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**United Nations Human Right Council 12th Session
Geneva, September 2009.
UPR Vanuatu – Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network**

Mr President,

We wish to address recommendation 25 in the Working Group report, which encourages the Government of Vanuatu to "take necessary measures to ensure that discrimination on the basis of disability, economic status, sexual orientation or living with HIV/AIDS is prevented".

We appreciate the government's response that all marginalised groups are protected by the Constitution. At the same time, clear explicit antidiscrimination legislation can only enhance Vanuatu's commitment to human rights, and the protection accorded to marginalised groups. We would therefore encourage the government to accept the recommendation and explicitly prohibit discrimination on grounds including disability, economic status, sexual orientation or living with HIV/AIDS, to which we would also add gender identity.

Such protections could be further strengthened if also accompanied by awareness-raising and public education campaigns on these grounds, and we would encourage the government to apply the *Yogyakarta Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity* as guidance to assist with policy-making.

Thank you Mr President.