



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

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Statement

by

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**Arria Formula – Women and the Afghan Peace Process:
Ensuring Women’s Participation and Promoting their Rights**

Security Council

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Thank you Ambassador,

As a member of the Group of Friends of Afghan Women, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes this opportunity for dialogue with Afghan women on concrete ways in which the international community can continue to support the remarkable progress you've made toward the reconfiguration of Afghanistan's economic, political and social systems. However, we recognise that the full realisation of gender justice remains tied to the success of the peace process, and its promise of inclusive and sustainable development. We wish to thank Germany, the United Kingdom, Afghanistan and Indonesia for hosting this timely meeting, given the imminent intra-Afghan negotiations. We are particularly grateful for the expert insights shared by our distinguished keynote speaker, H.E. Rula Ghani, First Lady of Afghanistan, as well as those by distinguished speakers and panellists:

- H.E. Dr. Hasina Safi,
- H.E. Adela Raz
- H.E. Alya Ahmed bin Saif Al-Thani,
- Dr Habiba Sarabi,
- Ms Ghezal Haris, and
- SRSB Deborah Lyons

The full, effective and meaningful participation of diverse Afghan women in all political and socio-economic processes, including the upcoming intra-Afghan negotiations, is essential to guarantee the institutional changes required for gender justice. It is indeed vital that we support the decisive actions to which our panellists spoke, in order to preserve and extend the hard-won gains Afghan women have made over the past 19 years. We recognise as significant, the various steps to implement the National Action Plan to effect resolution 1325; the greater involvement of women as decision-makers in government and executive positions of the civil service; the increased participation of girls in education; and a growing shift in public consciousness in support of the expanded political and socio-economic participation of women and girls. Indeed, women and youth have demonstrated remarkable leadership in COVID prevention education. The inclusion of four women in the 21-member negotiating team of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is also noteworthy. To extend these gains, we support the Secretary General's call for greater participation of women in the growing domestic architecture for peace,

including the Ministry of Peace Affairs and the High Council for Peace and National Reconciliation.

Afghan women have consistently advocated for more inclusive government, emerging as leaders at various stages of the peace process. You have stood as drivers of peace and development. You (alongside other members of civil society) have led calls for ceasefire. It is an honour for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to stand with you as friends, and for the international community to learn with you, as we recommit to redressing historical gendered inequalities and all gender-based harms. In solidarity with you, we lend our voice to the call to secure your necessary and effective participation in the upcoming negotiations, and all subsequent dialogue and actions to promote a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan.

We denounce the recent surge in violence that continues to claim the lives of civilians, including women and children, and members of the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF). These attacks run counter to the spirit of “the

Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan,” welcomed in resolution 2513 (2020). As the commencement of the intra-Afghan negotiations fast approaches, there is urgent need for a cessation of all hostilities, to ensure that important gains made towards rebuilding more inclusive institutions and relations are not jeopardised.

In closing, we wish to pose the following question:

What are some concrete steps that must be taken at the institutional and decision-making levels, as well as at the level of capacity building, to ensure that diverse women participate in the upcoming and subsequent negotiations, as well as in political and socio-economic processes in general?