



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

At the

**United Nations Security Council Briefing on the Middle East  
(Yemen)**

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United Nations Security Council

Thank you Mr President,

We also thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and USG Mark Lowcock for their briefings. We extend our gratitude for their sustained leadership, engagement and efforts on this file, and unwavering commitment to the people of Yemen. We very much welcome the insightful remarks of Ms Naji-ba Al-Nag-gard. Your activism is indispensable to achieving lasting peace in Yemen.

The conflict in Yemen is a multidimensional and toxic mix of continued fighting, a catastrophic humanitarian situation, and economic collapse, all existing simultaneously against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. We condemn the unabated fighting that has resulted in May being one of the deadliest months for civilians in the conflict for 2021. Also unacceptable is the impact of the fighting on the region, as recently exemplified by the drone attack against a school in the city of Asir, Saudi Arabia. These continued attacks, which constitute a violation of international law, have denied over two million children access to education. We strongly urge the parties to work with the SRSG on CAAC to establish an action plan to end and prevent the grave violations of children rights.

The recent announcement by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition to end attacks is a much-welcomed initiative, necessary to create an environment conducive to the peace process. Without a nationwide ceasefire and a resumption of political talks, civilians in Yemen will continue to carry the burden of this conflict. It is critical, therefore, that the parties honour their obligations under international humanitarian law, which demands the rapid and unimpeded passage of impartial humanitarian relief for civilians in need. In a country where malnutrition rates among women and children remain the highest in the world, humanitarian assistance is the difference between life and death. To this end, while we welcome the improved operating environment, the increase in funding for the Humanitarian Response Plan, and WFP's announcement to resume monthly distributions to approximately 6 million people in areas with the highest rates of food insecurity, the situation remains so dire that we must collectively redouble our efforts. We must also pay close attention to the plight of migrants and refugees living in Yemen as well as using it as a transit point.

While the humanitarian situation needs our attention, another issue is the economy. The decreased purchasing power of Yemeni households makes basic goods and services inaccessible to many. We echo USG Lowcock's appeals for support to the economy and call for a lifting of restrictions on civilian commercial imports.

The only way to achieve durable peace in Yemen is to resume political negotiations. For this to be successful, certain prerequisites are needed. First, the political process must be inclusive of all groups within Yemen, including women and civil society organisations, who play a critical role in local mediation and peacebuilding. Secondly, discussions must account for, and sufficiently reflect, the plurality of voices that exist within Yemen. Finally, the process must be Yemeni-led, and Yemeni-owned. An absence of political will would render all efforts to achieve peace futile.

Ms Al Nag-gard underscored that “Yemen is at a breaking point”—she emphasised also that the Yemini people feel abandoned by the international community. We must be mindful of this. We, therefore, echo Martin’s assessment that “time is not on Yemen’s side”.

Before concluding, we turn our attention to the issue of the SAFER tanker. Our appeals for concrete progress on this issue and for the parties and relevant stakeholders to avoid its politicization must not become mere platitudes. We must continue to exert pressure on the parties, both bilaterally and multilaterally, until there is an adequate resolution. The potential impact of a spill or explosion is far too grave for us to relent.

Mr President,

In closing, we commend the diplomatic engagement and the commitment displayed by the international community and various humanitarian organisations to the people of Yemen. I have no doubt that this commitment, coupled with political will from the parties, will result in a political solution that limits the multigenerational impact of the conflict, and results in a stable, peaceful and prosperous Yemen. As Mark so aptly concluded earlier, “War has solved nothing. It is indeed time to give peace a chance.”

I cannot cede the floor before conveying our heartfelt gratitude to you, Martin, for your dedication to this file and to the people of Yemen, yours will be big shoes to fill—for you have poured your heart and soul into finding a solution. We will miss you and we wish you well in your next assignment. Mark we also thank you for your unwavering efforts, dedication and service and we wish you all the best as you move on. Peace profound to you both.

I thank you.