



**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

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

Security Council

January 25th, 2021

New York

Check against delivery

Thank you Mr. President,

Let me begin by thanking you for convening this timely discussion and expressing our appreciation to Under Secretaries-General Di Carlo, Lacroix, Lowcock, and Khare for their comprehensive briefings.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose disastrous health, socioeconomic, and security challenges in every corner of the globe. The humanitarian impacts of the pandemic, which are felt most acutely in conflict-affected countries, necessitate greater attention and urgent action by the international community to alleviate the suffering of those made most vulnerable, including women and children, internally displaced persons, and refugees.

We commend the continued efforts by the Secretary General, his Special Representatives and Special Envoys, and the range of UN presences, both at headquarters and in the field, to:

- facilitate peace talks geared towards achieving a global ceasefire as part of the COVID-19 response;
- provide operational support to affected countries to help bolster health and safety;
- mitigate the risk of virus transmission amongst deployed personnel; and,
- maintain the delivery of mandates despite the immense risks posed by the pandemic.

We reiterate our full support to the provisions of resolution 2532 and emphasise that only through a total cessation of hostilities will conflict-affected countries be able to effectively manage this health crisis as they mend their social fabrics and advance peace processes. In Libya, Sudan and South Sudan, although the peace processes are still delicate, the positive overall developments stand as testament to the ongoing commitments of UN personnel, both uniformed and civilian, to achieve sustainable peace. Yet, as we have seen with the horrendous slaughter of innocent civilians by rebel forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in mid-January, and the recent series of armed group attacks in the Central African Republic, more must be done to achieve peace for those who yearn for it.

If we are to successfully address the simultaneous challenges of COVID and conflict, greater political will; scaled up humanitarian *and developmental* assistance; the full respect for

international law, including international humanitarian law; and earnest efforts toward pursuing dialogue, compromise and reconciliation are all required. As vaccines are rolled out to combat the disease, we must also spare no effort to ensure that they are equitably available to all, including conflict-affected and least developed countries. In this regard, our delegation calls for greater financial support to the COVAX facility to strengthen the global immunisation campaign against COVID-19. In addition, we need an enforceable, international rules-based compact between all countries and major pharmaceutical companies to deliver, universally and affordably, COVID-19 vaccines.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its support of the World Health Organization's key coordinating role in ensuring safe and effective vaccine distribution. We also underscore the firm partnership between the WHO and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, which highlights the importance of strong cooperation at the regional and sub-regional levels, not only for traditional security issues, but across the entire spectrum of the peace and security, development, and humanitarian nexus.

In closing, Mr. President, we reiterate the importance of an integrated and coordinated approach in which all organs of the United Nations, its relevant specialised agencies and programs, Member States, and other important stakeholders such as the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), work together to systematically address the variegated challenges and dimensions of COVID-19. As we seek to recover from this pandemic, let us also seek to advance peace and justice for all, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Let us remember that unless everyone is safe, no one is safe.

I Thank You.