



**Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations**

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Statement

by

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Nations

**The situation in Haiti
Briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United
Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH)**

Security Council Chamber

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Thank you, Mr President,

Permit me, on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, to express sincerest condolences to the Government and people of Haiti, for the deaths of babies and children in last week's fire at the Orphanage of the Church of Bible Understanding in Port Au Prince. Our prayers and thoughts are with the families of the victims.

We welcome and thank the briefers this afternoon for their informative reports.

The current situation in Haiti is unquestionably dire — and this afternoon's briefings have underscored this. The international community has a formidable task in providing comprehensive and sustained support to assist Haiti in the alleviation of its difficulties, specifically the ongoing political impasse which has paralyzed the country. The resolution of Haiti's constitutional crisis is paramount in this regard, and the first step towards restoring some semblance of stability in the country.

Accordingly, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines calls on ALL Haitian parties to urgently engage in inclusive dialogue, in a spirit of good faith, towards resolving the protracted crisis. The inability to reach an immediate political settlement by the parties can result in the recurrence of violence. Further, the concomitant breakdown of law and order could have detrimental effects in the region.

Given Haiti's kinship in our CARICOM family and our shared history, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, together with CARICOM, are duty bound to exhaust all possibilities to assist the people of our sister Caribbean nation in finding a peaceful solution to the present crisis. We remain steadfast in this endeavour.

My delegation is mindful of lingering issues which plague Haiti, in particular, the institutional shortcomings relating to the rule of law, including the need to re-appoint or replace thirty-two judges and to address graft, and the limited participation of women in the political processes, which is far removed from the Constitution's mandated quota of 30% of women in government. The prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, and the associated lack of accountability and impunity by members of the society, as well as those assigned by state and international bodies to protect the Haitian people, is exceedingly tragic.

These coupled with the increase in food insecurity, the exploitation of Haitian children and the adverse effects of climate change, require urgent attention.

As Haiti navigates uncharted waters having recently transitioned to BINUH, the cross-cutting nature of peace, security and development needs to be reflected and prioritized.

Before I conclude, it would be remiss of me not to stress the importance of reparations for Haiti. As we commence the second half of the decade for people of African descent (2015-2024), let us not lose the opportunity to address the genesis of Haiti's underdevelopment and encourage appropriate recompense for Haiti. The fact that Haiti was made to pay, rather than receive, reparations for its experiences of mass enslavement remains lamentable. More pertinently, given that 80% of its national budget was extracted for reparatory payments up until the mid-20th Century, meant significant vacuums were created in its efforts at nation-building.

Mr. President, *The persistent underdevelopment of Haiti, rooted in these past experiences, remains crucial when considering its current reality.*

Finally, Mr President, As the first free black nation in the western hemisphere, Haiti is a cornerstone of our Caribbean Civilization. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines stands in solidarity with our Haitian brothers and sisters, and remains optimistic that as the country traverses this new course in its unique history, it can achieve greater success in its goals of bringing hope to its people by building peace, stability and sustainability.

We must continue to accompany Haiti in its noble pursuit of prosperity and never abandon them.

I thank you!