Establish a Border Management Sub-Committee of the proposed National Security Committee.

- Conclude maritime boundary negotiations with France and Fiji.

- Develop a more comprehensive and effective network of extradition agreements with other countries.

Government Directions

- Strengthen point-of-entry health security and quarantine procedures.

- Upgrade the monitoring and policing of Vanuatu's waters and EEZ, maximising effective use of the patrol boat.

- Further strengthen cooperation, information-sharing, the network of bilateral agreements, and career development opportunities, in the field of trans-national crime and border management, with security partners and regional and international organisations.

Pillar 3.
Justice and Human Rights

Justice and rights for all

A comprehensive and effective law and justice system is fundamental to national security, as is the protection of human rights. Vanuatu is fortunate in that there is widespread respect for the rule of law, court decisions are accepted, and the judiciary is ethical. Fundamental freedoms and values are enshrined in the Constitution, including security of the person, protection and equal treatment under the law.

A great strength of Vanuatu is that it is able to draw on traditional values which continue to make a vital contribution to national stability, security, and harmony. Kastom, the chiefs, culture and the churches remain fundamental to Ni-Vanuatu ways of thinking and acting. A priority is finding the right balance between traditional values, and the requirements of the formal justice system and of economic development and land use. This will be increasingly challenging in this globalised and modern world.

The formal justice system is well-established and has undergone reform in recent years. The Justice and Community Services Sector Strategy 2018-2021 provides a modern, comprehensive framework, relevant to the Vanuatu context. It has a strong focus on how the non-state/kastom and state/formal systems may be harmonised to create practical improvements in access to justice at the community level. Limited legal literacy is still a limiting factor however in access to the justice system. In addition, access to justice by women is a significant challenge.

Chief Justice Vincent Lunabek at opening of the 2015 legal year. The court system, for both criminal and civil matters, comprises the Supreme Court, which has unlimited jurisdiction; the Court of Appeal, which is the highest court in the land and hears appeals from the Supreme Court; 4 Magistrates Courts, with limited jurisdiction; and 11 Island Courts, with lesser jurisdiction.

The challenges in the formal law and justice sector relate principally to lack of resources. There is a limited number of qualified judges and prosecutors, which can lead to large backlogs of cases and undue delays in resolving disputes. The legal profession also is short of capacity. The law and justice sector involves 14 agencies, and close and regular coordination is important. There is scope to improve this, for example through the revitalisation of the Combined Law Agency Group forum.

The state of Vanuatu's prison system has caused problems over the years. The paucity of correctional facilities in the provinces, the relatively high number of escapees and the incidence of reoffending, and the need for a greater focus on rehabilitation and reabsorption into the community, have impacted on law and order and heightened community security concerns. Reforms and a new Correctional Act in 2006 addressed a number of the issues, but further work is needed. The Department of Correctional Service (under the Ministry of Justice and Community Services) is currently undergoing a major review.

Systems of traditional governance have been in place across the islands of Vanuatu for centuries. There is a need to continually strengthen and formalise the links between traditional systems of government and the state. The role of chiefs, and the Malvatumauri (Council of Chiefs) are central to this.

Our customary lands are the principal source of our national wealth, and the most obvious manifestation of our cultural heritage. Under the Constitution,

Nakamal (meeting place) in Port Vila of the Malvatumauri, the formal advisory body of chiefs, recognised by the Constitution. Members are elected by fellow chiefs sitting in District Councils of Chiefs. Among its many roles, the Malvatumauri has been crucial in mediating land disputes and on a number of occasions putting an end to social unrest.

the "rules of custom shall form the basis of ownership and use of land". Land use is governed by custom tenure and traditional land allocation systems, and formal land use planning. The demand for land and often competing land uses is rising.

Lelepa and Mangalilu chiefs sign an agreement to protect their customary land in May 2012. Disputes over land, particularly if protracted, impact not only on ownership and use of land, but can have wider consequences, including social unrest and economic harm. Timely settlement of differences, in accordance with transparent and efficient processes, is essential.

Following major reforms, including changes to the Constitution, the passing into law of the Land Management Act 2013, and the subsequent establishment of the Custom Land Management Office and the Office of the Land Ombudsman, disputes over ownership of land has reverted to traditional Nakamal forums in 2014, moving them outside the Magistrates Courts.

Land issues continue to present challenges. There are instances where land is obtained without the knowledge of traditional owners, or registered by mistake. Foreigners control substantial amounts of land, particularly on Efate, and there is a need to clarify land investment guidelines. The government is reviewing the Custom Land Management Act, which some argue is holding back development. Very few leases have been issued and delays in resolving disputes can be long. Security of land tenure and leasing is essential for business and investment confidence.

Community policing, which can play an important role in our widely dispersed island nation, is being strengthened.

The reach of the police force into the more remote parts of Vanuatu is often limited or non-existent. Chiefs and communities play a crucial role in maintaining stability and security in those areas. The Government's current decentralisation policy envisages the provision of public services, including police, closer to the people. 72 Area Councils have been established across Vanuatu, and it is envisaged that a minimum of two police officers will be assigned to each Council.Vanuatu is committed to the protection of human rights, and is strengthening internal mechanisms and institutions to allow

Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, Santo. In concert with community leaders, churches serve as a traditional safety net and source of social cohesion.

leadership and churches, as they relate to human rights, traditional values, and Christian principles.

The media and civil society have important roles to play in educating the community and policy makers on issues of concern, maintaining policy scrutiny, and promoting responsible and responsive government. Vanuatu ranks relatively highly in terms of press freedom and freedom of expression more generally, which is enshrined in the Constitution.

it to meet its obligations under human rights treaties. Vanuatu is currently participating in the 3rd cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) under the auspices of the UN Human Rights Council.

Vanuatu compares relatively well against many countries in its observance of human rights, although there are still some vulnerable areas. These include gender violence and the rights of women more generally, and various abuses by police or other officials, despite efforts by the government to prosecute and punish such behaviour. The rights of people with disabilities also need strengthening.

Establishment of a fully functioning Human Rights Commission would be a valuable step forward. In addition, an eminent persons group has been proposed to develop a policy delineating the roles of the state, traditional

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

In October 2018 Vanuatu established the National International Humanitarian Law Committee (NIHLC), which will strengthen Vanuatu's observance of various international undertakings, and promote awareness of human rights and humanitarian law in the country.

