



**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

**The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

United Nations Security Council  
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New York

Thank you Madam President,

I also thank Mr. Tor Wennes-land, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, for his briefing, and Mr. Oren Gian and Ms. Malak Abu-Soud for their excellent and deeply profound presentations.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines takes note of the ruling of the International Criminal Court (ICC) of justice that it has jurisdiction over war crimes committed in the Palestinian Territories. It is critical for the international community to actively participate in the global fight against impunity and render our unwavering support to the ICC. Moreover, we reaffirm that all states must comply with their obligations under the Rome Statute and relevant UN Security Council resolutions to cooperate with the ICC.

We welcome the recent announcement that Israel will vaccinate 100,000 Palestinians who regularly cross into Israel for work. Notwithstanding, the rollout of the coronavirus vaccine, with more than half of the occupied West Bank and Gaza yet to receive supplies, needs the urgent attention and support of the international community. We urge Israel to provide more coronavirus vaccines to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. We also commend the efforts of those countries that have supplied vaccines to the Palestinians and call on the international community to help fill the large funding gap for the

Palestinian COVID-19 vaccine plan. We must all work together tirelessly to confront the coronavirus crisis, in line with the UN's principle of 'Leaving No One Behind'.

In East Jerusalem, as in the rest of the West Bank, settlements, the demolition of homes and the displacement of Palestinians, are of deep concern. We condemn the ongoing demolition of Palestinian homes and the forced displacement of Palestinian families and we call upon the Israeli authorities to halt this unlawful eviction and end illegal demolitions of Palestinian property. Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory must immediately and completely cease. We reiterate that settlements have no legal validity, constitute a flagrant violation under international law and must be dismantled. Continued settlement activity violates the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and dangerously imperils the viability of a two-state solution based on the pre-1967 borders.

The social and economic impacts of the occupation on the Palestinians in the occupied territory, particularly the Gaza are increasingly dire. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza remains of deep concern for my delegation, especially now during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this connection, we call on the Israeli Government to take additional steps to lift the blockade on Gaza, particularly to allow medical treatment and humanitarian aid to those in need. Similarly, we call on the international community to address the financial situation of

UNRWA, which remains a serious concern for millions of Palestinian refugees.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reiterates its support for President Abbas decree issued on January 15, setting legislative, presidential and Palestinian National Council elections for later this year and welcomes steps taken so far towards Palestinian unity. All Palestinians should be granted the opportunity to exercise their constitutional right to vote and contribute towards Palestinian unity. Moreover, we welcome the presidential decree guaranteeing a minimum of seven parliamentary seats for Palestinians of Christian faith.

It is our firm belief that a lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved by peaceful means in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions and through credible and direct negotiations. Consequently, we reiterate the call of President Abbas for the United Nations to convene an international peace conference and encourage the Middle East Quartet to assist in this regard, in an effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the pre-1967 borders. Finally, we call on this Council to explicitly uphold international law, in promoting peace and security for the Middle East. From our outstanding youth briefers today, we heard that we need to build trust *and* we need a just solution for the

Palestinians—those are two aims that are inextricably linked. Thank you!