



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

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**Statement**

By

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At the

**United Nations Security Council Briefing on UNAMI**

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Thank you, Mr. President. We begin by expressing our appreciation to Ms. Jeanine Heniss-Plasschaert for her briefing on the recent developments in Iraq, and her efforts made towards the discharge of UNAMI's mandate.

We welcome the Government's commitment to conducting free and just elections. We recognise the importance of the enhanced technical support provided by UNAMI to the Independent High Electoral Commission, which has made significant advancements in its preparation towards elections. UNAMI's deployment of additional electoral advisers will contribute to the integrity of the electoral process, and we encourage Iraq's international partners to positively consider the Government's request for electoral observers. The elections will be a flagship moment for the people of Iraq to exercise their rights to freely choose their representatives, make their voices heard, and for the trust between the Government and the citizens to be bolstered. To this end, we emphasize the importance of broad and genuine participation from all sectors of society in the elections. We encourage the Government and stakeholders within the country to engage in dialogue in these critical weeks preceding the scheduled elections. We stress that the involvement of women in elections and in the government will advance the shaping of an inclusive and prosperous Iraq, as women play an important role in the stability, progress and long-term development of nations.

Indeed the holding of free, fair and credible elections is critical to the future of Iraq. Also important to its reconstruction is respect for human rights and the rule of law. The preservation of these core pillars requires accountability and justice, and we call on the authorities to ensure that violators of human rights, including those that targeted civil society activists, human rights defenders and peaceful demonstrators, are held accountable. In this context, we express concern that attacks by ISIL

continue to be carried out, and continue to result in civilian casualties. It is imperative that these perpetrators are also held accountable and that justice for the victims and survivors is secured. In this vein, we recall the adoption of the milestone Yazidi Female Survivors Law, and welcome the progress that has since been made, particularly the establishment of a General Directorate of Yazidi Affairs, to which a Yazidi female lawyer was appointed Director General.

The overall stability of the region is closely linked to the security and stability of individual countries within. A collaborative regional approach to challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and terrorism, is indispensable to regional peace, security and sustainable development. Barriers to this regional cooperation must be overcome, and dialogue is a key tool to this end. We therefore welcome the efforts undertaken by the government to engage with regional countries, with a view to enhancing regional ties and coordinating on common issues and threats. The sustained engagement with international partners and key stakeholders is also important.

Before concluding, we recognise the dedication of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait to resolving the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, which is important to ensuring closure for the affected families. Progress made despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic is indicative of their unwavering commitment to the file.

In closing, we emphasize Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence over its internal affairs. We reaffirm our support for UNMAI and the Government of Iraq, and continue to stand in solidarity with the people of Iraq. Thank you.