



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

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Statement

By

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Counsellor**

The Situation in the Middle East (Syria - Humanitarian)

United Nations Security Council

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Please check against delivery

Thank you, Mr. President. I also thank Under Secretary-General Lowcock and Ms. Sirkin for their briefings.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains alarmed by the dire humanitarian situation in Syria, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The magnitude and complexity of the crisis continues to demonstrate the urgent need to scale up the humanitarian response - a lifeline for millions of Syrians. In this regard, we reiterate our support for the most optimal access arrangements, through **all** modalities, to guarantee the rapid, uninterrupted, and direct provision of humanitarian aid to all who need it.

Syria's swiftly deteriorating economic situation is also profoundly concerning. Millions are now food insecure and basic necessities have become unattainable luxuries. Syria cannot continue to withstand the pressures of unilateral sanctions, which also serve to undermine the country's COVID-19 response and mitigation efforts. We therefore reiterate our calls for the lifting of all unilateral coercive measures to assist the country in confronting the seemingly insurmountable challenges.

Mr. President,

The Secretary-General's most recent report has noted that the Allouk water station and power supply were disrupted multiple times in April and May. Thousands of people, residing in overcrowded camps and informal settlements are heavily dependent on its supply. The numerous interruptions significantly diminish the capacity to manage the pandemic, through basic hygiene precautions, and deny an essential service to the most vulnerable. We urge **all** parties to work together to ensure the sustained flow of water to civilians in need.

In northern Syria, Security Council designated terrorist groups continue to pose a considerable threat, and this necessitates coordinated and targeted counter-terrorism operations. We, however, remind that these efforts must fully respect obligations under international law.

Above all, the well-being of the Syrian people is paramount. Hostilities bring harm to civilians, destroy critical infrastructure and obstruct the provision of vital humanitarian aid. We strongly urge parties to the conflict to continue to exercise maximum restraint and to de-escalate tensions. The ceasefire in the northwest must be preserved and a nationwide cessation of hostilities must be pursued.

Mr. President,

Syria's humanitarian situation is inextricably linked to its political process. Without a political solution, which has full regard for Syria's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, the conflict will continue, and the humanitarian situation will worsen. Cooperation must be prioritized in order to achieve the goals of resolution 2254 and to bring peace and stability back to Syria.

I thank you.