



**PERMANENT MISSION OF ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
TO THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
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**STATEMENT BY
SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES TO THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
“TRIBUTE TO H.E. BERNARDO ALVAREZ, FORMER
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF VENEZUELA TO THE OAS”**

DECEMBER 1, 2016

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Assistant Secretary General, H.E Nestor Mendez;

Distinguished Excellencies, Alternate Representatives and Permanent Observers;

Members of the Staff of the OAS General Secretariat;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Good morning,

Death, although untimely, is inevitable.

It was with immense sadness that the delegation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines learnt of the passing of H.E. Bernardo Alvarez, former Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to this Organization. My delegation therefore pays homage to a distinguished diplomat and Venezuelan nation-builder, and extend our sincerest commiseration to his family, the staff of the Permanent Mission, as well as to the government and people of Venezuela on the loss of a great son, who has represented his country's ideals and interest immaculately in this Organization, particularly in this Council.

For my delegation, we have lost a very good friend and colleague, and we pray and hope that his family finds the strength and fortitude to assuage their grief in this time of mourning. Our beloved friend was a man of great tenacity, with a resolute spirit, passion and dedication. During his time with us, he was a champion of many causes, especially those regarding "diplomatic solidarity" and cooperation for the ennoblement of the peoples of our Americas. My delegation remembers vividly our engagements with Ambassador Alvarez, particularly his efforts in facilitating the visit of my Prime Minister during his Chairmanship of the Permanent Council, to address Member States on the vital issue of

“Reparations for Native Genocide and African slavery” – a topical issue for St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the entire Caribbean Community.

Indeed, Ambassador Alvarez’s physical presence will be deeply missed in these hallowed halls of this Organization, but my delegation takes solace in recognizing that his work and effort will continue to live on, his values will continue to reside in his children and his legacy will surely be remembered. The great book of Ecclesiastes 3 reminds us there is *‘a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens’*, and verse 2 of the said book declares “...there is a time to live and a time to die...”

Today we mourn the death of our friend, but we also celebrate his life, a life which epitomizes solidarity and progression, struggles and victories, a determined life which has inspired many in their pursuit for the upliftment of all humanity.

¡Qué viva Bernardo!

I thank you, Mr. Chairman
