



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

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Statement

by

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Thank you Mr. President,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes today's discussion, and we thank the Secretary-General António Guterres for his keen remarks.

Peacekeepers are deployed under the most volatile conditions where they face immense threats to their own security, and that of the communities they are mandated to protect. Against this backdrop, we must redouble our efforts to keep them safe as we honour them for their selfless commitments and sacrifices. To this end, we commend today's adoption of the Presidential Statement (PRST) on Peacekeeping and Technology and congratulate the Republic of India for its leadership on this important issue.

Mr. President,

A wide array health, socioeconomic, political, security and environmental hazards threaten stability in conflict-affected countries. These interconnecting challenges - *which include the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, and asymmetric threats posed by terrorists, armed groups and organized criminals* - undermine the effectiveness of peace operations and place at risk the lives of their uniformed and civilian personnel.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines condemns, in the strongest terms, recent hostilities that targeted peacekeepers in northern Mali and aggressions against UNAMA's compound in Afghanistan. These incidents provide a striking reminder that all attacks against UN

personnel and infrastructure - *wheresoever and by whomsoever committed* - must be promptly investigated and those found responsible must be held to account. Under no circumstance should impunity for attacks against peacekeepers be tolerated.

It is widely accepted that innovative technologies serve as force multipliers in mission settings by:

- improving surveillance, information gathering and peacekeeping intelligence;
- increasing situational awareness and strengthening force protection;
- enhancing strategic communications, including capacities for monitoring and countering disinformation, misinformation and hate speech; and,
- supporting decision-making and mandate delivery at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.

We must strive to ensure that these competencies are made widely available to each peacekeeping operation. In this regard, it is crucial that all stakeholders, including troop and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs), Member States, and the Secretariat work closely together to provide each mission with adequate resources as well as clear, focused and actionable mandates to ensure that peacekeepers are able to discharge their duties safely and efficiently. Enhanced triangular cooperation is essential for implementing resolutions 2436, 2518, and other relevant outcomes that address peacekeeping performance and bolster the safety and security of peacekeepers.

It is imperative that modern technologies that assist with explosive ordnance detection, management and disposal are made available to all mission settings and - *whenever possible* - transferred to host-countries that grapple with the residual risks of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other remnants of war. IEDs have claimed the lives of far too many uniformed and civilian personnel. It is also crucial that peacekeepers are provided with safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines to protect them and the host-communities in which they are deployed.

To conclude, Mr. President, my delegation commends all efforts to modernise peacekeeping through measures such as the Secretary General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative and the United Nations Strategy for the Digital Transformation of Peacekeeping. We also welcome all efforts to increase the use of renewable energy technology in UN peacekeeping missions. These technologies improve climate compliance, enhance mission efficiency and bolster the safety and security of UN personnel.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines encourages further integration of modern technology into peacekeeping and emphasise that these technologies must always be reliable, gender-responsive, environmentally-friendly and meet the practical requirements of peacekeepers in the field. They must also - *in every circumstance* - fulfil the national needs and priorities of the host-countries in which they are deployed.

I thank you.