



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

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**Statement**

by

**H.E. Dr. Halimah DeShong**

Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
to the United Nations

**Open VTC – “Toward the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Youth Peace and Security  
Agenda: Accelerating Implementation of Resolution 2250 and 2419”**

United Nations Security Council

Monday 27 April 2020

10:00 am

New York

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Thank you Mr. President

We join Council Members in thanking the Dominican Republic for arranging this timely Open VTC with a focus on accelerating the Youth, Peace and Security agenda. We also thank Secretary General Guterres, Special Envoy on Youth, Ms. Wickramanayake, and Mr. Gatkuoth for their insightful briefings, and look forward to the contribution of Ms. Al-Sakkaf, shortly.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines regards the participation and leadership of youth, a key pillar of the whole-of-society approach, necessary for achieving lasting peace, security and sustainable development, globally.

Mr President,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is encouraged by the continued evolution of the Youth, Peace and Security infrastructure in the Caribbean and Latin America. We recall initiatives to promote peace among Haitian youth through the use of sports in neighbourhoods gravely affected by violence, and the many contributions of young people to the peace process in Colombia.

The Youth Peace and Security agenda is particularly relevant for Africa, the Continent with the largest youth population. It is heartening to see that young leaders, such as Mr. Gatkuoth, remain committed to building a fairer, more peaceful future on the continent, by tackling a range of issues from terrorism, unemployment to climate change.

Notwithstanding national and regional progress, sufficiently funded, focused, and strategic action is required to accelerate this agenda all over the world, especially in light of enduring

legacies of anti-youth ideologies and the increased threat posed by COVID-19. With this in mind, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines wishes to reiterate the following strategic interventions. There is need to continue to fund the PBC and to support even greater policy coherence within the wider peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations system. In particular, youth in their diversity, must continue to be engaged, not simply as targets *for*, but as crafters *of* policies. Funding must target the high levels of unemployment and barriers to education and training that render youth vulnerable to recruitment, criminality and violence. This is even more urgent with the almost universal, drastic increase in unemployment, and overall despair occasioned by the pandemic. With the pandemic amplifying existing inequalities, we call for responses which engage and account for the intersections of the Women Peace and Security and Youth Peace and Security agendas, to ensure young women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding and to address the escalating levels of sexual and gender-based violence. Additionally, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would welcome further reporting and focus on Youth, Peace and Security.

Excellencies,

The 2030 agenda for sustainable development is inextricably linked to Youth, Peace and Security programming. Future generations must be offered the freedom of a safe and secure world. This necessarily entails greater efforts of the international community to mobilize the necessary resources to adapt and mitigate against Climate Change – the greatest threat facing young people. Often misunderstood and silenced, young people, in their diversity, have always spoken. Young people have always had a voice. It is our responsibility to develop the apparatus with which to meaningfully engage youth and ensure their full participation in decision-making, as we collectively re-imagine, and craft futures marked by social justice and social transformation. **Thank you.**