



## **Harvey Law Group named global representative of the Development Support Program of the Republic of Vanuatu**

**(Bangkok, October 6, 2017)** – Multinational immigration law firm Harvey Law Group (HLG) has been named the first global representative of the Development Support Program (DSP) of the Republic of Vanuatu, a program that offers individuals the opportunity to obtain a Second Citizenship in a tax-free member state of this State of The Commonwealth.

Under the DSP, individuals obtain a Second Citizenship in exchange for a contribution to the Vanuatu Government Development Funds.

The DSP is the first and only citizenship-by-investment program in the Asia-Pacific, which offers a geographical advantage for fast-growing markets in the region, which include Thailand, The Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia, as well as more advanced Asian countries such as China and Malaysia.

Vanuatu passport holders enjoy visa-free travel to over 127 countries, including the United Kingdom, Russia, UAE and the Schengen Area. They also enjoy numerous tax benefits, as there is no corporate, income, capital gains, estate, wealth, withholding, inheritance, and gift tax in the country.

In addition, Vanuatu's citizenship-by-investment program can cover up to three dependents (typically the main applicant's spouse and dependent children up to age 25). There are no language or residency requirements to obtain the citizenship, and there is no requirement to visit Vanuatu.

Vanuatu consists of 83 islands located in the southwest Pacific, south of Solomon Islands and east of Queensland, Australia. Its population, which consists of nearly 280,000 people, speaks both English and French. The country's GDP growth has more than doubled from 1.6% in 2015 to 4% in 2016. The country relies mainly on the services sector, specifically on tourism, and its rural economy is driven by agriculture. Some of its major exports include copra, cocoa, and beef.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has forecast Vanuatu's GDP to grow to 4.5% for 2017, driven by recovery from natural disasters and political instability. In addition, ADB has noted that there is an ongoing construction boom in Vanuatu, supporting disaster reconstruction efforts and major new infrastructure projects.

Vanuatu's investment opportunities in areas such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and energy make Vanuatu an attractive destination for entrepreneurs looking to find new partners or expand across the Asia-Pacific.

Currently, Vanuatu is looking to attract investors with expertise in horticulture and modern farming techniques, leisure property and tourism development, and even in timber and related products processing. Entrepreneurs looking to test new food and beverage products may also find an opportunity in the country, as Vanuatu's tourism sector imports most of its fruit, vegetable, and foodstuff supply and as local manufacturers look to develop more processed products involving vanilla and spices.

With the Vanuatu government looking into operating direct flights from Bangkok to Vanuatu, it will be easier for ASEAN countries to develop trade and tourism links with the island nation.

“Vanuatu offers entrepreneurs opportunities, especially for those in the areas of real estate and eco-tourism, cement and leather goods production, and food manufacturing,” said Harvey Law Group Managing Partner for South East Asia Bastien Trelcat. “Entrepreneurs and investors have an opportunity to explore investment opportunities and become a first mover as Vanuatu opens its business to the rest of Asia.”

Founder and Global Managing Partner Mr. Jean-François Harvey added, “This business opportunity also comes with greater mobility and more business, travel, and potentially even education opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs.”

Vanuatu Information Centre network Managing Director James Harris remarked that Harvey Law Group’s expertise and its growing footprint in Asia made it an ideal partner for the program. The partnership with DSP adds to the current portfolio of similar programs for other member-states of The Commonwealth, such as Australia, Canada, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, New Zealand, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and the United Kingdom.

“The official appointment of Harvey Law Group as a global representative elevates the profile of the Development Support Program. This partnership is in line with our ambition to secure a position as one of the world’s leading citizenship-by-investment programs,” noted Harris.

“Harvey Law Group’s strength and depth in the Asia Pacific and its expertise in immigration and business law complements our own current regional footprint. We look forward greatly to working with Harvey Law Group in this new initiative, and we hope to attract more individuals to live, work, and do business in Vanuatu.”

#### **About Harvey Law Group**

Founded in 1992 by Jean-François Harvey, Harvey Law Group (HLG) is a multinational and award-winning immigration law firm that has developed a worldwide reputation of excellence by providing sophisticated legal representation to businesses and individuals. The firm focuses on investment immigration programs particularly residence and citizenship-by-investment programs in over 20 jurisdictions such as Australia, Canada, US, UK, EU, Cyprus, and The Caribbean. With offices notably in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Da Nang, Manila, Phnom Penh, Yangon and Montreal, along with a regional and international network, HLG has an extensive team that provides exceptional support to a diverse global clientele.