



**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](mailto: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

**VTC Debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina**

May 4, 2021  
New York  
United Nations Security Council

Thank you, Mr. President.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines thanks High Representative, Mr. Valentin Inzko for his briefing, as well as his team's commitment to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We begin by expressing our deep concern over the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the population. We appeal to the international community to lend support in any way possible, and underscore the importance of prioritising the health and safety of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is critical that relevant authorities set aside political differences, and create, with the greatest sense of urgency, a coordinated framework and unified response to counter the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and ease its impact on the population.

The rule of law remains a key characteristic of any society determined to secure stability, peace and good governance. It is important to combat divisive rhetoric and policies, corruption; and quell any conduct inimical to the overall peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the wider region. To this end, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines urges all relevant authorities and leaders to strengthen the rule of law.

Additionally, we recognise the significance of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including as it relates to the creation of an environment conducive to the voluntary return and integration of refugees into communities. It is concerning that the most recent report on the implementation of the Peace Agreement documented the continued glorification of war criminals, divisive rhetoric, and targeted attacks on religious property; all of which make the dignified return of refugees challenging. This is evidence that efforts towards implementing the General Framework Agreement must be strengthened in order to move the country forward, in a sustainable manner. We call on all parties to respect their obligations under the Agreement, and fulfil, in earnest, their commitments made under international law, and to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Wanton disregard of the rule of law and international commitments will only operate to undermine progress and move Bosnia and Herzegovina further away from reconciliation and durable peace.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines affirms its support for the stability, political independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the role of the Office of the High Representative. It is important that all relevant actors and stakeholders work to implement the Peace Agreement in good faith, and have an open dialogue about where implementation is falling short.

I thank you.