



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

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**Statement**

**By**

**H.E. Inga Rhonda King**

Permanent Representative of

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations

**Open VTC on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated  
Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)**

Security Council Chamber

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Thank you, Mr President, and we also thank Secretary General and the African Union High Representative for Mali and the Sahel for their briefings.

Mr. President,

As Mali navigates pathways toward durable peace and people-centered development, with the support of the international community, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commends the recent progress toward the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement.

In this regard, we highlight, as significant, MINUSMA's support toward the redeployment of the reconstituted units of the Malian army to northern Mali, the bolstering of policing capabilities, and the country's hosting of the second round of legislative elections on 19 April, in spite of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The increased number of women elected to the legislature, from 14 to 41, signals both symbolic and qualitative shifts in the terms of engagement with women. We also welcome steps toward increasing women's participation in the follow up mechanism of the Agreement, the imminent appointment of six women to the Agreement Monitoring Committee, and encourage further democratization by gender and youth across public institutions, as outlined in the Agreement.

The Government of Mali, with MINUSMA's support, must be recognised for the COVID-19 response, particularly in the provision of sanitary supplies to justice institutions, the release of prisoners in order to protect persons in detention facilities, but also for the coordinated approach with public, private and other international actors to mitigate the effects. MINUSMA's support for the establishment of reconciliation committees in central Mali, and their capacity-building work on reconciliation and social cohesion, conducted across the linguistic divide, are noteworthy, given ongoing inter-communal hostilities in the center.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines condemns the continued terrorist attacks in Mali and the wider Sahel region. We express our deepest sympathy to the families of those civilians and peacekeepers who lost their lives in the past few months, as a consequence of this violence.

As the number of food insecure and internally displaced persons within Mali and the wider Sahel region continues to rise, combating violent extremism and intercommunal violence remain urgent. This situation we must emphasize is primarily due to armed conflict and climate change. We endorse the call for greater support of the G5 Sahel Joint Force, and their work in defense of the tri-border and wider Sahel region. We also reiterate the request made by the G5 Sahel countries, and echoed recently by the A3 plus SVG, that the Joint Force be placed under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. This would be advisable given MINUSMA's limited ability and mandate to provide support outside of Mali, and as armed terrorist groups are well networked across borders in the region. Notwithstanding these limitations, we welcome MINUSMA's efforts of force adaptation toward a more mobile, flexible and agile posture in line with the principles of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative (A4P).

In closing, Mr President, we wish to reiterate that durable peace demands the simultaneous pursuit of a comprehensive security agenda as well as inclusive socio-economic development. Lasting peace also requires a renewed social contract in which the state, with the support of its international partners, re-establishes its authority by protecting civilians and strengthening essential institutions. We welcome work toward accelerating greater decentralization of key state services; the operationalization of the Northern Development Zone; greater focus on education and psycho-social support for children and survivors of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence; and engagement with Malian women and youth organizations currently pursuing adaptation and resilience strategies for economic development. We stand with Malians at the cusp of engineering futures beyond the limits and violence of conflict, COVID and adverse climate.

I thank you.