

## VANUATU

Date of Elections: 2 November 1983

### Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament for the first time since independence was attained in July 1980\*.

### Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Vanuatu comprises 39 members elected for 4 years.

### Electoral System

Every citizen who has reached the age of 18 is entitled to vote in the constituency in which he ordinarily resides. Electoral lists are compiled annually at the district level.

Qualified electors at least 25 years old are eligible to be candidates for Parliament. Disqualified are undischarged bankrupts, the insane and persons sentenced to imprisonment. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with the office of President of the Republic, judge or magistrate, public officer, membership of the police forces or the National Council of Chiefs, and membership of the teaching profession.

Candidates must be supported by at least five electors of their constituency and deposit a sum of Vatu 10,000 (approximately US\$100), which is reimbursed if the candidate obtains not less than 5% of the votes cast in his constituency.

Members of Parliament are elected in 14 constituencies through a system which includes an element of proportional representation to ensure fair representation of different political groups and opinions. By-elections are held to fill vacancies which arise between general elections.

### General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

General legislative elections were previously held in November 1979, prior to independence; at that poll, the predominantly English-speaking Vanuaaku Pati (VP) obtained 26 seats, twice the number of the Federal Party of the New Hebrides, an alliance of mainly French-speaking parties\*.

In the 1983 elections, the ruling VP, led by Prime Minister Walter Lini, once again fielded the highest number of candidates. It was challenged principally by the coalition of the Union of Moderate Parties (UMP) and the Vanuatu Independent Alliance Party (VIAP). During the campaign, Father Lini, an Anglican priest, accused the opposition parties of receiving foreign funds to help them win seats.

\*See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments XV (1980-1981)*, pp. 29-30.

On polling day, VP was returned to power with a slightly reduced majority. On 21 November, Parliament re-elected the outgoing Prime Minister and he announced his Cabinet the next day.

## Statistics

### 1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in Parliament

Number of registered electors. . . . .	44,726	
Voters. . . . .	44,166	(98.7%)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	551	
Valid votes. . . . .	43,615	

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	Number of Seats
Vanuaaku Pati (VP). . . . .	<b>31</b>	24,313	<b>24</b>
Union of Moderate Parties (UMP) . . . . .	<b>25</b>	12,806	<b>13</b>
Independent Alliance Party (VIAP)	<b>15</b>	1,513	—
Nagriamel . . . . .	<b>4</b>	1,254	<b>1</b>
French Melanesian Party. . . . .	<b>1</b>	1,014	<b>1</b>
			<b>39</b>

### 2. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex

Men . . . . .	39
Women . . . . .	
	~39~