



**Statement by Ms. Kristie Russell, Third Secretary
Permanent Mission of The Bahamas to the United Nations Office and Other
International Organizations in Geneva
at the 39th Session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
Presentation of National Report by the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
3rd November, 2021**

The Bahamas extends a warm welcome to the delegation of our sister CARICOM State, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We thank the delegation for its comprehensive report and also commend the delegation for its active and constructive engagement in this important process.

In a constructive spirit, The Bahamas submits the following recommendations to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:

- (i) continue its efforts to reform the sexual offences legislation;
- (ii) proceed with the establishment of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Support and Referral Centre (VINCYSARC) for attending to survivors of violence; and
- (iii) consider extending a standing invitation to all Special Procedures Mandate Holders

We recognise the ongoing commitment of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the promotion and protection of human rights, despite challenges faced, including due to limited human and financial resources as well as the effects of climate change. We commend the county on the implementation of various human rights related legislation and are particularly pleased with the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (2015) as well as public awareness and educational campaigns undertaken.

We also congratulate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for progress in providing access to education, for example, by increasing the number of free preschool centers, and also its “One tablet per Child” initiative, where laptops and tablets were distributed to primary and secondary school students to facilitate school work and build ICT capacities.

We encourage St. Vincent and the Grenadines to avail itself of technical assistance and capacity-building support, in accordance with its human rights priorities and call on the international community to cooperate with the country in this regard.

We wish the delegation every success in this UPR process.

Thank you.