

Republic of Vanuatu

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THE PRIME MINISTER

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Media Release
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Vanuatu and France release Joint communiqué on maritime boundary and sovereignty over Umaenupne and Leka Islands

Monday 4th August, 2025 – On July 23, 2025, Vanuatu Prime Minister Jotham Napat and Deputy Prime Minister Johnny Koanapo Rasou met with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris for bilateral discussions.

Amongst a host of many other key issues of mutual interest, high on the bilateral discussions was the outstanding issue of the maritime boundary delimitation and sovereignty over the two southern islands of Umaenupne/Matthew and Leka/Hunter, within Tafea province.

Prime Minister Napat and President Macron have agreed to maintain an open and constructive dialogue, aiming for an amicable resolution to the sovereignty over the two islands.

The leaders have instructed their negotiating teams to engage in discussions as soon as possible, with the first round of resumed negotiations to be held in Port Vila this autumn and the second round in France before the end of the year.

This commitment aims to promote regional cooperation, stability, and strengthen the bilateral relationship between Vanuatu and France.

A joint communiqué has been released publicly to inform citizens of both countries of the progress made so far.

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