Vanuatu has ratified core human rights treaties including:

- *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*
- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*
- *Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC)*
- *International Convention of Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)*
- *Convention Against Torture (CAT)*

Vanuatu has also ratified a number of International Labour Organisations (ILO) conventions that aim to protect and uphold the rights of its workers. Furthmore, it has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of a Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of a Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

Action Plan

✕ Strengthen links between the traditional and formal justice systems, including through implementation the Malvatumauri 2011 Roadmap.

✕ Ensure the smooth implementation of the new community police arrangements flowing from decentralisation, working closely with chiefs and traditional authorities.

✕ Revitalise the Combined Law Agency Group.

✕ Accelerate work to develop a fully-functioning Human Rights Commission.

✕ Prompt follow-up of any issues arising from the 2019 Universal Periodic Review of human rights in Vanuatu.

✕ Improve the framework for land ownership and use, to achieve a harmonious balance between the rights of traditional owners and the productive use of land.

✕ Develop support systems for victims of crime.

Government Directions

✕ Further strengthen all people's access, particularly that of women, to independent, well-resourced justice institutions.

✕ Prioritise continued reforms of the correctional system.

✕ Strengthen the protection of human rights, recognising their importance in underpinning national security.

✕ Strengthen the rights of people with disabilities.

Pillar 4.
Disasters and Climate Change Resilience

Resilient national systems for disaster preparedness, response and recovery; and for climate change adaptation.

Vanuatu is the world's most vulnerable country to climate and disaster risk, according to a 2016 United Nations report. This poses our highest and most enduring security threat, with major implications for our society, environment, agriculture and fisheries and the economy more generally. Vanuatu lives with cyclones, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis, and storm surges, landslides, flooding and droughts. With its limited resources and island geography Vanuatu is also potentially vulnerable to major man-made disasters, particularly involving vessels and aircraft.

Changing weather patterns, which give rise to an increase in natural disasters, are widely attributed to climate change, which is of grave global and regional concern and was recognised by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2018 as "the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and well-being of Pacific people". Climate change is also a "threat multiplier" which can exacerbate a range of existing stress situations and lead to social tensions.Learning from Cyclone Pam, natural disaster response and recovery mechanisms, including

the National Disaster Management Office have been upgraded. Effective coordination between the many stakeholders in response and recovery operations continues to improve. The Government gives high priority to climate

In addition to the human toll, the economic cost of natural disasters can be devastating. The impact of Cyclone Pam in 2015 exceeded 60 per cent of GDP, derailing the nation's budget and fiscal position. Overall, the impact of natural disasters in Vanuatu is equivalent to the loss on average of 6.6% per annum (World Bank).

change and disaster risk, and was a leader in recognising that by integrating work in these two areas, duplication of structures, funding and policy approaches could be avoided. This underlies the establishment of the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

A VMF member assists with the evacuation of 10,000 residents of Ambae Island, following protracted volcanic activity in 2017/18. Like most major natural disasters, this multi-agency operation required close cooperation between national and local authorities, communities, NGOs, international development partners, and the private sector.

in 2012, the development of the comprehensive Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016 to 2030, and the development of the Natural Disaster Recovery Framework in 2018. Vanuatu and its partners have strong technical expertise on climate change and disaster risk.

In building climate change resilience across the country, there is much to be done with limited funds, so careful

strategic planning and access to international climate finance is critical.

Vanuatu speaks up strongly in international fora on climate change, including the United Nations Framework Climate Change negotiations, the Small Islands Developing States forum, and the Pacific Islands Forum. It is an active member of the recently-formed Climate Vulnerable Forum of 20 countries. Domestic policies also reflect Vanuatu's strong commitment to climate change

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

Ni-Vanuatu possess diverse traditional resilience practices that enable disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, including in relation to food production and preservation.

mitigation and adaptation. It has set a target of transitioning to 100% renewable energy in the electricity sector by 2030, launched a National Green Energy Fund in 2018, and included climate change topics very widely in school curricula.

Action Plan

- Develop a framework for the support of people displaced by natural disasters.

- Strengthen measures to deal with major man-made disasters, particularly involving ocean vessels and aircraft, as well as oil spills and other potential environmental disasters.

Government Directions

- Further strengthen capacity for natural disaster preparedness, response and recovery and climate change adaptation, based on the Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016 to 2030.

- Strengthen collaboration with local and international partners on climate change resilience and natural disaster management.

- Actively pursue funding from international sources for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

- Continue to be a strong advocate regionally and globally on climate change.

Pillar 5.
Cyber Security

Protection of individuals, government and the private sector against cyber crime and other malicious cyber activity.

The use of information technology globally has grown exponentially, and with it the risks of attacks on computer systems and critical infrastructure, cyber crime, and the misuse of social media. Cyber security has become a high priority national security issue for all countries, requiring increasingly sophisticated and resource-intensive measures at the national level, as well as close international collaboration.

Access to broadband internet has grown rapidly in Vanuatu, which is now one of the best-connected countries in the Pacific region. This speedy communication brings great opportunities in terms of business and economic activity, as well as social and cultural exposure.

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

Government and private sector workshop participants at launch of Vanuatu's Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) in June 2018.
Currently in set-up phase, the aim of the CERT is to

