



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

685 3rd Ave., Suite 1108, New York, NY 10017 • Tel: (212) 599-0950 • Fax: (212) 599-1020 •

svgmission@gmail.com | <http://svg-un.org>

Statement

by

H.E. Dr. Halimah DeShong

Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations

Open VTC Meeting on the Situation in Libya

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I thank Acting SRSG Williams for her presentation and we welcome the distinguished Permanent Representative of Libya to this meeting.

The positive developments unfolding in Libya are commendable. They are testament that the solution to the conflict is through an all-inclusive inter-Libyan political process that avoids threats of violence or the use of force. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines particularly welcomes the signing of the permanent ceasefire agreement on October 23, 2020 and looks forward to its implementation, as well as receiving the Secretary General's interim Report on the options to monitor the ceasefire by the end of this year. It has, and will always be, our bedrock conviction that dialogue and diplomacy are the only way to achieving durable peace, stability and prosperity for all Libyans.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The progress that we are witnessing in Libya is due to the resolve, willingness and determination of the Libyan people, who yearn for a better future. This progress is facilitated by the complementary role of the international community, specifically, under the auspices of the United Nations' three-point plan. The international community must support the Libyan people in meeting their challenges head-on, whilst respecting the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this regard, we applaud the work of Acting SRSG Williams and UNSMIL to advance the political dialogue, and reiterate the need for the appointment of an SRSG to consolidate the meaningful gains achieved thus far.

Additionally, we commend neighbouring countries for their constructive efforts - the most recent being the in-person Libyan Dialogue Forum (LPDF) hosted by Tunisia. We note with satisfaction, the participation of women and youth in the LPDF and emphasize their critical importance in Libya's rebuilding process. We look forward to the implementation of the outcomes of the LPDF and reiterate our support for the upcoming dialogue processes and other positive initiatives, including the Libyan national reconciliation conference.

Distinguished Colleagues,

A reversal of the gains and losing the current momentum would be debilitating. We therefore urge all parties to fulfill their obligations and fully adhere to international law, including by strictly complying with the arms embargo. We encourage countries involved to act responsibly and guard against undermining the political process in Libya.

We also recognize the dire humanitarian challenges facing Libya, which have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, we stress the importance of abiding by international humanitarian and human rights law. There can be no impunity in Libya for the atrocities committed over the years and, in this vein, we reiterate our support for the international Fact-Finding Mission to Libya (FFML), to investigate atrocity crimes and ensure accountability.

Likewise, we urge the Libyan authorities to facilitate safe humanitarian access in order to address the difficulties facing refugees and migrants, especially those in the detention centers. In keeping with the Secretary General's previous observations that Libya remains an unsafe port for the return of migrants and refugees, we emphasize that their safety and dignity should be the utmost priority at all points of interception, rescue, disembarkation and beyond.

Distinguished Colleagues:

Amidst the most difficult and challenging times, Libyans - through the dialogue process - are providing hope and optimism for the future of the country. We therefore encourage all Libyans to stay the course and further encourage all stakeholders to the peace process to intensify their efforts to assist Libya in meeting its challenges. Indeed, the difficulties confronting Libya at this juncture are tremendous, but not insurmountable. In conjunction with the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, and neighbouring countries, Libya has the support to overcome impediments for the ennoblement of its people. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains in solidarity with the Libyan people.

I thank you.