



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

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Statement

By

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Counsellor**

International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

United Nations Security Council

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Thank you, Mr. President and I would also like to thank Judge Agius and Prosecutor Brammertz for their comprehensive briefings.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its unwavering support for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals which remains an essential pillar of the international criminal justice system. The Mechanism serves a critical role in the fight against impunity for mass atrocity crimes and continues to contribute significantly to national reconciliation. Further, its effective and efficient work in other practical aspects such as witness support and protection, the monitoring of cases referred to national jurisdictions, the preservation of archives and the provision of multi-faceted assistance to Member States cannot be overstated.

We are pleased to note that the Mechanism was able to deliver three judgments in June, keeping its caseload on track. This is indeed a notable accomplishment, and it certainly speaks to the tireless efforts and dedication of the staff and Judges of the Mechanism, despite the challenges resulting from the ongoing global pandemic. We applaud the Mechanism's commitment to operational continuity while still ensuring the health and safety of staff, witnesses and persons in detention.

We also commend the Mechanism's commitment to meeting the Secretary-General's gender parity goals among staff. This is necessary to create and ensure a more diverse and inclusive environment. We are however dismayed that the number of women judges now stands at only seven out of twenty-five. It is our hope that Member States will keep the current composition of the roster in mind when nominating future candidates.

The Security Council's vision of "*a small, temporary and efficient structure, whose functions and size will diminish over time*" cannot be achieved without international cooperation. In the absence of support and timely assistance from Member States, the search for missing persons, *whose families still do not know their fate*, and the tracking and apprehension of fugitives will be severely impeded. Further, the enforcement of judgments will not be guaranteed, and above all victims will be denied justice. Political will is much needed as non-cooperation undermines the administration of justice and the rule of law.

In the context of international cooperation, we welcome the announcement just made regarding the agreement between the Government of the Republic of Niger and the United Nations to facilitate the relocation and resettlement of the nine acquitted and released persons who were residing in Arusha, Tanzania for some time. We wish to commend the Republic of Niger for its assistance and cooperation and we recognise and commend the efforts of Registrar Tambaou which have finally resolved this matter and allowed these persons to resettle.

Mr. President,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines emphatically denounces all forms of genocide denial and the glorification of convicted war criminals. Genocide denial promotes dangerous ideologies, impedes the fight against impunity and hinders reconciliation. It further delegitimizes and shows wanton disregard for the suffering of victims of horrendous crimes - *for which the facts have been incontrovertibly determined*. The recognition, education and remembrance of painful periods in history are critical to preventing the re-emergence of hateful rhetoric and ensuring that such crimes are never repeated.

We must remain committed to the pursuit of international justice. As such, we urge Member States to intensify their cooperation with the Mechanism in the quest for accountability and the strengthening of the rules-based international system.

I thank you.