



**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 St. Vincent and the
Grenadines to the United Nations

At the

United Nations Security Council VTC Briefing (UNAMI)

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New York
United Nations Security Council

Thank you Madam President and Good morning.

We welcome the briefing by Special Representative, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, and extend our gratitude to you and your team.

We begin by welcoming the positive milestones highlighted in the Secretary General's most recent report, particularly the government's efforts towards the creation of a stable, secure and prosperous Iraq. This includes the steps taken to increase diversity in senior positions within the Government, and efforts to strengthen relations with international partners, as well as countries in the region. The government of Iraq has continued its efforts towards the holding of free, fair and credible elections, such as the finalisation of the electoral legislation to facilitate continued preparation for elections. We also welcome the critical role played by UNAMI in line with its mandate, including electoral assistance. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines expresses its support for the United Nations' continued cooperation with the Iraqi Government in that regard. We support, in so far as is feasible, the strengthening of the UN's engagement to assist the Government with the elections, thereby ensuring the credibility and integrity of the electoral process. Notwithstanding this support, however, we underscore that the upcoming elections are Iraqi-led and Iraqi-owned.

The path to reconstruction and peace is not without its challenges. While Iraq was able to celebrate, on 10 December, the anniversary of the military defeat of ISIL, security threats persist. It was disheartening that insecurity and violence continue to impact civilians, including women and children. It is also concerning that attacks against diplomatic missions and convoys in Iraq have continued. These unjustifiable and reckless acts undermine all good faith efforts towards stability, and we call for the perpetrators to be identified and held accountable. We call on the international community to lend support to the Iraqi Government to strengthen its capacity, and on all actors within Iraq to work with the Government to strengthen state control. Also critical to bolstering domestic resilience, is the need to collectively address the ongoing economic crisis, and we call on international partners to support the Government's efforts in this regard.

We welcome the progress made towards the identification of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property. Further, we recognise the role of the Tripartite Commission, the International Committee of the Red Cross and UNAMI, in advancing this issue.

In closing Madam President, we affirm our support to UNAMI. We further emphasize our solidarity with the Government of Iraq and its people as they endeavour to consolidate peace, and recall the need to ensure the preservation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Thank you.