

PM Supports Income Tax

By Anita Roberts

VANUATU NEEDS A TAXATION THAT IS FAIR to the taxpayers and can progressively generate sufficient revenue for the government to function.

Prime Minister (PM) Charlot Salwai made this statement during the opening of a two-day symposium in Port Vila which ended yesterday.

“Vanuatu needs a more consistent and sustainable taxation system to support population growth and demands for services as infrastructure, education and health.

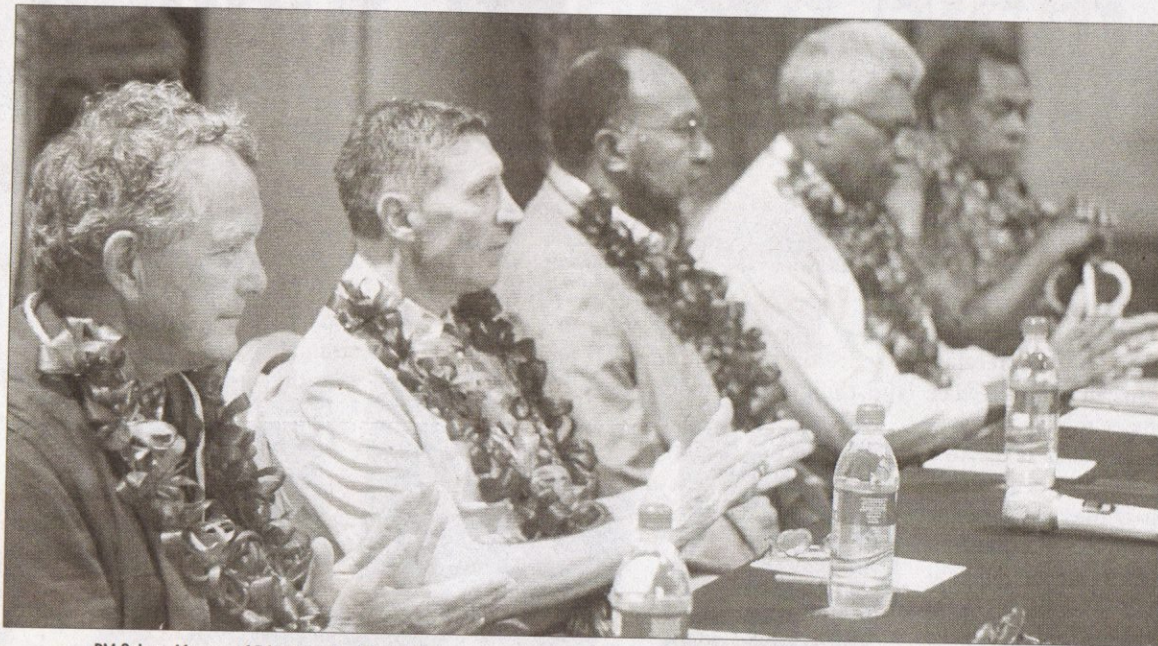
“Vanuatu has many taxes but some of those revenue sources are given away with trade agreements and bilateral agreements with other countries.

“Some will be eroded in the future therefore, we need to find other alternatives to sustain our economy.

“We cannot rely on the Citizen Program because it is temporary. It is getting returns today but it might not work tomorrow.

“Last year we passed the legislation on tax administration to help us identify which of the existing taxes are easy to manage and which ones needs to be replaced”, he said.

Vanuatu is in the process of



PM Salwai, Minister of Education, Jean Pierre Nirua, and academics at the opening of the two-days symposium on Income Tax (photo: MOET)

reforming its tax laws. Parliament is divided on the subject of income tax.

The symposium brought academics from the University of Toulouse 1 in New Caledonia (NC) and different institutions in Vanuatu to discuss and share ideas on a suitable taxation system for Vanuatu as part of the ongoing consultations.

PM Salwai said the symposium is

an opportunity for Vanuatu to learn from other countries to help create its own suitable system.

“What we are trying to introduce for income tax I think is acceptable for everyone unlike VAT which everyone is contributing. Income tax will target only the employed.

“It’s important for the people to understand how the government gets

its revenue and why the country is listed on the grey list by EU recently,” he said. The Minister of Internal Affairs, Andrew Napuat, said after the symposium that “the people must understand that some of the existing taxes will be exempted when Vanuatu graduated from the category of the Least Developed Country (LDC) by 2020.

“We have to find ways to stand on our feet and not depend much on foreign aid. For a long time the government has been exploring ways for revenue initiatives. The people have been consulted about income tax as we continue to explore fair taxation options.

“We as citizens need to decide what we want our country to be like in the next year; whether we want a Vanuatu that continues to rely on foreign aid, a Vanuatu that continues to get loan or an independent state that can make its own revenue.

“Such symposium are important to create debate and get views from the public to support decision-making”.

“Which tax system for Vanuatu?” was the theme of the symposium facilitated by the Tertiary and Higher Education Unit of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in partnership with the University Toulouse 1 Capitole from NC.

PM Salwai said he wants to see that more students in higher education institutions like the University of the South Pacific (USP) engaged in similar symposiums.

The recent symposium was attended by students from the Vanuatu Bilingual Higher Studies.

Alleged scammers in Luganville

By G.Bule

A woman who spoke on to the author of this article scam have already died.

Shops in Luganville

warned to stop 'lolly