



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

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**Statement**

by

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Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

**The Situation in Afghanistan/ United Nations Assistance Mission in  
Afghanistan (UNAMA)**

United Nations Security Council  
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New York

Thank you, Madam President,

I begin this morning by expressing our condolences to the People and Government of Niger for the senseless killings of innocent civilians in Southwestern Niger. We condemn this action in the strongest terms and we stand in solidarity with the people of Niger, as they mourn the loss of life and grapple with this most recent and heinous terrorist attack.

I also thank Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons for her comprehensive briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and the work of UNAMA, and the Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Shaharзад Akbar for her invaluable contribution to this debate.

Today, violence levels in Afghanistan are unacceptably high, undermining confidence in the negotiation process. The only path to durable peace in Afghanistan remains an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process towards a political settlement and an immediate, unconditional and comprehensive ceasefire to facilitate the peace negotiations. Women's participation in and support for the peace process, is crucial to ensure its effective implementation and sustainability.

Despite the U.S.-Taliban agreement made on 29 February 2020 and the initiation of Afghan peace talks in September 2020, many challenges remain. The Afghan peace negotiations represent a real prospect for sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan. We welcome the joint statement on the extended "Troika" on Peaceful Settlement in Afghanistan following the Moscow international conference. We also take this opportunity to encourage the parties to accelerate peace talks and hope that they can recommit to this process.

The security situation in Afghanistan remains precarious. We condemn in the strongest terms acts of violence committed against civilians that have exacerbated an already alarming humanitarian situation. Far too often civilians and civilian objects, such as hospitals and schools, are targeted on purpose. We recognize the urgent need for a humanitarian response and to mobilize resources for the Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2021. In reaffirming the enduring commitment of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to Afghanistan and its people, we underscore the urgent need to minimize harm and suffering caused by the armed conflict, protect civilians and allow unhindered access of humanitarian relief to the

affected areas. We also renew our call on the parties to the armed conflict to end the violence and promote confidence building. All parties, to the armed conflict must comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law to better protect and assist the civilian population.

It is also particularly worrying that women and children account for the majority of those adversely affected by the armed conflict. Specific measures must be taken to maintain the safety of victims of armed combat with an emphasis on women and children. We encourage the Government to bolster its promotion and protection of the rights of women and children and address the needs of victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the conflict.

A unified approach to increasing the quality of life for all Afghans must be built by the Afghan government and all segments of society. In this connection, we welcome and support the second version of the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF 11) for 2021-2025. Delivering on the SDGs, such as (SDG 16) peace, justice, and strong institutions should remain an integrated and indivisible package in ensuring no one is left behind in Afghanistan.

Finally, we reiterate our support for the work of UNAMA acknowledging its close cooperation with key stakeholders, including OHCHR and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. We also welcome the appointment of UN Secretary-General's Personal Envoy on Afghanistan and Regional Issues, Jean Arnault and wish him every success in his new role aimed at strengthening relations with regional countries and supporting the peace negotiations. At this critical juncture, we reiterate our call on the international community, particularly regional countries, to support the conditions for advancing sustainable development, peace and stability in Afghanistan and the wider region.