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**Statement**

by

**H.E. I Rhonda King**

Permanent Representative

**Open VTC - Maintenance of International Peace and Security:  
Implementation of S/RES/2532**

Security Council

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New York

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Thank you, Mr. President,

Let me begin by also thanking you for convening this timely discussion and expressing our appreciation to the briefer(s) for leading this fruitful exchange. **We commend the Secretariat for its remarkable efforts in supporting the global COVID-19 response by spearheading ceasefire talks, providing field mission support to affected countries, ensuring effective risk mitigation and preventive measures for deployed personnel, and striving to maintain operational continuity in the implementation of mandates.**

Mr President,

The unanimous adoption, two months ago, of resolution 2532 which reinforces the Secretary-General's calls for a global ceasefire, marked an important milestone for the Security Council and for the wider multilateral system. We successfully navigated divisions and divergent

views to deliver a clear message of unity and hope to the international community. Yet, ever mindful of the efforts thus far, more must be done to ensure that hard won gains across the peace-security-development nexus are preserved.

Today, as confirmed and underscored by all of our briefers this morning, the pandemic continues to accentuate vulnerabilities and exacerbate risks in many situations on the Council's agenda as delicate peace agreements have become increasingly fragile and many belligerent parties, including armed groups, have disregarded our calls for a global ceasefire. Furthermore, the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic have magnified inequalities, intensified humanitarian concerns, and aggravated social, political and communal divisions increasing the probability of violent conflict.

Addressing the monumental and complex challenges precipitated by this pandemic will require the political will to fully implement resolution

2532. This means, in practical terms, that **all countries and the regional and sub-regional organizations within which they are situated, must spare no effort to promote an immediate cessation of hostilities** and ensure that the rule of law, including international law, is upheld so that the international community can channel our collective efforts toward addressing the health, socioeconomic, political, and security dimensions of the pandemic.

**Our approach to managing the COVID-19 health crisis must be conflict-sensitive and sovereignty supporting.** In this light, we again reiterate the calls to all parties to abandon unilateral actions, including the use of economic sanctions, that exacerbate hardship and impede efforts to respond to the pandemic - especially in conflict-affected countries where state capacity is easily overwhelmed.

**We also appeal for greater regional and international cooperation** to better manage the trafficking of small arms and light weapons, the

unlawful exploitation and trade of natural resources, the illicit supply of narcotics, and other activities that embolden armed groups and organized criminals as they profit from these illegal activities while endangering human security and disrupting peace processes.

In conclusion, Mr. President, we reiterate our full support to resolution 2532 and emphasize that only through a total cessation of hostilities will conflict-affected countries be able to manage this health crisis as they mend their social fabrics, advance peace processes, and strengthen governance. At this crucial moment we must continue to amplify the calls for a global ceasefire and strengthen capacities to assist those made most vulnerable.

I thank you.