



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE  
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU TO THE  
COMMISSION ON THE LIMITS OF THE  
CONTINENTAL SHELF

10 August 2009

**Preliminary Information Submitted by the Republic of Vanuatu to  
the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf**

1. The Republic of Vanuatu is a State Party to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (the Convention) having ratified the Convention on 10 August 1999.

2. The Republic of Vanuatu is mindful of its obligations under the Convention and of the importance of the work of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (the Commission) for coastal States and the international community as a whole.

3. Pursuant to the Decision regarding the workload of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental shelf and the ability of States, particularly small island developing States, to fulfill the requirements of article 4 of annex II to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well as the decision contained in SPLOS/72, paragraph (a) (SPLOS/183), Vanuatu has prepared the following preliminary information in order to provide an indication of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles in respect of the continental shelf extended from the islands of Mathew(Leka)and Hunter(Umaenupne) of its continental margin.

4. The Republic of Vanuatu recognizes that the islands of Mathew (Leka) and Hunter (Umaenupne) of the Republic of Vanuatu and the continental margin which extends from them are land territory and maritime regions over which there is a long standing dispute with the government of the French Republic and this dispute has not been settled in accordance with international law to date.

5. The Republic of Vanuatu also notes that maritime boundary delimitations remain outstanding between Vanuatu and the French Republic and the Republic of the Fiji Islands. Pursuant to Article 76, paragraph 10 and Article 9 of Annex II to the Convention, this preliminary information is submitted without prejudice to these delimitations and to any other future maritime delimitation between Vanuatu and any other coastal State.

6. The Republic of Vanuatu acknowledges the decision taken by the government of the French Republic in the Note Verbale dated 18 July 2007 to request the Commission not to consider the disputed islands and their disputed continental margin in the partial submission dated 22 May 2007.

7. The Republic of Vanuatu has commenced work on the preparation of the Submission in respect of this area. In this regard, the Republic of Vanuatu has

assembled legal, policy and technical expertise in the preparation of the Submission.

8. In addition to the resources that the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu has committed to this work, it is considering to make an application for assistance to the United Nations Trust Fund for the purpose of facilitating the preparation of submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for developing States, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and compliance with Article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for the purpose of specialized software and technical training for this purpose.

9. The Republic of Vanuatu intends to lodge its Submission in the northern area of its continental shelf before 2015, mindful of the need to support the Commission in the performance of its functions under the Convention in an efficient and timely manner. In this regard, the Republic of Vanuatu will continue to take advantage of all available data and opportunities for scientific and technical capacity building, advice and assistance in order to complete the preparation of its Submission.

10. The Republic of Vanuatu notes that in accordance with operative paragraph 1 (b) of SPLOS/183, pending the receipt of its completed Submission concerning the continental shelf region of the islands of Hunter (Leka) and Mathew (Umaenupne), the preliminary information submitted by the Republic of Vanuatu shall not be considered by the Commission.

11. The Republic of Vanuatu also notes that in accordance with operative paragraph 1(c) of SPLOS/183, the preliminary information submitted is without prejudice to the future Submission concerning this region and its consideration by the Commission.

12. The Republic of Vanuatu requests that the Secretary - General of the United Nations inform the Commission and notify member States of the receipt of this preliminary information in accordance with operative paragraph 1(d) of SPLOS/183.

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Vanuatu Ambassador to the United Nations

SECRETARY GENERAL  
UNITED NATIONS  
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