



**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, Mr President,

We thank Special Coordinator **Wennesland** and Mr. **Paulson** for their briefings. We also welcome the presentations of the distinguished Permanent Representatives of the State of Palestine and Israel.

As we heard from the briefers, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory demands urgent attention and action from this Council. The Security Council has an obligation to cooperate in solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Too much time has already been lost. It is critical that we collectively address the challenges facing Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory.

The expansion and acceleration of illegal settlement activities in the occupied West Bank, ongoing demolitions, seizures of Palestinian-owned property and evictions, continue to irreversibly undermine the peace process and the two-State solution. Moreover, we condemn Israel's most recent decision to advance construction of 540 illegal housing units in the Palestinian neighbourhoods of Beit Sa-fa-fa and Shara-fat. Israeli settlement activity "has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law," according to UN Security Council Resolution 2334. Once again, we call on the Israeli authorities to stop the building of new settlements and the extension of existing ones, cease all home demolitions, forced evictions and confiscation of land in the occupied territory, including in East Jerusalem.

Allow me to reiterate my Government's position that a two-State solution remains the only path to ensuring Palestinians and Israelis can both realize their legitimate aspirations, living side-by-side in peace and security, based on the 1967 borders, and with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

In the Gaza Strip, the living conditions remain dire. There is an urgent need to end the blockade, address the humanitarian and human rights situation, and the free movement of both goods and people into and out of Strip. Without the support that is flowing into the Gaza Strip from UNRWA, it would certainly be an even more dire situation. Consequently, we welcome the resumption of US funding to UNRWA and reiterate our call for sustained and predictable contributions to the Agency, especially considering Gaza's COVID-19 crisis.

As the COVID-19 incidence increases around the world, we commend the continuing efforts of the Palestinian Authority to protect its citizens. We welcome the second shipment of 72,000 vaccine doses through the COVAX program for the West Bank and Gaza and the provision of vaccines directly from other countries. Similarly, we encourage the international community, including Israel to ensure the availability of vaccines to Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory and throughout the region.

Turning to the upcoming Palestinian national elections, we support the Palestinians, as they work towards holding peaceful, free, fair, and inclusive elections. It is also imperative for Israel

to permit voting throughout the occupied Palestinian territories namely, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. A postponement of elections on account of access to voting in any of these areas would be unfortunate.

Mr President,

In the absence of a full resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is incumbent upon the United Nations, particularly the Security Council to make clear that any attempt to undermine the peace process is unacceptable. Equally important is the need for this Council and the Middle East Quartet to promote the resumption of meaningful dialogue and confidence building between Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

I thank you.