

Delegation from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Position Paper for the United Nations Security Council

The topics before the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are: Youth, Peace and Security; Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts; and The Situation in Myanmar. For Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) it is a great honour to occupy a non-permanent seat in the SC during the 2020-2021 period. Even as the smallest ever SC seat holder, we are aware of the high responsibility that goes along with a membership in the SC and therefore look forward to fruitful discussions on the given issues.

I. Youth, Peace and Security

In many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, young people are adversely affected by conflict and different forms of violence. This is the reason why youth is often seen a fruitful soil for all kinds of instability. *The Youth on the Bloc survey in SVG* (2011) provided a situational analysis of youth. While unemployment is the biggest difficulty young people in our country have to face, they are also affected by underachievement in the educational system and rising levels of violence and drug trafficking. We are highly concerned about these serious problems our young generation is confronted with, as these are the reason why they are vulnerable to involvement in criminal activity and can become a serious threat for peace and security. However, we do not primarily see youth as a catalyst for instability. We are working ambitious on improving youth's situation in our country in order to exhaust the full potential young people entail to make our world a better place.

In 1996, SVG adopted a *Youth Policy Document* providing guiding principles for the active inclusion of opinions, talents, initiatives, resources and experiences of Vincentian youth. It focuses on providing employment for our youth, ensuring qualified education, taking care of physical and mental health as well as on upholding culture. Furthermore, we are signatory to *Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Youth Development Action Plan 2012-2017* as well as of *The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2006-2015*. We highly welcome SC resolution 2250 (2015) on "Youth, Peace and Security" which identifies five areas of action connected to youth: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships and disengagement & reintegration. *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security* (2018) is a great step towards adequate representation and participation of young people in decision-making processes.

SVG sees a tight connection between the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and climate change. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) our country is permanently endangered to get affected by natural disasters like inundation or hurricanes. Keeping in mind the serious threat that climate change poses to the future of global security, we want to emphasize our obligation to actively include young people as the ones mostly affected by this phenomenon in the decision-making process. Furthermore, our nation feels strongly committed to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the herein included Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). Referring to SDG 4, we put a national focus on providing young people with qualified education in order to prevent them from becoming vulnerable for criminal activity. We are encouraging all member states of the UN to further engage in education, with special attention on violence and crime prevention. Investments in youth are investments in the peaceful future of the particular country as well as in global security.

II. Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts

SVG luckily has not been targeted by any dramatic terrorist act in the past. However, terrorism is a problem that affects the whole international society and that no country is immune against. Terrorist acts are undoubtedly one of the most serious and current threats to global peace and security, which is the reason why we see the urgent need to further discuss this topic within the SC. Representing the region of South America and the Caribbean in the SC, we are also taking in consideration the standpoint of other south american states that are affected by terrorist attacks.

Our country is deeply committed to the principles established in the *Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism* (1995). Further critical documents that we support are the *International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings* (1997) as well as SC resolution 1372 (2001). We appreciate the work of the therein created *Counter-Terrorism Committee* (CTC) and its overseeing *UN Office of Counter-Terrorism* (UNOCT) created in GA resolution 71/291 (2017). The *UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy* established by GA resolution 60/288 (2006) is another milestone in the fight against terrorism as is established four pillars framing the global anti-terrorism policy. One of the most important issues particular states and the UN should focus on in the fight against terrorism is its funding. For this reason, we appreciate the international framework regarding this issue, made up by the *International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Financing* (1999). As a national contribution to the Convention, we adopted our national *UN Anti-Terrorism Measures Act* in 2002. We highly welcome the inclusion of the topic of terrorist