- Respond to cyber threats
- Promote security awareness
- Collaborate with international counterparts, as well as other cyber security institutions and firms.
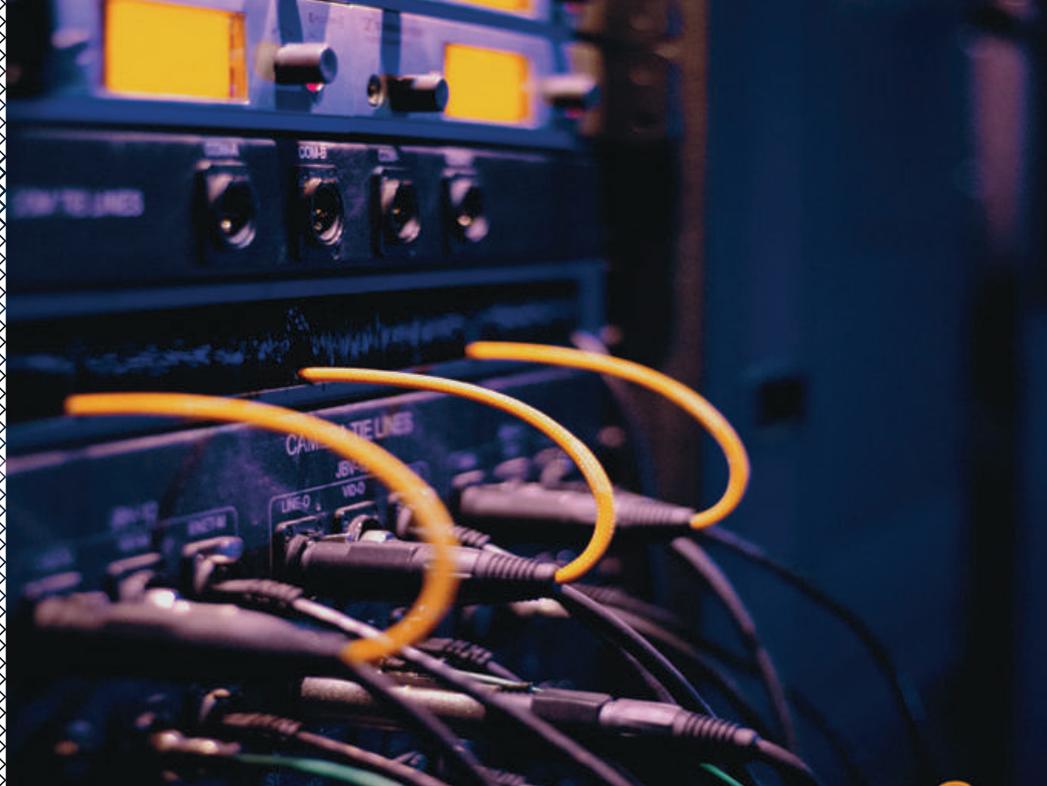
However greater connectivity brings with it increased vulnerability to a range of emerging threats with the potential to harm the economy, the integrity of government information systems, safety and security, and social cohesion.

The Boe Declaration endorsed by Pacific Islands Leaders highlighted cyber security as an emerging security challenge for the region, and recognisedthe need to maximise protections and opportunities for Pacific infrastructure and peoples in the digital age.Vanuatu is making steady progress in addressing the rapidly growing threat of malicious cyber activity, building on the 2013 National ICT Policy and the 2013 National Cyber-security Policy. A Cyber Computer Emergency Response

Team (CERT) was established in 2018, only the third to date in the Pacific region (see Box); cybercrime legislation is being revamped; Vanuatu's cooperative arrangements on cyber security with a range of international and regional partners is expanding steadily; and a national Online Child Protection Policy is in place.

The challenge for Vanuatu is timely and effective implementation of the National Cyber-security Policy and related measures, which will require allocation of adequate resources and the development of a skilled workforce. Accession to the Budapest Convention on Cyber Crime, once Vanuatu is eligible, will bring significant benefits.

Action Plan

✕ Prioritise passage of new cybercrime legislation, and accession to the Budapest Convention.

✕ Accelerate implementation of the National Cyber-security Policy, particularly the full functioning of the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and the establishment of the proposed national cyber security centre.

Government Directions

✕ Expand collaboration with international partners on cyber security, as well as with community and private sector stakeholders in Vanuatu.

✕ Further develop appropriate safeguards to protect government and private information, including in the national ID system and in future e-government programs.

Pillar 6.
Human Security

Provide robust human security for individuals and families.

Human security is a broad concept embracing a range of issues affecting an individual's well-being, including not just personal security, but issues such as health security and food security. The importance of human security for individuals and families has long been recognised by Pacific Islands Forum leaders, and is a key objective of the 2014 Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

Vanuatu is in the medium human development category - its Human Development Index (HDI) rating has steadily improved, although it continues to lag behind the regional average, and still confronts a number of social challenges. Culture and society is Vanuatu's strength, and the traditional family is the only social safety net for most of the young, old, and disadvantaged.

There are three human security issues that stand out as having current or potential major national and social impact in Vanuatu. They are health security, gender-based violence, and the challenges of a fast-growing youth population.

Health Security

Disease patterns in Vanuatu are changing, and health issues are increasingly complex. There have been a number of significant gains in the health sector in the past decade, including an increase in life expectancy. However, Vanuatu continues to face significant challenges to human security from communicable infectious diseases, and, perhaps more significantly, the rise in non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Pacific Island Forum Leaders have declared the rise in NCDs to be a crisis in the region. The impacts of NCDs in terms of premature deaths and increasing levels of disability (including strokes, amputations, blindness and mental health issues), are significant and growing, and affecting the development prospects of member countries.

In the case of Vanuatu, 37% of deaths are caused by NCDs, principally coronary heart disease, diabetes and strokes. According to the World Bank's "Pacific Possible" report, in addition to the human toll, this could reduce GDP by around 6% by 2040 if not dealt with, and reduce the labour force substantially.

This school canteen is a role model, selling only healthy local food, not imported and local processed foods and drinks. A healthy diet and life-style is critical in combatting the growing incidence of NCDs.

The new National Health Sector Strategy 2017 - 2020, and the strong supportive role played by the WHO and several other organisations and development partners, provides the opportunity to tackle both NCDs and infectious diseases in a more concerted, prioritised fashion, employing a comprehensive whole-of-government approach, with strong emphasis on information campaigns and preventative medicine. At the regional level the South Pacific Commission's 2014 Roadmap on NCDs also provides a valuable framework.

Gender-Based Violence

The problem of domestic and gender-based violence is severe in the Pacific region, including Vanuatu. According to a 2017 UN Women report, the level of such violence in the region is amongst the highest in the world, with two thirds of women and girls affected.

There is increasing disquiet in Vanuatu at the high levels of violence against women, and that the use of violence as a form of punishment is accepted as "normal"

in many families and communities. In addition to the human toll, there are multiple other effects, which can include financial cost, irregular attendance at work, low productivity, unwanted pregnancies, vulnerability to diseases, and mental illness.

Vanuatu has been relatively active in tackling this problem. The 2009 Family Protection Act was the first legislation of its type in the Pacific region. The National Gender Equality Policy 2015-2019 was put in place to drive changes aimed at empowering women and reducing domestic and gender-based violence. Several development partners and regional organisations provide strong support.

