Welcome to Vanuatu and to the regional meeting on the theme “Towards Graduation: A Focus on Broadband Connectivity.” Please find information on meeting arrangements that you will find useful.

General information about Vanuatu

Vanuatu is a group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean, east of Australia and west of Fiji. Vanuatu is made up of eighty-three small islands that cover approximately 12000 square kilometres, sixty five of the small islands are inhabited. Most visitors to Vanuatu arrive at the nation’s capital, Port-Vila, situated on the main island of Efate. Port Vila is located on the edge of a natural harbour filled with corals and sea-life. Vanuatu is a parliamentary republic divided into six administrative regions. The name Vanuatu is derived from the words that occur in several Austronesian languages spoken across the island, “vanua” meaning (home or land) and “tu” (stand), which provide the meaning of the “land remains” but also convey a sense of “independence” or “our land.” The official languages of Vanuatu are Bislama, English and French.

Vanuatu has a tropical climate; moderated by southeast winds from May to October; moderate rainfall from November to April and may be affected by cyclones from November to April.

The official currency is the Vanuatu Vatu (VUV). Participants are advised to check exchange rates at the time of their arrival in Vanuatu.

Conference Venue

The conference will be held at the Warwick Le Lagon Resort & Spa in Port-Vila, Vanuatu. The Warwick Le Lagon Resort & Spa is situated at the outskirt of Port-Vila town a 10 minutes ride.

There are a number of hotels located on your way to the Warwick Le Lagon Resort & Spa. A list of these is provided in (VII). Taxis and mini-buses are available outside most hotels and are able to transport participants to the National Convention Centre.

Meeting Schedule

The style of the meeting will be informal discussions and reflection. The expectation is that participants will engage in an informal interactive discussion. The meeting will be conducted in English. The regional meeting will be held over two days from 26 to 27 October 2017.

Registration and Badges

All participants are required to register for the conference and obtain an ID badge. A registration table will be set up on Wednesday 25 October 2017 at the main lobby of the Convention Centre from 12 noon to 8:00pm.

For reasons of security, conference badges should be worn visibly at all times during the conference and at social functions related to the regional meeting.
Arrival and Departure

Arrival in Vanuatu should be planned to Bauerfield International Airport in Port Vila on 25 October 2017, unless flight schedules are not available for these days. Departure should be planned for 28 October 2017.

The United Nations Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (UN-OHRLLS) will issue airline tickets to the sponsored government participants, prioritizing the most immediate flight prior to and after the conference. Please correspond directly with the travel advisor from AMEX with Ms. Oksana Yarashuk of UN-OHRLLS on copy (contact details at end of note) to arrange for and confirm all booking details. Any changes to the booking details should be communicated to the travel advisor with adequate prior notice; otherwise these may not be accommodated. Self-funded participants should make their own travel arrangements.

Transport to and from Airport

Transportation will be made available for all participants from Bauerfield International Airport to the hotel, and back to the airport after the conference. All non-sponsored participants are expected to send their arrival and departure date and time to Ms. Oksana Yarashuk by Friday, 20 October 2017. Please note that participants can also arrange their own public transport to and from the airport. There are standard fares for taxis to and from the airport to most accommodation around Port-Vila a list of which should be available in the arrivals section of the airport.

Visa Requirements

For a list of countries that can retain Visas on Arrival, please refer to the Vanuatu Tourism website: http://vanuatutravel.info/index.php/travelservices/72-visa-info. For countries not listed, participants should obtain a visa attestation letter from Mr. Sanlan William (contact details at end of note) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade in Port Vila prior to their departure.

For entry to Vanuatu please prepare the following documentation:

1. A valid foreign passport (Please note a United Nations Laissez-Passer is NOT considered adequate for immigration purposes and needs to be accompanied by a national passport with 6 months validity)
2. Return ticket to country of residence or citizenship
3. Completed and signed Arrival Card
4. Confirmed accommodation address
5. Meeting accreditation letter

Hotel Accommodation

Delegates and participants should make their own hotel reservations. In order to facilitate online hotel bookings, delegates and participants should use the website http://vanuatutravel.info to compare accommodation options and finalize arrangements.

