



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

685 3rd Ave., Suite 1108, New York, NY 10017 • Tel: (212) 599-0950 • Fax: (212) 599-1020 •

svgmission@gmail.com | <http://svg-un.org>

Remarks

by

Dr. The Honourable Ralph E. Gonsalves

Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the
Grenadines

International Ministerial-level Meeting on Haiti – Global Affairs Canada

1/21/2022

Please check against delivery

Your Excellencies,

1. I begin by thanking the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada for her invitation to participate in this critical meeting. I also extend warm greetings to the esteemed Foreign Ministers; I greet particularly, the Honourable Dr. Ariel Henry, Prime Minister of the Republic of Haiti. I am most pleased to note the participation, at this international ministerial meeting, not only from our hemisphere, but also from Europe, Japan, the OIF, the UN and its agencies. I urge that we involve, too, the African Union.
2. We gather today with the hope that our deliberations will bring us closer to finding lasting solutions to the multifaceted crises confronting our Caribbean sister nation. Undoubtedly, the precarious and pervasive political, socio-economic and security situation in Haiti is extremely worrying, presents daunting challenges and requires great attention from the international community.
3. St. Vincent and the Grenadines, together with CARICOM member states are committed to exhausting all possibilities to assist Haiti. Indeed, my government has been consistently advocating for more robust engagement and sustained support from the international community, evident most recently when we hosted, along with Kenya, Niger and Tunisia (the A3+1), a High-level Arria Formula, on October 15, 2021, during our tenure as a non-permanent member on the United Nations Security Council.
4. We therefore welcome this initiative by Canada and take this opportunity to share the following observations.
5. First, we are mindful of Haiti's deeply entrenched challenges and do not expect them to be resolved overnight. We, however, reaffirm that the crises can only be resolved by peaceful means, through an inclusive inter-Haitian dialogue process.
6. Cognizant of the highly complex political landscape, we stress that Haiti's political organisations and civil society groups must advance a Haitian-led and Haitian-owned process to address its problems and promote national reconciliation.
7. In this context, we call on all political parties and stakeholders to soften deeply held positions, build trust, exhibit compromise and undertake actions that herald willingness to bridge the existing political chasm to facilitate dialogue. We further commend to Haiti, the instruments and tools available through CARICOM, to assist in this regard, as outlined by our Secretary General.
8. Second, the socio-economic and humanitarian situation is of grave concern. Abject poverty, which is a fundamental root cause of unrest and instability, needs to be tackled urgently. There

can be no genuine stability without strengthening the country's institutions and economy, including through a long-term strategy and commitment for sustainable development. It is therefore imperative that we accompany the Haitian authorities in the rebuilding and reforming of institutions, in particular the judicial system, and promote the sustainable development of the country.

9. Haiti's legacy of underdevelopment must also not be separated from its historic injustices. Accordingly, it would be remiss of me not to repeat our just and justiciable call for reparations.
10. The nexus between development, security and human rights is nowhere more evident than in Haiti. This brings me to a third and vital point - the security situation. Strengthening the state's security apparatus, specifically enhancing the capacity of the Haitian National Police (HNP) to restore stability and security, remains central. The disturbing levels of violence perpetrated by gangs, including kidnappings and sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, require urgent intervention.
11. Equally, allegations of egregious abuses at the hands of the police must be fully investigated. The net must be cast wider to stamp out corruption, end impunity and ensure good governance. Such an approach would help to create an enabling political climate to facilitate peace and security.
12. Additionally, I take this opportunity to repeat my call for traditional development partners of Haiti in the North Atlantic, Latin America, and elsewhere, in tandem with multi-lateral agencies to fashion, with the Haitian people, a veritable "Marshall Plan" so as to place Haiti on a path of sustainable development in the shortest possible time. Global funding, on a sustained basis, for Haiti is critical even as its political and judicial institutions are being credibly built and sustained.
13. Excellencies, as we commence this crucial year, the international community ought to revisit its approach in Haiti, particularly its peacebuilding approach. To this end, we look forward to the findings in April of the assessment to be conducted on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Haiti (BINUH) as mandated by the Security Council. We also look forward to a strengthened and more fit-for-purpose BINUH during the next renewal of its mandate.
14. St. Vincent and the Grenadines remains committed to seeing Haiti break these vicious cycles of crises and usher in an era of peace and prosperity. Haitians, however, must take ownership of their challenges and make the necessary effort to embark once again on the path of peace and stability. As demonstrated from the vicissitudes of their history, we are confident that our Haitian brothers and sisters will overcome the existing challenges and repair the gravely damaged fabric of their society. We owe a great historical debt to Haiti.
15. I thank you.