



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

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**Statement**

by

**Hon. Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves**

Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

**High-Level Meeting to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the United  
Nations**

Security Council

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Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Friends,

The exigencies of the 21st Century demand a firm recommitment to the values of unity and solidarity envisaged by our forebears as they created our United Nations. For the past 75 years we have navigated rising tides, weathered many storms and extinguished countless fires. But as we seek to confront the headwinds of Climate Change, manage the glowing embers of conflict, and address meaningfully the health, socioeconomic, political and humanitarian aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must pursue a renewed and effective multilateralism steeped in the virtues of inclusivity, equality, and justice for all.

Against the backdrop of a markedly unequal global political economy, the moment is ripe for us to refashion our multilateral system, by among other things addressing the crucial issue of security council reform and updating the protocols that govern international trade and finance to promote a resilient and climate-friendly post-pandemic global economy. Given the disproportionate and disastrous health, economic, social, and security implications of COVID-19 in the developing world as a result of supply chain disruptions, sharp declines in remittances, significant decreases of travel and trade, and the consequent accumulation of debt, urgent and ambitious action is required to avert a grim post-COVID reality where heightened inequalities and deepened political divides create ruptures in our social fabrics.

For small island developing states like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with our exceptional bundle of challenges - *both historical and contemporary* - there is an urgent need for our development partners, including international financial institutions, to apply vulnerability indices and update financing eligibility criteria to address debt distress. Without greater debt relief, concessional financing, and scaled up development assistance, our countries will fall further behind - unable to provide social protections, attain sustainable development goals, or safeguard the social contracts on which peace and prosperity are built.

COVID-19 has exposed the fragilities of a lopsided multilateral system, while the long arm of modern-day imperialism - *with its hegemonic, unilateral and interventionist modus operandi* - disembowels the bedrock principles of international law and threatens further turmoil and fragmentation. We cannot continue on this perilous path. As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of this global institution, let us dare to imagine a new dawn for human civilization -

where the rights and freedoms of all nations and peoples are equally protected. Let us craft a United Nations that ensures peace, security, and prosperity for **all** of humanity - *in all parts of the world* - and let no state use its military, economic or political power to deny any other its rightful place at the table at the United Nations, in equality and dignity.

Thank You.