



**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. Mr. Saboto Caesar

Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and
Labour

Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Conflict and Food Security

Security Council

March 11th, 2021

New York

Check against delivery

Thank you Madam President,

Excellencies, Colleagues,

Let me begin by conveying, on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, our appreciation to the United States of America for convening this timely discussion. We also thank our briefers for their insightful, but very sobering, remarks.

Madam President, the fight against hunger remains one of the international community's most noble, yet difficult, endeavours. Decades of progress in the quest for global food security are being erased in the face of the worst global pandemic in over a century. Rampant climate change and ecological destruction; protracted conflicts; and other acute challenges such as the desert locust infestation: we have to grapple with these. We can and we must do better to ensure that everyone, everywhere has access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food.

For vulnerable and conflict-affected communities including refugees, internally displaced persons, and those made stateless as a result of political, socioeconomic and environmental forces beyond their control: addressing hunger is more than a moral imperative. It is an existential concern.

This challenge brings into closer focus the need for a comprehensive and coordinated "whole-of-system" approach to address the root, and proximate, causes of fragility and insecurity. The Security Council, as the primary body tasked with maintaining international peace and

security, must spare no effort in our attempts to protect the most vulnerable, including by facilitating full, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access to those in need.

The Security Council must also work more closely with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), to foster developmental solutions that meet the basic needs of people in conflict settings. The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), with its strategic advisory capacities and its convening platform, is also useful in consolidating our efforts across the peace and security-humanitarian-development nexus. We must leverage these capacities more often.

Madam President, for our part, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has accelerated our efforts to provide food security throughout our nation and across our region. Even though we have been tried and tested by this pandemic, we have ensured that life, living and production continue, and that we can feed ourselves and our neighbours. We are the bread-basket of the Southern Caribbean. Our farmers and fisher-folk remain crucial stakeholders to these efforts, and we will do what we must to support them as they continue to support us. In this regard, we reiterate our calls for urgent, concerted and decisive action to tackle Climate Change which is inextricably linked to food insecurity. The Food and Agriculture Organization must continue to play a critical role.

While we agree that conflict is a primary driver of hunger in some contexts; extreme weather events, including floods and droughts,

also undermine agricultural productivity and create food insecurity. The continued suffering of our brothers and sisters in Haiti, one of the most food insecure countries in the world, is a painful reminder of the interlinkages between natural disasters, political and economic stability, and acute hunger. Greater efforts are therefore needed, on all fronts, to address the interconnecting challenges of conflict, Climate Change, and food insecurity.

We are of the view that:

- All parties to conflict, and those with influence over them, should heed our collective call for a global ceasefire.
- Global action must be accelerated to keep temperature rise below 1.5° above pre-industrial levels. Emissions must be reduced, and financial commitments towards adaptation measures must be upheld.
- And major donors, including the international financial institutions (IFIs), should scale up the assistance offered to developing and conflict-affected countries, including by expanding debt relief and concessional funding.

To conclude, Madam President, we underscore the need for inclusive multilateral solutions to advance the Sustainable Development Agenda. If we are to make good on our collective promise to end hunger by 2030, we must work together. We have a shared global responsibility. Let us hold offenders accountable. I have hope of success. I thank you for your kind attention.