



## PRESS STATEMENT - DIPLOMATIC PASSPROTS.

### PROCESS OF ISSUING A DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT.

**Port Vila, VANUATU** – 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025: The Ministry of Internal Affairs wishes to state that the Department of Immigration and Passport Services is mandate by the Passport Act No 20 of 2009 to issue Ordinary passports; Official passports; and Diplomatic passports to those entitled.

Section 4A of the Act provides for the issuance of Diplomatic and Official passports as stated below:

#### **“4A Issue of diplomatic and official passports**

- (1) The Director may, on application, issue a Vanuatu diplomatic passport to a citizen of Vanuatu who holds an office listed in Schedule 1.**
- (2) The Director may, on application, issue a Vanuatu official passport to a citizen of Vanuatu who holds an office listed in Schedule 2.**
- (3) An application made under subsection (1) or (2) must be:**
  - (a) made in the prescribed form; and**
  - (b) accompanied by written advice from the Director General of the Ministry responsible for foreign affairs stating that the applicant is eligible for the diplomatic or official passport.**

The Ministry of Internal Affairs wishes to clarify that requests for printing of Diplomatic and Official Passports are submitted to the Department through the Department of Foreign Affairs and External Trae. Individuals **are not allowed** to submit Diplomatic and Official Passport applications directly to the Department of Immigration and Passport Services. Once the Diplomatic and Official Passports are printed, an Officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs is the only authorised personal to collect the passports from the Passport office.



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## **DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT ENTITLEMENT.**

The Ministry of Internal Affairs also wish to inform the public that the list of persons entitles to the Diplomatic Passport that are listed under Schedule 1 of the Passport Regulation Order is strictly observe to ensure that Diplomatic or Official passports are not issued to any person that is not listed on Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Passport Act.

Schedule 1. Persons entitle to Diplomatic Passport are;

### **“SCHEDULE 1**

### **PERSONS ENTITLED TO HOLD DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS**

- President
  - Prime Minister
  - Speaker of Parliament
  - Chief Justice
  - Government Ministers
  - Heads of missions (as defined in the Foreign Service Act No. 22 of 2008)
  - Diplomatic and consular staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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- Spouses and children under the age of 18 years of persons holding diplomatic passports, provided the diplomatic passport holders are travelling on duty at Government expense
  - Chairperson of the National Council of Chiefs
  - Leader of Opposition



In 2022, an amendment was made to the Schedule 1 of the Passport Act to include the following to be entitled to Diplomatic Passports;

- 1. Member of Parliament**
- 2. Chairman of the Public Service**
- 3. Chairman of the Police Service Commission**
- 4. Trade Commissioners.**

In July 2024, the Regulation Order was amended and further amendments were made in that same month. In August 2024, COM made a decision to reinstate the Trade Commissioners and recommended for the Department of Immigration and Passport Services and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare the relevant legislative amendments to parliament to better administer the process of the issuance of the Diplomatic and Official Passports. The relevant documentations have been prepared awaiting new COMs approval.

NOTE: **The Ministry of Internal Affairs wishes to further clarify that the passport machine installed and launched in Hong Kong late in 2024 was purely an enrolment machine and not printing machines. Vanuatu has only one dedicated passport printing machine which is installed in the Port Vila Passport Office and prints all passport applications. This statement is made to correct the comments made on social media regarding the passport's booklets displayed in the front page of Daily Post.**