Nevertheless the problem remains endemic. Addressing the core problem will require strengthened capacity in the law and justice chain, as well as more Government, NGO and Church cooperation, and programmes to support police and traditional authorities in training for mediation, victim support and other measures.

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

March against domestic violence organised by the Vanuatu Women's Centre, which works closely with communities as well as the VPF in combatting gender-based violence.

Youth Population

Vanuatu's high birth rate of 2.3% per annum is fuelling a rapid increase in the number of young people. Many lack opportunities in rural communities and drift to urban areas, where a number become involved in criminal activities. Alcohol and drug abuse is a growing problem.

Increasing urbanisation of youth will increase the potential for communal violence, public disorder, and social unrest. There will be a need for expanded law enforcement and rehabilitation resources.

Critically, the "youth bulge" calls for increased education and training opportunities, and, most importantly, more employment outlets. In addition to the creation of more local jobs, labour mobility schemes in Australia and New Zealand are providing useful opportunities. Other creative solutions can be explored, for example on-the-job skills training in the Vanuatu Mobile Force.

Pilot tourism and hospitality program run by Youth Challenge Vanuatu, one of a number of NGOs working to provide a better future for youth.

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

Action Plan

✕ Develop a National Human Resources Development Plan, incorporating family / traditional / church values, along with the skills required in a modern society.

Government Directions

✕ Tackle NCDs and infectious diseases in a more concerted, prioritised fashion, employing a comprehensive whole-of-government approach under the new National Health Sector Strategy 2017 - 2020.

✕ Strengthen the multi-agency approach to tackling gender-based violence and implementation of existing legislation and policies, working closely with communities, churches, and civil society.

✕ Prioritise addressing the challenges of a rapidly growing youth population, focusing on education, training and employment opportunities, as well as crime reduction and the rehabilitation of offenders.

Pillar 7.
Political Stability and
Good Governance

Political stability and strong governance of institutions, including the security sector

Stable government, an independent civil service, and strong governance underpin national security as well as sustainable economic and social development. Government needs to be driven by sound policy-making, not personalities and patronage.

Until recently, frequent changes of political leadership in Vanuatu have been a dominant feature of political life, leading to constant changes of policy and a lack of sustained concentration by successive governments on issues of national importance. This has undermined confidence in government amongst the people of Vanuatu as well the private sector.

The current government, elected in January 2016, has now been in power for three years, and has prioritised political and constitutional reform to bring about stability in government as well as better representation. An important initiative has been the development of a Political Party Law, designed to curb defections of MPs from the party they were elected to, and to tighten requirements for the registration of political parties.

Another concern has been political interference in the civil service, security services, and state -owned enterprises. This has been disruptive and detracted from the professionalism of these organisations. Merit-based recruitment and promotion is vital, as is the independence of the oversight institutions, such as the Public Service Commission and Police Services Commission. The Government is addressing these issues within the context of a comprehensive National Human Resource Development Plan, due for completion early in 2019.

Then-Prime Minister Natapei supported a number of initiatives promoting good governance and political stability.

Strong governance is essential for the professionalism of the security services and institutions, and to instil public confidence. Security organisations need to be accountable, transparent, and clear on their roles and responsibilities.

Key elements of security sector governance include civilian oversight of policy and implementation, legislative oversight of institutions, judicial oversight, and compliance with domestic and international law and human right standards. Community leaders, civil society and the media also play a useful role, enabling the perspectives of ordinary people and interest groups to be incorporated into policy making and oversight processes.

Historically, there have been concerns in Vanuatu over the involvement on several occasions of the security forces in politics, most notably the abduction of the President in 1996. However the security services have not played a political role in recent years, and have also played a constructive role during constitutional crises. There have, however, been continuing reports of misconduct and impunity in the security services.

Accountability institutions play a key role in strengthening governance. In relation to the security sector, potentially important accountability institutions include Parliament, the State Law Office, the Judiciary, the Office of the Ombudsman, the National Audit Office, and the Leadership Code Commission. A number of these require additional resources and other institutional capacity strengthening to fulfil their obligations to the public.

In addition, within the police, the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) investigates allegations of ethics violations and misuse of force, handling for example 108 complaints against 80 officers in 2016. It is important that this body also be well-resourced.

Currently Parliament plays only a limited role in relation to the security sector. The government proposes to address this gap by establishing a Parliamentary Oversight Committee for the sector.

Corruption is a major global problem. It has the potential to undermine the rule of law and trust in the political system, allow organised crime to flourish, and hold back development. It has been a concern in Vanuatu over a long period. The jailing of 14 Members of Parliament in 2015 for corruption and bribery however was a watershed, serving to highlight the importance placed on the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. It also put in the spotlight the longstanding conflict between customary practices and gift exchanges and the

effectiveness of governance and public sector performance.

In 2016 the Government set up an anti-corruption committee to oversee implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, which Vanuatu ratified in 2014, and to oversee the development of a national Anti-Corruption Strategic Framework.

More generally, transparency of the workings of government, and of related issues such as the funding of political parties - a current concern - are fundamental to good governance and public trust. The Government is strengthening transparency in a number of areas, and in 2016 brought in the Right to Information Act, which requires government agencies to publish information about their activities and to respond to public requests for access to information.

Pacific Islands journalists, including from the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation, attend a workshop in Tonga to learn about the United Nations convention Against Corruption.

Action Plan

✖ Continue to promote political stability, including through initiatives such as the proposed Political Party Law.

✖ Tighten rules on donations to political parties, ensuring full disclosure.

✖ Establish the proposed Parliamentary Oversight Committee on the security sector.

✖ Strengthen good governance across government institutions, particularly in the use of funds.

Government Directions

✖ Further strengthen measures to curb political interference in the public service.

✖ Strengthen the resources and capacity of accountability institutions, prioritising the Ombudsman's Office and the Auditor General's Office.

Pillar 8.
Foreign Relations – External Engagement

Effective promotion and defence of Vanuatu's external interests and engagement.

Vanuatu has an independent and non-aligned foreign policy. It is an open country that supports the international rules-based order and international law, and defends universal human rights. Traditionally it has taken a strong stance on issues like decolonisation and self-determination, and disarmament and arms control. It plays a strong and increasingly active role on climate change.

