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Conference on the Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis in the Pacific

February 10th-12th, 2010, Port Vila, Vanuatu

Preparations Underway for Pacific Conference on Global Economic Crisis

[Suva – November 4] Preparations are underway in the Pacific for a major meeting to map ways to protect the region's vulnerable from the impacts of the Global Economic and Financial Crisis.

Announcing the conference at the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting in Cook Islands last week, Hon. Sela Molisa, Vanuatu's Minister for Finance and Economic Management said the conference was timely as it allowed Pacific Island Countries to fully prepare to face the current crisis and build resilience for future crises.

The Pacific has not yet experienced the full brunt of the crisis but indications are that women, children, youth, and families would be among the most affected.

"As part of its response to the Global Economic Crisis, the Government of Vanuatu will host a high level Pacific Conference on *The Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis in the Pacific* to be held in Port Vila, from February 10-12th next year. The ADB, PIFS, SPC and USP have joined our Government and the United Nations in organizing this important meeting," said Hon. Molisa.

Over 200 people, from 16 countries, including government ministers, parliamentarians, civil society organizations, youth, women, United Nations (UN) agencies and development partners are expected to attend.

"The Conference will consider how the current crisis affects the people of our countries, not only economically, but more importantly, socially, at community, national and regional levels. In addition, it will bring challenges faced by similar developing countries to our attention, to inform how we might frame and contextualize a wide range of policy choices in labour, education, health, social protection and legislature."

"The Conference will then consider how these policy choices can be incorporated into our existing national development strategies, to mitigate the crisis through sustainable recovery action plans. Such discussion could lead to strengthening of our national capacities to respond to crises, including through social protection as well as other measures."

Promoting sustainable development and "green growth" and working together to meet the Millennium Development Goals despite the challenges posed by the Global Economic Crisis will also feature prominently at this conference. While mapping ways to counter the current Global Economic Crisis, the conference will also examine ways to build the resilience of the region to future crises.

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