



**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 Meeting on Secretary General's Report on the Sudan and South  
Sudan**

United Nations Security Council

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Thank you, Mr. President,

My delegation thanks USG Lacroix and Special Envoy Onanga-Anyanga for their briefings on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes the positive political developments in both Sudan and South Sudan. We remain hopeful that this momentum will translate into greater cooperation and a renewed commitment between the two countries, to find a just, political resolution on the final status of Abyei.

We acknowledge the progress and challenges highlighted in the Secretary General's recent report. In particular, we note the fragile security situation in Abyei, including the ongoing intercommunal violence as was evident with the Nai Nai -Kolom attacks on January 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. We condemn these attacks and lament the heightened tensions between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya communities. We welcome UNISFA's efforts in investigating these violent incidents and encourage the authorities to proceed with the joint investigation as agreed during the February 19<sup>th</sup> Joint Political and Security Mechanism (JPSM) meeting in Juba.

Equally, we urge Abyei communities to exercise utmost restraint, and call on the Sudan and South Sudan governments to cooperate fully with UNISFA. UNISFA's tireless efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region, including to maintain Abyei as a weapons-free zone, are laudable. We commend UNISFA for its regular constructive engagements with the administrative and traditional

leaders, as well as with the Joint Community Peace Committee (JCPC). We also welcome the advances within the framework of the JPSM and urge the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC) to convene regular meetings.

Mr. President, the difficulties in Abyei will not be resolved unless the key drivers of intercommunal conflicts are robustly tackled. We therefore urge the parties to fulfill their obligations as stipulated in the 2011 Agreement and the 2012 Cooperation Agreement.

We remain concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in Abyei, which is expected to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, the dreadful environmental conditions in the region, which is compounded by the adverse effects of climate change, continue to negatively alter the security, economic, and social landscape. Amidst these immense challenges, we emphasize the need for unhindered humanitarian service delivery to those who require urgent assistance.

My delegation encourages the inclusion of women in the decision-making process in Abyei. We welcome the work of UNISFA in support of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) mandate. We also note marginal progress on the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and some progress on the benchmarks specified by S/Res/2497 (2019). We call on all parties to adhere to the stipulations outlined in the outcome documents of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism ordinary sessions in Juba on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

UNISFA remains an interim security force, and therefore it is critical to resolve the status of Abyei. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines stands in solidarity with the people of Abyei and reaffirms our commitment to UNISFA. We also thank Ethiopia for its invaluable contribution through its peacekeepers and reiterate our support for the critical mediating role played by the African Union.

I thank you.