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PRESS STATEMENT

**VFIU CONDUCTS AWARENESS WITH VANUATU LAW ENFORCEMENT
AGENCIES**

On 20th June 2016, the Vanuatu Financial Intelligence Unit (“VFIU”) conducted an awareness workshop with the domestic law enforcement agencies.

The objective of the awareness was to enhance the knowledge of law enforcement officers of the functions and powers of the VFIU as provided for under the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act No. 13 of 2014 (as amended), the analytical process deployed by the VFIU in assessing and analysing reports and information it receives, its ability to undertake inquiries and facilitate criminal investigations undertaken by law enforcement agencies and the suspicious reports and information it receives from the reporting entities.

The Director of the VFIU, Mr. Floyd Mera opened the workshop by remarking on the existence of the VFIU since 2000, its governing legislation and benefit of financial intelligence. It was identified in the 2015 Mutual Evaluation Report that domestic law enforcement agencies were unaware of the functions and powers of the VFIU and how it could legally assist criminal investigations.

Participants gained greater insights into the operation of the VFIU and agreed to request assistances from the VFIU for criminal investigation involving proceeds of crime or money laundering.

The one day awareness was funded by the Stretem Rod blo Jastis Program and was held at the VNPF Conference Room. It was attended by officers from the Transnational Crime Unit, Fraud Unit, Serious Crime Unit, Uniform Investigation Unit and National Intelligence Unit of the Vanuatu Police Force, the Office of the Ombudsman, Tax Unit and the Department of Customs and Inland Revenue, Compliance Officers of the Department of Labour and Compliance Officer of Vanuatu Investment Promotion Authority.

A similar one day awareness will be organised in September 2016.

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