We recommend that you reserve a room in one of the following hotels:
1. The Melanesian Hotel (www.melanesianportvila.com)
2. Coconut Palms Resort (www.coconutpalms.vu)
3. The Grand Hotel & Casino (www.grandvanuatu.com)
4. Vanuatu Holiday Hotel (www.vanuatuholidayhotel.com)
5. Kaiviti Motel (www.kaivitimotel.com)
7. Moorings Hotel (www.mooringsvanuatu.com)
8. Chantilly’s on the Bay (www.chantillysonthebay.com)

Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA)

UN-OHRLLS will provide DSA in Port Vila to the sponsored participants that registered by 26 October 2017. The sponsored participants of the meeting will be entitled to 3 days DSA in Port Vila ($368 per day) and set terminal expenses (TRM) ($152) to cover airport transfers and incidentals.

The following are the required documents for claiming the DSA and TRM:
1. copy of the passport bio page
2. copy of e-ticket
3. boarding passes

If possible, copies of these documents should be made in advance for submission.

DSA will be distributed to the sponsored participants on Thursday 27 October 2017.

Please note that for the sponsored participants who registered after 26 October, DSA will be transferred to the personal banking account within 4-6 months after the meeting. Please refer to Ms. Oksana Yarashuk for details.

Meals

The Government of Vanuatu will offer complementary lunch and snacks during the duration of the meeting. Participants will need to make their own arrangements for other meals.

IMPORTANT: For any special dietary requirements, please inform Sanlan William on or before 13 October, 2017.

Insurance

The Government of Vanuatu does not provide travel or medical insurance cover for participants or their belongings. Participants are expected to make their own arrangements for accidents, illness, and luggage insurance, if so desired. A station will be set up in the the Warwick Le Lagon Hotel to provide basic medical support services.
Climate and conference Attire
Weather in Port Vila is warm and tropical all year round. Conference attire should be smart casual or business wear for the entire duration of the conference.

Currency
The local currency in Vanuatu is the Vanuatu vatu (VUV). Tourist places, shopping areas, ordinary coffee shops and restaurants accept only local currency, although more established shops may accept debit or credit cards. Credit card purchases often have additional service fees. Currency conversion and ATM bank withdrawals can be completed at the airport, at the hotel, or at nearby tourist spots in town.

Persons traveling into or out of Vanuatu are required to declare to customs officials at the borders if they are carrying on themselves or in their possessions any currency or bearer negotiable instruments of $10,000 or more (or equivalent amounts in foreign currency). Travellers must make this declaration by completing a Border Currency Reporting Form which will be made available at the customs counter at the airport.

Internet Services
Complimentary Wi-fi access will be available at the conference venue and at each of the hotel rooms. The network name and password will be provided upon registration. Please bring your own laptop computer, if desired. Printing will be available in the meeting secretariat at the National Convention Centre.

Security
A security focal point for the conference has been identified by the Vanuatu Government.

Joint Police Operations Centre
Tel: +678 26570

Security detail, provided by the Vanuatu Police Force, will also be made available at the meeting venue. The latest UN Travel Advisory for Vanuatu is attached to this Information Note.

First Aid and Health Services
Port Vila is serviced by both Port Vila Central Hospital (Rue Edinburgh, Tel: +678 22100) and numerous medical clinics. Pharmacies are located along Lini Highway. These are:

- Healthcare Pharmacy & Dispensary Centre Ltd, available on +678 29627
- Healthwise Pharmacy, available on +678 25722

The UN has four UN Examining Physicians for entry/exit medical examinations and for support to medical evacuations. These are:

- Dr. Sarah Brewster, Novo Medical Clinic (ground floor Anchor Hse) on +678 26698
- Dr Carine Morel-Boyce, Vanuatu Private Hospital, Nambatu. On +678 7785699/22255

The medical emergency call number is 115 and for police emergency it is +678 22222

Conference documents
Pre-session documents can be downloaded from the conference website: http://unohrlls.org/event/ldcs-regional-meeting-vanuatu/ prior to the conference. For ease and in order to reduce the amount of paper used, USB flash drives containing conference documents and resources will also be distributed to each participant upon registration. Only one conference programme and administrative note will be printed and distributed to each participant.

Conference proceedings will be reported and published after the conference. This will be uploaded to the conference website and a printed copy will be sent to each delegate, for their reference.

Contact Persons

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GOVERNMENT OF VANUATU

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