As a small country Vanuatu lacks economic clout. In advancing its interests internationally it needs to win support and respect through persuasion and its actions. A strong Foreign Ministry and network of missions of abroad is

Image: The Australian

Minister Ralph Regenvanu welcomes Australian Prime Minister on his visit to Vanuatu in 2019

Vanuatu's external network includes
- *High Commissions or Embassies in New York (UN),*
- *Canberra, Wellington, Suva, Beijing, Brussels, and Geneva; and Consulate-Generals in Noumea,*
- *Auckland, Hong Kong and Shanghai, with another planned for Guangzhou.*

Missions in Vanuatu

- *Australia, China, France and New Zealand have long-standing diplomatic missions in Vanuatu.*
- *Japan has recently opened a mission, and the UK is planning to do so.*
- *In addition various United Nations agencies and a number of other international and regional organisations are represented in Vanuatu.*

essential if Vanuatu is be effective in its diplomacy. Currently Vanuatu has diplomatic relations with 107 countries. It has 11 missions abroad, although these are understaffed, with less than two officers per mission on average.

Vanuatu is developing its first foreign policy White Paper, which will set out Vanuatu's interests and strategies for advancing its interests abroad. This is timely given the greater opportunities but at same time more challenging and complex environment. It will be practical and focused, particularly given Vanuatu's need to maximise its limited resources.

Vanuatu has committed to a number of international treaties and conventions to make the world safer, more secure, and better governed, and has signed and ratified over 40 treaties and conventions that deal directly or indirectly with security issues.

A major priority is strengthening relationships with development and security partners. Vanuatu's regional linkages are central to its interests, particularly through the Pacific Islands Forum and associated organisations.

Vanuatu hosts the Secretariat of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), an organisation established to promote cooperation in the Melanesian region. Members of the MSG are Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and the FLNKS (Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front, New Caledonia). Indonesia is an Associate Member and the ULMWP (United Liberation Movement for West Papua) has observer status. The MSG is developing its own regional security strategy, to advance members' shared goals of peace and security.

Action Plan

- Prioritise completion and implementation of the proposed foreign policy White Paper.

- Expand the role of Vanuatu's missions abroad in support of national security objectives, including through the possible

- posting abroad of suitably qualified specialist officials.

- Expand Vanuatu's membership and ratification of international conventions of direct relevance to the country's economic, environmental and security interests.

Government Directions

- Continue to strengthen relations with external partners, building on the current momentum.

Pillar 9. Economy

A strong, well-managed and resilient economy.

A healthy and sustainable economy is fundamental to Vanuatu's national security - to underpin equitable development and social cohesion, build resilience to unpredictable shocks like natural disasters, and support the provision of adequate resources for agencies with major security responsibilities. Conversely, security is essential to a well-functioning economy - to provide a stable and predictable environment based on the rule of law, and to underpin productive interaction with the outside world, such as foreign tourism and investment.

While Vanuatu's economy faces a number of long-term challenges, notably its narrow base and vulnerability to shocks such as natural disasters, it is generally well-managed. In its 2018 Article 4 report on Vanuatu, the IMF commented that successive governments have succeeded in maintaining macroeconomic stability in recent years. The economy has made an impressive recovery from Cyclone Pam in 2015. The Government is conscious of the need to avoid unsustainable debt levels, which would create unnecessary hardship for the nation in the future.

Vanuatu's close relationship with its development partners is important, with development cooperation

Image: Vanuatu Tourism Office

The capital, Port Vila, is the most important business and financial centre and a major tourist destination, and accounts of much of the formal employment in Vanuatu. However rural areas play a vital role in national life. Agriculture contributes more than 20 per cent to GDP, and employs approximately 75 per cent of the population.

accounting for a significant proportion of Vanuatu's GDP. Underlining the importance of sound management of development cooperation, in early 2019 the Government launched the National Aid Management Policy Implementation Strategy. Development cooperation opportunities in the region are growing, commensurate with

the increase in interest a number of countries are showing in engagement with the region. The Government works to ensure development cooperation is well coordinated, transparent, supports sustainable development, and responds to Vanuatu's priorities. It is also important that any loans are within manageable levels and do not create debt stress.

<div style="color:#c0392b">
Development cooperation helped fund this project to train prawn farmers. Vanuatu's main development partners are Australia, China, New Zealand, Japan, France, and the EU. Multilateral development partners include the World Bank, the ADB, UNDP, WHO and a range of other UN organisations.
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In its 2018 report, the IMF noted that public debt had increased sharply since 2014, mainly due to disbursements for Cyclone Pam reconstruction and infrastructure projects, though the new external borrowing was highly concessional. It recommended that

once the reconstruction phase was over, the Government consider measures to address the rising debt and to rebuild fiscal buffers, which it is currently doing. In the future, consideration of further measures to diversify sources of revenue, such as the introduction of income tax, will assume increasing importance.

Vanuatu has an open economy and is keen to attract further foreign investment. There have been instances however of investments which have been inconsistent with Vanuatu's developmental priorities and national interests, for example by over exploiting resources, failing to provide suitable employment opportunities for ni-Vanuatu, or creating problems in relation to land use. The Government is strengthening the implementation of national interest guidelines for foreign investment.

The narrow base of Vanuatu's economy has been a driver of efforts by governments, dating back to the pre-independence period, to raise revenue by other means, including the Offshore Financial Centre, the International Shipping Register, and, more recently, Citizenship schemes. While to varying degrees these have generated revenue, they have also not been without their problems, principally due to the lack of probity of some of those who have taken advantage of the schemes.

In relation to the Offshore Financial Centre, in 2016 Vanuatu was placed on the "Grey List" by the OECD Financial Action Task Force (FATF), signifying a judgement that Vanuatu had not made sufficient progress in addressing money

laundering and terrorist financing. In a notable success, Vanuatu was removed from the Grey List in 2018, following a major program of legislative reforms (see box). However, in early 2019 Vanuatu was placed on an EU list of non-cooperative

Image: Vanuatu Daily Post

Vanuatu was officially removed from the FATF Grey List in June 2018. This notable success, which followed passage of more than 30 pieces of legislation, was the result of a strong collective effort by a multi-agency National Coordination Committee, supported by development partners.

tax jurisdictions.

