



**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 the Middle East
(Yemen)**

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Thank you, Madam President.

We thank our briefers for their insightful remarks and their unwavering efforts to finding a durable solution to the conflict in Yemen. The work being undertaken by Ms. Al-Qadhi, including through the Marib Girls Foundation for Development and the “Peacemakers” initiative, is crucial to the safety and security of Yemen’s youth, and by extension, indispensable to the long-term prosperity of the country. We also extend congratulations to Special Envoy Hans Grundberg on his recent appointment to this position, and welcome his presence with us this morning.

Once again, we call for an immediate, lasting ceasefire among the parties involved in the Yemeni conflict. The recent launch of attacks into Saudi Arabia from Houthis in Yemen only underscores the urgent necessity for all sides to truly commit to a ceasefire. We condemn these most recent attacks as well as indiscriminate airstrikes and shelling of civilians, and destruction of objects critical for civilians, which have so characterised this war in Yemen. Even before the dust settles, we ought to have an open and frank conversation about reconciliation between the parties, an indispensable component of which is accountability. Our role as a Council, and as individual Council members, is to do our utmost to help facilitate the warring parties to reach a settlement, and to act responsibly when providing support to one party or another.

The impact of the protracted conflict is evident in the collapse of Yemeni institutions and the fragmentation of the social fabric. The brunt of this is borne primarily by those most vulnerable: women and children. Hostilities and displacement threaten millions of people, and we are all acutely aware that fighting on multiple frontlines across the country continues to destabilise an already fragile situation. The overall humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate, in parallel with the economy, as many Yemenis lack the purchasing power needed to afford food and basic necessities. To this end, we recognise the need for unhindered passage of humanitarian aid, particularly against the backdrop of a third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and an active rainy season that triggered, for the second time this year, the nationwide flood preparedness plan as Yemen faces the climate crisis from a very vulnerable position. In this context, we recall the relevant provisions under international law, to which the parties of the conflict are legally bound. We also call on the international community to sustain and increase its support for the Humanitarian Response Plan. We hope that the humanitarian event organised by Sweden, Switzerland and the EU this month will be seized as an opportunity for the international community to renew its commitment to the people of Yemen. In this vein, however, we note that humanitarian aid is merely palliative. The only viable solution to the conflict is an inclusive Yemeni-led, Yemeni-owned and Yemeni-focused political solution that reflects the complexities on the ground and addresses the root causes of the conflict.

Any reference to the political process will be incomplete without recognising the role of women, who make up a significant portion of the Yemeni population. Women are present and active on the ground in Yemen, including on the frontlines, and were some of the first to call for a ceasefire in Yemen to respond to COVID-19. Women in Yemen have demonstrated their resilience, strength and determination, and a peace process that marginalises this group is destined for failure. Women must be included in all aspects of the peace process, not only when dialogue commences. We urge the Special Envoy to work with Women groups and leaders in Yemen, and for this Council to continue inviting women briefers to enrich our meetings.

Before closing, we stress the need for concrete progress to be made on the issue of the SAFER oil tanker. Its dilapidated condition increases the risk of a disaster, the occurrence of which has the potential to cause irreparable damage to the environment and the livelihoods of many in the Red Sea Region. In this context, we recognise that a lack of trust can act as a barrier to compromise, and we encourage the parties to undertake confidence-building measures that can open the path to a pragmatic solution.

We affirm our support to Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and the people of Yemen, and reiterate our commitment to work constructively towards a solution that ensures long-term peace, stability and prosperity of Yemen.

Thank you.