



**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
29 September 2020
New York

Thank you, Mr. President,

I also thank Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, for his comprehensive briefing on the Secretary General's report on the implementation of resolution 2334 (2016).

Mr President,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains deeply concern about the trends unfolding on the ground. It is time for us as a Council to take significant steps that would stabilize the current situation and promote meaningful progress towards a two-State solution.

The prolonged occupation and conflict have caused immense suffering for the Palestinian people, as clearly highlighted in the latest report. Consequently, we remain particularly concerned about the numerous reports of violent incidents against civilians throughout the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. We therefore call on those responsible to respect their obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure civilian safety, protection and wellbeing.

We wish to draw urgent attention to the grave breaches of international law being perpetrated by Israel, despite the international community's

continuous calls for the complete, immediate cessation and reversal of settlement activities. Israel continues its illegal activities in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Demolitions and settlement activity contravene international humanitarian and human rights law and erode the viability of the two State solution. We strongly call on Israel to fully respect Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) and all other relevant provisions of international law and UN resolutions.

Here, it is relevant to underscore that international efforts to promote a peaceful settlement can only bear success by facilitating direct and meaningful negotiations between the parties. We call on the Middle East Quartet to renew their efforts and restore belief among Palestinians and Israelis that a negotiated peace agreement remains possible.

Turning to Gaza, Israel continues to intensify measures of repression against the Palestinians under its control, most flagrantly by its illegal, inhumane blockade of Gaza. Over the years, the blockade has deepened poverty in Gaza. According to the State of Palestine, Atlas of Sustainable Development 2020, poverty rates in Gaza (53%) are higher and more severe than in the West Bank (13.9%). We commend the United Nations and its partners' continued efforts to implement urgent humanitarian and economic interventions to help sustain lives and livelihoods of Palestinians in Gaza. We call on Israel to end its blockade of Gaza.

We commend the work of UNRWA in its quick and responsive support to the needs of Palestinian refugees that have been exacerbated by COVID-19. UNRWA continues to deliver in a constrained financial environment. In this connection, we call on the international community to redouble their support to the Agency's new humanitarian appeal from August through December 2020 to address the worst impacts of the pandemic on Palestine refugees across its five fields of operation.

In closing, Mr. President, the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its principled position in relation to the Palestinian question and remains committed to achieving a negotiated two-State solution, in conformity with the international consensus. We wish to emphasize our commitment to a peaceful and just solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

And finally, I would also like to express our condolences on the passing of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad, the Emir of the State of Kuwait, who will most certainly be remembered for his dedication and contribution to peace and security in the region.

Thank you, Mr. President.