While questions have been raised about the EU process, it is important that Vanuatu takes steps to have that listing lifted - it is vital that Vanuatu remain off such international warning lists, both to provide confidence and predictability to the local and foreign business communities, and to avoid damage to Vanuatu's reputation internationally.

The current Citizenship Scheme has provided a windfall to government coffers (approximately US$70 million in 2018), although the government recognises these returns are unlikely to be sustainable in the long term. There is increasing evidence however that background checks on those purchasing Vanuatu citizenship have failed to weed out a number of undesirable individuals, thus potentially compromising the good name of the Vanuatu passport, leading other countries to consider tightening requirements for entry of Vanuatu citizens.

There have been instances in the past where decisions taken by certain statutory authorities have caused public disquiet, with actual or potential security implications. It is important that the Government be in a position to keep abreast of such problems and take appropriate action.

Vanuatu is scheduled to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2020. While this is welcome acknowledgement of the progress Vanuatu has made over recent decades, it does imply that Vanuatu will no longer benefit from certain development cooperation instruments available to LDCs. Although development partners do not base their cooperation exclusively on LDC status, careful planning will be required to minimise any negative impacts from graduation. The Government has put in place a high-level coordination mechanism for this purpose.

Action Plan

- Develop a policy framework for Citizenship schemes, with particular emphasis on strengthening the integrity of such schemes through rigorous background checks of applicants.

- Complete follow-up work following Vanuatu's removal from the FATF Grey List, and take prompt action to have Vanuatu removed from the EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions.

- Prompt and effective implementation of the National Aid Management Policy Implementation Strategy

Government Directions

- Maintain responsible management of the economy, prioritising fiscal responsibility and debt management.

- Ensure development cooperation, including grants and concessional loans, is transparent, well-coordinated, and directed towards projects which are sustainable and aligned with Vanuatu's priorities.

- Strengthen the foreign investment regime, ensuring projects and land purchases meet Vanuatu's economic and social objectives.

- Put in place smooth transition mechanisms for graduation from LDC status in 2020.

- Strengthen due diligence of participants in revenue raising schemes.

- Develop a framework to monitor decisions by statutory authorities which potentially have security implications.

Pillar 10.
Government Machinery

Well-coordinated and effective government machinery to manage national security issues, and a high-quality intelligence and assessment capability.

National Security System

Until now, Vanuatu has not had a national security system, and only few personnel specifically assigned to cover national security issues. The government is addressing this gap, which was identified as far back as 2009, through the establishment of the National Security Council and supporting government machinery, and more generally to build expertise on national security issues within the government service.

This is in line with the responsibility of any government, in safeguarding its nation and people, to have in place a national security system that is strategically-focused, well-coordinated, flexible and able to balance competing interests. Such systems should be able to deal with short-term emergency situations as well as evolving and longer-term threats, and to provide strong management at both the strategic and operational level.

The Government therefore is establishing a national security system that will operate at three levels:

1. **Cabinet** (Council of Ministers)

   The prime body for decisions on national security shall continue to be the full Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister. It has oversight of the national security sector, including relevant policy and legislative proposals. Exceptionally, Cabinet can be convened urgently to manage and direct responses to major crises or other events affecting national security that require immediate attention. In the event of an extreme national security emergency, Cabinet has the option of recommending to the Head of State the declaration of a State of Emergency.

2. **The National Security Council** (NSC)

   The National Security Council, chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising a number of Ministers and security officials (see BOX), will be established as soon as the requisite legislation is passed. The NSC will be responsible for advising the government on security, peace and law and order issues in Vanuatu, reporting regularly to the Cabinet. It will meet once a month, and when required during an emergency.

National Security Council Membership
Permanent members: Prime Minister (Chair), Attorney General, Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance, Minister of Climate Change, Commissioner of Police, Commander VMF. Other ad hoc members invited to attend on a needs basis.

3. ### The National Security Officials Committee (NSOC)

The NSC will be supported by an advisory committee of senior officials, the National Security Officials' Committee, which will prepare submissions and memoranda for the NSC to assist in their deliberations. The composition of NSOC, usually at Director General level, will reflect that of the NSC, although there will be occasions when NSOC may decide to invite representatives from other agencies or from outside government to participate in discussions. NSOC may appoint sub-committees to address particular issues, for example border security.

A Secretariat will be established within the Prime Minister's Office to provide policy and administrative support for the work of the NSC. Headed by a National Security Adviser - a senior official with direct access to the Prime Minister - the Secretariat will also provide a focal point within government on national security issues. The Secretariat's prime


Reflecting the Whole-of-Government nature of the national security machinery, the NSC, NSOC, NSA and Secretariat will be part of the Prime Minister's Office.

National Security Machinery

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│        Cabinet          │◄─────              │ National Security Advisor    │
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│ National Security       │◄──────             │        Secretariat           │
│ Council                 │       ◄            │ Including Intelligence and   │
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│ National Security       │
│ Officials Committee     │
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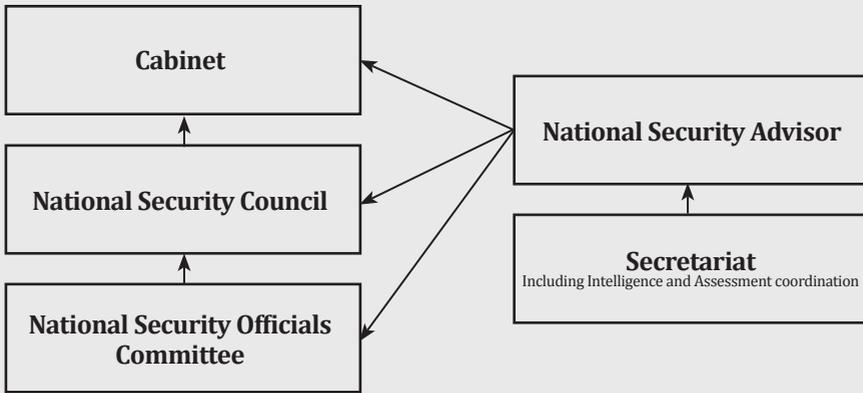
role will be assisting with NSC meetings - scheduling, preparing and presenting security briefs, identifying issues, record-keeping, and follow-up. It will also play a role in building working relationships on security issues with relevant regional organisations and bilateral security partners.

