



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

685 3rd Ave., Suite 1108, New York, NY 10017 • Tel: (212) 599-0950 • Fax: (212) 599-1020 •  
svgmission@gmail.com | <http://svg-un.org>

**Statement**

by

**Ms. Isis Gonsalves**

Political Coordinator of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations

**The Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question**

United Nations Security Council

24 February 2020

New York

Please check against delivery

Mr. President,

I also thank today's briefer Mr. Mladenov for his briefing on the developments on the ground. I especially appreciate the presence here today of Mr. Parker, senior Adviser, Policy and Advocacy, at Defense for Children International – Palestine, to take part in this discussion.

Ultimately, lasting stability and security for the Middle East will come only if the Palestinians and Israelis meet for an advanced-level dialogue on all the issues pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This will require more transparent, responsive, accountable and participatory approach from both sides.

For Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, multilateralism in itself is valuable. Multilateralism can serve mainly as an answer to unilateral settlement policies and as a response to the failure of bilateral peace negotiations. We therefore reiterate our commitment to support peace and stability, to strengthen the international rule of law by strengthening effective multilateral mechanisms.

The most recent announcements to build thousands of new homes for Jewish settlers in the annexed part of East Jerusalem constitute a flagrant violation of institutional law and threaten to exacerbate the crisis between Israel and Palestine. In this connection, we declare our full support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and call for the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolution on Palestine and the achievement of a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian question.

In his speech on 11 February, the Secretary-General António Guterres reiterated his full personal commitment and the commitment of the United Nations to supporting the parties in their efforts to achieve a two-State solution. Similarly, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains committed to the two-state solution on the basis of the pre-1967 lines.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) continues to play a vital role in coming to the aid of more than 5.5 million Palestinian refugees. In this context, we commend the commitment of UNRWA to the delivery of an education for over 530,000 girls and boys at its 709 schools in the West Bank. UNRWA services also encompass health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance. In relations to the funding shortfall, we encourage donors to increase their financial commitment.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains gravely concerned about the violations and abuses against children. Most recently, a 17-year-old was killed in Hebron city on 5 February, and a 19-year-old male was killed on 7 February, next to a Barrier gate near Qaffin village. Children should never be the target of violence nor should they be put at risk of violence or encouraged to participate in violence. We underline the need for all parties to fully comply with international humanitarian law and to further protect those in situations of vulnerability, including children.

Allow me to express deep concern about settler-related violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. According to OCHA two Palestinians were killed and 14 Israeli soldiers were injured in three separate Palestinian attacks and alleged attacks on 6 February. Additionally, Israeli forces shot and killed two Palestinians and injured another nine, in clashes that erupted during a punitive demolition in Jenin city. Here today, we call for an immediate cessation of all military attacks throughout the Palestinian Occupied Territory, in particularly in the Occupied Gaza Strip. The violence must stop.

In conclusion, we stress the need to convene direct negotiation to reach a peaceful settlement allowing for the independent and sovereign state of Palestine to live side by side in peace and security with the state of Israel.

