



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

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Statement

by

H.E. Hon. Sir Louis Straker

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Open VTC - Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Global
Governance Post COVID-19**

Security Council

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New York

Check against delivery

Thank you Mr. President,

At the outset, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines extends our compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency António Guterres, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat. We thank you both for your insightful remarks, and we commend the Republic of Niger for convening this important and timely discussion.

The overlapping health, socioeconomic, political, and security risks precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic have converged to present our multilateral system with its most complex challenge since the Second World War. This pandemic will claim more than one million lives, as it destroys the livelihoods of millions more, globally. Given these profoundly altered conditions for life, living and production, our world will never be the same again. It is therefore of critical importance that we adapt our systems of global governance to this extremely challenging contemporary reality.

Mr. President,

Turbulent times bear disproportionately on the vulnerable:

- On refugees, displaced persons, and those made stateless due to painful cycles of violent conflict.
- On women and children who shoulder an unequal share of the social and political burdens.
- On the communities and families that become fractured due to instability and unrest.
- And on conflict-affected countries that struggle to safeguard their social contracts as emerging threats such as COVID-19, and existing risk multipliers such as Climate Change, present themselves in novel ways posing unprecedented security, humanitarian, and political challenges.

COVID-19 has laid bare the undisputable fact that today's complex challenges will not be solved by military strategies. Nor can they be effectively addressed in siloes. Moreover, this pandemic has presented incontrovertible proof that in our increasingly interconnected world, the uneven development of economies, healthcare systems, and governance institutions, produces vulnerabilities that affect us all. We can only protect ourselves by protecting each other. In this regard, we can and we must do better to build capacities for the most vulnerable amongst us, and

to promote inclusivity, peace and resilience in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This remains the primary blueprint for a peaceful, just and secure world.

In order to tackle the root causes of insecurity, and to ensure that conflict-affected countries are able to restore trust in public institutions, repair their social fabrics, and advance political processes to achieve national unity and reconciliation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines emphasizes the need for predictable and reliable development financing. We reiterate our calls to developed countries to honour their overseas development assistance (ODA) commitments. We also reiterate that a lack of meaningful action by some states to curb their emissions and to set and honour ambitious pledges for climate adaptation and mitigation serves to perpetuate climate-driven security risks in many fragile contexts. To those that suffer the effects of climatic hazards, this failure by major emitters is an act of hostility. From Haiti to the Horn of Africa to the Middle East, the peace and security implications of Climate Change must be comprehensively acknowledged and robustly addressed.

Mr. President, as we embark on the decade of action to accelerate the sustainable development goals, integrated and coherent strategies that bring together all United Nations organs and specialized agencies, within their respective mandates, are urgently needed. Only through a renewed multilateralism that places people at its center; considers the needs and perspectives of all member states equally; and fully respects the guiding principles of international law, can we effectively address the challenges of the 21st Century.

I Thank You.