Whole-of-Government

More generally, Government is committed to fostering greater collaboration and information sharing between agencies throughout government on national security issues. The tendency of agencies to work "in silos", a common problem in the Pacific region, is hampering the cooperation needed to deal with security issues. Strategies include upgrading formal mechanisms, such as MoUs, between agencies; the creation of more opportunities between agencies for joint training, exercises and secondments; and inducing cultural change to discourage agencies from being too protective of information.

Intelligence and Assessments

There is a pressing need to improve Vanuatu's intelligence capability. There is no policy in place for the VPF's National Intelligence Unit (NIU), and it is under-resourced and unable to meet government requirements.

In addition to the intelligence gap on developments within the country, a second gap is in the capacity to provide government with intelligence and assessments of developments within the region and beyond that have implications for Vanuatu.

A unique Vanuatu assessment product on national security issues is needed in this volatile world to understand the forces driving change, in order to be able to influence events and to advance national interests. The Government requires good quality and timely data and other information, from open source materials and from regional and bilateral

partners, to be used as a basis for tailored briefs to assist senior policy makers in decision-making. Examples of issues of interest are transnational crime; cyber security; customs, immigration and biosecurity issues; financial crimes; human trafficking; foreign interference; and terrorism.

Classified and other sensitive information: Currently Vanuatu does not have an adequate system to store and protect classified information. Such a system is important in itself, and is also a necessary pre-condition if Vanuatu is to exchange sensitive information with other governments.

Extract from the forty ninth Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Communique, 6 September 2018. Initiatives such as the Pacific Fusion Centre provide opportunities for countries like Vanuatu to boost their information and intelligence capacity, and to contribute to efforts to make the region safer.

Pacific Fusion Centre

45. Leaders welcomed Australia's decision to work with regional security agencies to establish a Pacific Fusion Centre that will build on current regional frameworks to strengthen information sharing and maritime domain awareness to better inform security responses to some of the main threats outlined in the Boe Declaration, such as illegal fishing, drugs trafficking and other transnational crimes. Leaders urged the importance of working together to develop a fit-forpurpose Pacific regional fusion facility and to conduct a feasibility study in the last quarter of 2018.

Image: Vanuatu Tourism Office

Action Plan

- Establish National Security Council (NSC) following passage of the necessary legislation.

- Establish government machinery to support the NSC, namely a National Security Officials Committee and a Secretariat headed by a National Security Adviser.

- Update current legislation and policy on intelligence, and upgrade the National Intelligence Unit.

- Following a scoping study, create a multi-agency intelligence body to report to government on national security issues.

- Establish an assessment capability in the future NSC Secretariat, focusing on domestic, regional and international security developments of relevance to Vanuatu.

- Develop and implement a system for the safe storage and protection of sensitive information.

- Develop a mechanism to monitor and respond to possible threats of terrorism.

- Develop a framework for the protection of government assets, ports, airports, energy and communications facilities and other critical infrastructure.

Government Directions

- Improve the collection, analysis and sharing of data by government agencies, to assist policy-making and action on national security issues.

- Develop closer links with trusted security partners, and regional and international agencies, to boost exchanges of intelligence and assessments on matters of common concern.

- Provide a career pathway for selected officials to develop expertise on national security issues.

Conclusion

The National Security Strategy outlines the major tasks facing us to secure our future. We need to strengthen our security services and border security; move ahead quickly to implement our cyber security policy; continue to build climate change resilience; and address more urgently the vulnerable areas of human security. These are just some of the tasks outlined - there are more.

The key to success will be effective implementation of the measures outlined in the Action Plan, making the best use of our limited resources, and working closely with security partners who are willing to provide support in priority areas.

Now is the time to move forward quickly in this task:

- *a number of initiatives in the security sector are already in train, and we should build on their momentum;*
- *the country is currently enjoying a period of relative political stability, which provides the opportunity for policy and implementation continuity as the Strategy is put in place; and*
- *the Pacific Islands Forum and security partners are currently strengthening their role in supporting Forum member countries in the security sector, in ways that complement the Strategy.*

The Government gives priority to safeguarding the nation and building public awareness of security issues, and looks forward to working with all members of the community in this endeavour.

Annex 1.
Global Trends

Global Trends

The global trends summarised below will impact on Vanuatu's security, interests and prosperity in the coming years and decades. They present both challenges and opportunities. Predicting the future with any precision is not possible, but mapping out the major trends and their interrelationship helps inform our National Security Strategy and guide our future actions.

Globalisation, Interconnectivity, and Shifts in Power

The global environment is increasingly dynamic and interconnected, a product of rapid technological and scientific advances. This has empowered individuals, expanded our opportunities, brought economic change and helped lift many millions of people in the developing world out of poverty.

Increasingly however this dynamic environment is accompanied by instability, uncertainty, and heightened risk. Events unfold quickly and often are more complex than before, calling for ever faster and more agile security responses to emerging challenges. Our interconnected world also means that malign individuals and groups now have greater access to disruptive technologies, including sophisticated weaponry,

enabling them to perpetrate large-scale violence.

The post-1945 international order has been characterised by an increasingly integrated world economy and the development of international rules and institutions. However more recent winds of change have seen increasing concerns about the effects of globalisation, and in many countries a rise in political alienation and economic nationalism. Rules are being contested, and in some cases major powers are ignoring or undermining international law. The post-Cold War lull in major rivalry has ended.

Meanwhile the centre of gravity of global economic power has continued to shift towards Asia. Even given the current decline in China's economic momentum, in a relatively short time China will overtake the US in economic size, with India also rising rapidly. The diffusion of power among countries will bring about huge change, with predictions that by 2030 Asia will overtake North America and Europe combined in global power, based upon GDP, population size, military spending and technological advancement. But, although the dominance of the US is being challenged in the international arena, it will remain the most powerful country.

We are now seeing a rise in trade tensions. These are compounding the

sharp slow-down in cross-border trade and investment since the 2008-9 global financial crisis. Should these tensions lead to a significant rise in protectionism globally, there will be a heightened risk of strategic friction, an economic slowdown, and an undermining of the rules of international commerce.

