



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

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**Statement**

By

**H.E. Inga Rhonda King**

Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the  
Grenadines to the United Nations

At the

**United Nations Security Council Open VTC (Middle East - Yemen)**

May 14, 2020  
New York  
United Nations Security Council

**Briefers:**

Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths

OCHA USG Mark Lowcock

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Thank you, Mr President, Good morning everyone,

We welcome both of our briefers and thank them for their continued commitment to the Yemeni people.

Mr President,

It is with regret that we must now accept that Yemen is fighting on two fronts. Years of war have destroyed many of the country's institutions, and now, the Yemeni people are contending with COVID-19, the transmission of which continues to increase. As a result of the longstanding conflict, Yemen's health care system has been shattered and is under strain, with only half of its hospitals operational.

Most of the population still desperately needs humanitarian aid, as they lack food, drinking water, fuel and access to healthcare. In this regard, the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian relief in accordance with international law is key for the survival of many people. The scaling down of some operations and possible closure of others represent the difference between life and death and we take this opportunity to thank those countries and agencies that continue to sustain aid operations through their donations.

The impact of COVID-19 will be felt acutely across the country, where many are grappling with lost livelihoods. Yemen remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis and it is unthinkable that the humanitarian needs of people will be worsened with the impact of COVID-19. It is critical, therefore, that the international community assists in strengthening the capacity of the Yemeni government to protect peoples' lives and livelihoods in the future. And we welcome the humanitarian pledging conference elaborated by Ramesh.

Amidst the COVID-19 response there remains a need for a political solution to the protracted crisis. We do welcome the extension of the ceasefire, and we emphasize the need for Yemeni responsibility and collective ownership over the political process in Yemen. This is the only path to a dignified advancement of Yemen, its institutions and political expressions. In order to strengthen the socio-cultural rubric necessary for sustainable peace, it is critical that all groups in society be included throughout the political process.

We conclude, Mr President, by underscoring, yet again, the need for progress to be made in addressing concerns over the SAFER oil tanker, which threatens the marine environment, as well as the lives of many people in the region.

Like Martin, I remain hopeful, on behalf of the Yemeni people, that sustainable peace can be achieved and dignity restored.

Thank you.