



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

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Statement

By

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Permanent Representative

Small Arms and Light Weapons

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Thank you, Mr. President and we commend Kenya for convening this very important and well-timed briefing. We also thank our briefers for their presentations.

The illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons have contributed to instability and insecurity in many regions and constitute threats to international peace and security. For this reason, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as a State Party to the Arms Trade Treaty, recognizes the importance of sustained international cooperation and national action to mitigate the global impact of illicit weapons flows. We firmly support the implementation of the Programme of Action and International Tracing Instrument, to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects at all levels.

Strengthened partnerships between the United Nations and regional, subregional and interregional organizations are required to combat the incessant illicit trade, in line with resolution 2457 (2019). At the regional level, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) recognises the necessity of mechanisms to protect our people. Even though we do not manufacture small arms and light weapons and we do not import them on a large scale, our region continues to be severely impacted by irresponsible and illicit weapons flows, aided by permissive gun laws in many manufacturing countries. CARICOM has therefore accelerated the Roadmap for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030. We are also firmly supportive of analogous arrangements such as the African Union's "Silencing the Guns" initiative and the regional road map for the Western Balkans. However, these efforts will be all for naught if states that manufacture arms and engage in their trade do not assume greater responsibility for the consequences of this trade. Undoubtedly, domestic policies can have harmful implications beyond borders.

The misuse of small arms and light weapons continues to hinder our pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. The high number of grave violations against children, as well as the serious threat posed to women and girls, all linked to the use of small arms and light weapons is alarming. Further, the availability and ease of movement of small arms and light weapons in the Sahel and Central African regions enable terrorism and violent extremism and escalates intercommunal tensions, which are being exacerbated by the devastating impacts of climate change. To

effectively protect civilians from the scourge of small arms and light weapons a “whole of system” approach is required, including Security Council engagement on the matter.

We underscore the necessity of building national capacity and institutional and policy frameworks to support effective disarmament, demobilisation, security sector reform and reintegration programs that provide for the inclusion and full and effective participation of women, youth and civil society. In this regard, we commend the work of the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

Mr. President,

Illicit arms flows create cross-cutting and multidimensional global challenges that all states are susceptible to. There must be concerted action to adequately address these challenges and safeguard peace and security.

I thank you.