

Statement of United Nations Subregional Team for Barbados and the OECS

Adoption of UPR Working Group report for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

21 September 2016

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

The United Nations Subregional Team for Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (UNST) welcomes the report of the working group on the Universal Periodic Review of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The UNST welcomes the decision of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to create a National Human Rights Institution in conformity with the Paris Principles. The establishment of such a mechanism is an important step to effectively protecting the human rights of all Vincentians.

While the UNST commends the Government on the 2016 launch of its National Child Protection Policy Framework, and on the recent adoption of legislation regarding child care and adoption, the UNST urges St. Vincent and the Grenadines to pass and proclaim the Child Justice Bill, which embraces restorative justice and non-punitive approaches to dealing with young offenders.

Violence against women and children remain a serious concern and St. Vincent and the Grenadines should be commended on passing the new Domestic Violence Act and the adoption of the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence. The UNST urges the government to ensure implementation of these important pieces of legislation through appropriate resource allocation.

Finally, the UNST would like to commend St. Vincent and the Grenadines on its decision to establish an institutionalized, permanent mechanism to coordinate Government engagement with international and regional human rights mechanisms aimed at implementing recommendations and carrying out required reporting. This national mechanism for reporting and follow-up will hopefully address St. Vincent and the Grenadines' previous reporting challenges and will allow for the timely submission of treaty body reports moving forward.

Thank you

