



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

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Statement

by

H.E. Inga Rhonda King

Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United
Nations

At the

**Open Debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian
question**

United Nations Security Council
25 August 2020
New York

Thank you, Mr. President,

I also thank Special Coordinator Mladenov for his briefing on the evolving situation in the Middle East and for his unwavering commitment to the Middle East Peace Process.

We meet again at a critical juncture. The Security Council must solemnly reaffirm our commitment to uphold the vital principles of international law. In particular, we must—by all appropriate means at our disposal—safeguard the territorial integrity of the State of Palestine and promote peaceful settlement of the decades-long dispute.

Mr. President,

We welcome the recent announcement by the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to delay annexation activities in the occupied West Bank. Notwithstanding, we call on the Middle East Quartet to renew their efforts to help facilitate a peace agreement that is acceptable to both Israel and Palestine. It is a categorical imperative that the Quartet carefully examines and pursues all practical courses of action to lead the peace process to a successful conclusion.

We are all aware that annexation undermines international norms and constitutes a serious breach of international law. A continuation of these activities across the West Bank violates the terms of Security Council Resolutions 465, 476, 478, and 2334, as well as relevant UN General Assembly resolutions. We therefore remain deeply concerned about the expansion of Israeli settlements and associated infrastructure in the occupied Palestinian Territories, which have no legal validity and undermines the peace process. As such, we reiterate the demands of Security Council Resolution 2334 that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to fully respect all of its legal obligations in this regard.

Turning to the humanitarian situation; the dire needs of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza demand urgent attention amidst the surge in COVID-19 cases. The Palestinians cannot combat the pandemic alone, and in this regard, we once again urge the international community to ensure that UNRWA has adequate, predictable and sustainable financing to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. We also echo UNRWA's appeals that aid to Palestine refugees in Lebanon is built into the international community's immediate emergency response efforts and longer-term support plans following the horrific explosion in

Beirut that claimed the lives of two Palestine refugees, among many others.

Mr. President, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reiterates its firm commitment to the two-state solution and, in this context, also, we reaffirm our long-held position that “We will not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations.” Only through a negotiated two-state solution that addresses the needs and concerns of both Israel and Palestine can we achieve our long-held dream of peace in the Middle East. As Coordinator Mladenov says “today *is* the day to redouble our efforts” to that end before it is too late.

I thank you, Mr President.

Follow up Segment of VTC Re JCPOA

Thank you, Mr President, and we thank you for your update and assessment.

1. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines takes this opportunity to reaffirm its strong support for the JCPOA and we reiterate that the agreement

remains the only viable path to ensure a peaceful, comprehensive, and long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue.

2. We wholeheartedly believe that a commitment to dialogue and negotiation will not only preserve the JCPOA but will go a long way towards resolving the current issues.
3. The preservation of the JCPOA is critical to safeguarding peace and stability in the region and we once again urge all parties to commit fully to multilateralism and refrain from actions that are contradictory to the requirements and goals of Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA.
4. We maintain the position, outlined in the 20 August 2020 joint letter of the A3 +1 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), that: *“Having confirmed its withdrawal from the JCPOA and by not participating in any of the JCPOA structures or subsequent activities, the United States ceased to be a JCPOA participant and is, therefore, ineligible to submit a notification to the Security Council in terms of resolution 2231”*.

I thank you, Mr President.