financing into the mandate of the *Financial Action Task Force* (FAFT) since 2001. In 2010, the *International Monetary Fund* (IMF) published a *Detailed Assessment Report on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism*. In this report SVG was analysed regarding the implementation of the recommendations on Terrorist Financing of the FATF. It includes various suggestions for improvement that we were and are working on effectively. For example, it suggests improving the interagency cooperation between our *Financial Intelligence Unit* (FIU) and other institutions with respect to investigations and prosecutions by establishing more formal arrangements. However, the report also emphasizes the strong commitment of our country regarding these issues and acknowledges the significant enhancement in our framework for national and international cooperation. On a regional level, SVG signed the *Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism* (2002), which, amongst others, aims at strengthening border controls and increasing cooperation among law enforcement authorities in different countries. The rising number of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) who travel abroad with the aim of participating in terrorist acts is the proof that terrorist organizations made big efforts in winning parts of society for their purposes. For this reason we welcome the decision of the SC to recognise FTFs as a global threat in SC resolution 2178 (2014).

In accordance with the UNOTC's report entitled *Enhancing the Understanding of the FTF Phenomenon in Syria* (2017) SVG is of the opinion that it is of the utmost importance to having regional, national and international bodies cooperating in effectively combating the flow of FTFs. Individuals susceptible for extremist ideas are the fertile soil for terrorist organizations. For this reason, we think that education and anti-terrorist campaigns in countries mostly affected by the FTF are key issues. A special focus should stay on the currently most prominent terrorist organization ISIL (Da'esh), which the SC already addresses in SC resolution 2368 (2017). Even if ISIL was defeated militarily in Iraq and Syria, it keeps threatening the peaceful living together on our planet. We are encouraging the whole states society to remain actively seized of the matter in order to guarantee international peace and security.

III. The Situation in Myanmar

When the UN was founded in 1945, the aim of maintaining international peace and security was enshrined in Article 1 of the UN Charter. Since then, the UN is deeply engaged in establishing a peaceful world for all people. One of the most important international documents is the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) which established fundamental human rights valid for all people. Unfortunately, there are still innumerable people for whom the UN could neither guarantee a secure environment nor essential human rights. The ethnic minority of Rohingya people in Myanmar is highly affected by these grievances. Only the most recent wave of violence against Rohingya people in 2017 led about one million people to flee to Bangladesh and other southeast Asian countries. SVG would like to express its deepest concern about the human rights violations that took and take place.

In conjunction with the happenings in 2017, the GA adopted resolution 72/248 urging the government of Myanmar to end the violence and outlining measures to support refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The *UN Human Rights Council* (UNHCR) is the UN body which is mostly involved in the topic on a political and humanitarian level. Its recent resolution 37/32 (2018) also directly addresses the government of Myanmar with a focal point on human rights violations. Furthermore, it negotiated memorandums with the governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar ensuring that Rohingya refugees have safe refuge in Bangladesh until the living conditions in Myanmar improved so that they can return. SVG supports the high engagement of the UNHCR as it is of the utmost importance to ensure human rights for all people no matter of which ancestry. The SC released statements on the topic, the most recent being statement 2017/22 in 2017 calling upon the Myanmar government to take responsibility for the incidents. Moreover, there has been a delegation from the SC visiting Myanmar with the purpose to establish UN principles, build positive relations with local governments and improve safety. SVG is deeply saddened that these efforts did not lead to fruitful outcomes.

Our country is committed to the principles of non-intervention and non-interference into domestic affairs. However, we also see the urgent need for the international society to take action considering the tragedy that is happening to Rohingya people in Myanmar. The *Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis* (2018) is the most concrete framework that addresses the issue. Although we strongly support the Plan, we are very limited in our financial resources. Considering the fact that from the required \$950 million so far there only have been provided \$680 million, we are calling upon all member states with bigger resources to widen their financial support. Furthermore, SVG is directly addressing the government of Myanmar to take a clear position and distance itself from the violations committed by the military. The government of a country is responsible for the wellbeing of the people living in it and therefore should make all possible efforts to guarantee fundamental human rights to everybody. Concluding, SVG is emphasizing its willingness to foster international cooperation within member states of the UN in order to find ways how to improve the situation of Rohingya refugees. We are not allowed to stop the fight for unrestricted human dignity until it is assured for all people.