

**BETWEEN: Public Prosecutor**

**AND: Caroline Vatoko**  
Accused

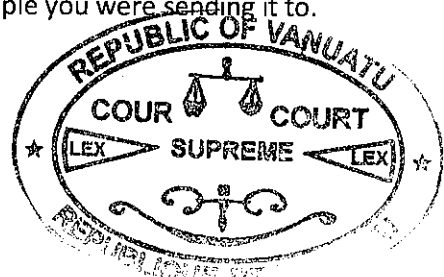
*Date of Sentence:* 18 July 2022  
*Before:* Justice EP Goldsbrough  
*Appearances:* Lunabek, L for the Public Prosecutor  
Botleng, T for the Accused

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**SENTENCE**

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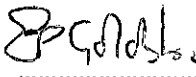
1. You have pleaded guilty to 2 counts of money laundering contrary to section 11 (7)(b) of the Proceeds of Crime Act.
2. The sentence which this Court will determine will take into account the maximum available penalty for these offences which is 25 years imprisonment.
3. The total amount of money involved is these transfers in VT 160,000.
4. It is accepted that you were tricked into making these transaction by others, more well versed in criminal activity.
5. There are no circumstances of aggravation apparent. Even the prosecution only suggested that not checking the Malaysian company information and having doubts about the provenance of the money that went into her account.
6. A starting point for these offences, from earlier cases is 3 years.
7. You were contacted by someone who you thought you knew a facebook and asked to allow your bank account to be used for the movement of money from Vanuatu to Malaysia. You were promised work and commission. You did not know, but did not check either, where the money was coming from or the background of the people you were sending it to.



8. The money came from another local bank from the account of an innocent man who had his account broken into and money unlawfully taken.
9. Your crime is helping those thieves get the money out of the country. Without your help, those overseas thieves, would not have been able to complete their crime.
10. You have no previous convictions. You yourself refunded the person whose money was put into your account. You have co-operated, pleaded guilty and have waited patiently to be sentenced.
11. There is also evidence of your reconciliation with the local victim.
12. The seriousness of these offences is clear to everyone, including you. The reason why offences such as these attract serious and severe penalties even though you may feel that you were a victim, is because when ordinary people are drawn into these schemes, often because of the promise of easy money, more sophisticated criminals are enabled. They get away with more and more serious crime.
13. Allowing you a credit for your guilty plea, co-operation and reconciliation the starting sentence of three years is reduced to 20 months imprisonment. That sentence is suspended for 2 years.
14. The Court makes no further orders as you have already made repayment.
15. Suspended sentence explained. Appeal rights explained.

**Dated at Port Vila this 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

**BY THE COURT**

  
Justice EP Goldsbrough