Demographics

The world's population, 7.7 billion in 2019, is likely to reach 9.2 billion by around 2040, as a result of increased life expectancy and continuing high birth rates in a number of developing countries. In most developed countries and China, population rates will be slower and in some cases will decline, slowing their productive capacity. Populations in Africa and South Asia however will continue to rise rapidly. In some countries this will give rise to a heightened risk of political and social tension, driven by a growing reservoir of dissatisfied young men. On the other hand, some developing countries like India have the potential, depending on their policy choices, to reap a demographic dividend which will spur economic growth.

Demand for both skilled and unskilled labour will drive global migration. At the same time the increased flows of irregular migration and displaced persons fleeing conflicts or natural disasters - now numbering some 65 million, the largest number since the Second World War - will continue to be a source of strain both internally in many nations, and between countries.

Climate Change, the Environment, and Resources

The world's growing population, and particularly the rapid growth in the middle class - expected to number some 3.5 billion by 2030 in Asia alone - will strain the environment and the world's resources. By some estimates, demand for food, water and energy will grow by 35, 40 and 50 percent respectively over the next two decades. There will continue to be intense pressure on forests, driven by changes in land-use, illegal logging, climate change, and the soaring demand for timber. Oceans will also be under greater pressure, with further strain on global fisheries, much of which are already fished at unsustainable levels. Increasing demand for critical minerals, and the need to transport them across states, will call for efficient extraction techniques and more secure routes, as well as equitable investment regimes, if tension and conflict are to be avoided.

Climate change, sea level rise and a greater incidence of extreme weather events will exacerbate the existing challenges. Natural disasters - causing loss of life, physical destruction and disease, and in extreme cases fuelling migration, social unrest and instability - will call for more disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. Vulnerable developing countries particularly will feel more pressure, due to the high cost of climate change and natural disaster adaptation and mitigation.

Health

Developments in technology will continue to bring significant improvements in medicine and health. Advances in diagnostic techniques, the development of artificial organs and mind-controlled prosthetic limbs, and the development of potential cures for some cancers and other devastating illnesses, all give hope. We are likely to live longer and have more productive lives.

But new challenges to good health are already taking root. In particular rising physical inactivity and unhealthy diets are contributing to an obesity epidemic and a spike in non-communicable diseases. Antimicrobial-resistant pathogens could be widespread by 2040, potentially causing millions more deaths. Drug-resistant tuberculosis and malaria are posing increasing challenges. The frequency and diversity of disease outbreaks is increasing rapidly, partly fuelled by the unprecedented mobility brought about by globalisation. The need to guard against pandemics - which could cause millions of deaths in a worst-case scenario - is ever present, with the annual cost of pandemics already an estimated $500 billion.

Gender

Gender inequality has long undermined global prosperity, stability and security, contributing to and often exacerbating a range of challenges including poverty, weak governance, conflict and violent extremism. The gap in opportunity between the genders in economic, social and political spheres is likely to narrow in the coming decades, but only gradually.

In developed countries, women will continue to have more opportunities and freedom, in comparison to developing countries where deep-rooted disparities are ingrained. In some parts of the world, advocates of women's rights and feminist movements will continue to be treated harshly.

Conflict

The world will face a diverse range of security threats, some of them increasingly sophisticated.

Conflict between the great powers does not seem likely, given the strong disincentives - too much would be at stake. To the extent there is such a threat, it is likely to be caused not by design on the part of any power, but the risk of strategic miscalculation or operational misadventure on land or sea or in the skies.

The risks of interstate conflict more generally are however increasing, with the weakening of the post-Cold War equilibrium. The confluence of a number of factors - for example changed calculations by key countries, disputes over resources, and more accessible and sophisticated weapons - could conspire to bring about interstate conflict. Growing concerns about nuclear security also underline the possibility that future wars in a number of regions, such as the Middle East or South Asia, could include a nuclear deterrent.

In the coming years the world will face new proliferation challenges because of emerging Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and conventional weapons

technologies. The risk, however low, of the employment of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons - not necessarily by readily-identifiable actors - will demand ever closer attention.

Terrorism

The threat of terrorism will remain high, as terrorists continue to exploit fragile and violence-prone states. Despite the defeat of ISIS, the conflicts in Iraq and Syria energised Islamist extremists to an an unprecedented degree, and their ideology will fall on fertile ground elsewhere, aided by advances in information technology which allow extremists to inspire or direct attacks remotely. Home-grown terror cells, lone wolves and returning foreign terrorist fighters challenge not just their home countries but those beyond their shores. Meanwhile the vicious attack in Christchurch in March 2019 underlines both that right-wing extremists are a major and growing threat, and that normally safe countries are not immune from terrorist attack.

Transnational Crime

Transnational crime is becoming increasingly complex and global, and threatens stability. Tax fraud and evasion, money laundering, narcotics smuggling, arms trafficking, human trafficking, and sexual servitude all blight lives and harm communities, and can undermine political processes, fuel corruption, and inhibit economic development.

The globalisation of transnational, serious and organised crime will threaten national security and public safety in the coming years in hitherto unseen ways – in terms of the volume of illicit narcotics and other illicit goods crossing borders, the incidence of the trafficking and smuggling of people, the level of violent criminality that we are likely to see, the threat to national revenue bases, and, increasingly, the attempts to infiltrate public institutions and to corrupt officials in order to create a permissive environment for crime.

Cyber security

The cyber economy is transforming how we do business and connect with the world. Increasing dependence on information technology however means the potential costs of disruption are large and growing. Malicious cyber activity can disrupt infrastructure and services, cause billions of dollars damage to companies, threaten the integrity of government and private networks, and even potentially compromise national security, for example through cyberattacks targeting the nation's financial, energy, water or transportation systems. Despite the significant efforts and investments that have been undertaken by governments and the private sector in recent years, the risks of such attacks continue to grow.

Annex 2. Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym / Abbreviation	Description
CERT	Computer Emergency Response Team
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
LDC	Least-Developed Country
FRANZ	France Australia New Zealand
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IUU	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (fishing)
NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
NSC	National Security Council
NSOC	National Security Officials Committee
NSDP	National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 – 2030
NSS	National Security Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PMSP	Pacific Maritime Security Program
PMW	Police Maritime Wing
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VMF	Vanuatu Mobile Force
VPF	Vanuatu Police Force