

**UN Security Council**  
**Open Debate**  
**'The situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question'**  
18 April 2016 New York

**INDIA STATEMENT**  
**Ambassador/DPR Tanmaya Lal**



Mr. President,

Thank you for convening of this open-debate. We also thank the Secretary General for his comprehensive briefing earlier today.

Mr. President,

2. India has had a clear and consistent position on the Middle East Peace Process, which is to support a negotiated solution resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognized borders, side by side at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap and relevant UNSC Resolutions.

3. India's approach to Palestine is built upon three core dimensions of Solidarity with the Palestinian people; Support to the Palestinian cause and Support to Palestine's nation building and capacity building efforts.

4. Our continued commitment with the Palestinian cause and our friendship with the Palestinian people remain an integral part of India's foreign policy. This is reflected in the continuing high level exchanges including visits to Palestine by Indian leaders in the recent months, including at the level of President, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs.

5. As part of our ongoing support to the nation-building efforts of Palestine India has consistently extended technical and financial assistance to Palestine. India contributes US\$ 1 million annually to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). India had also contributed US\$ 4 million in response to the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza.

Mr. President,

6. We are concerned that since the last attempts for serious direct talks broke down two years ago, there has been a downward trend in the Peace Process despite efforts for serious negotiations between the parties, which remained inconclusive. Instead we saw an unfortunate escalation in Gaza. Unilateral actions by the parties, unfortunately, are moving them further apart.

7. India remains firmly convinced that dialogue is the only viable option that can effectively address the issue. We remain hopeful and urge both sides to resume the peace process soon, for a comprehensive, just and lasting resolution of the Palestinian issue.

Mr. President,

8. In Yemen, India has been urging all parties concerned to amicably resolve their differences to find a consensus-based solution. We are encouraged by the planned peace talks and hope that these will commence soon and lead to positive outcomes.

Mr. President,

9. On Syria India has consistently called for a comprehensive political resolution of the conflict, bringing all parties to the negotiating table. We hope that the intra-Syrian talks under UN auspices will ensure a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition, bringing an end to the violence in Syria and contribute to stabilising the country and the region.

10. The humanitarian situation in Syria and neighbouring countries has to be addressed effectively. India has contributed US \$ 4 million as humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees. India participated in the meeting on Syria in London in February 2016 and committed to provide bilateral humanitarian assistance to Syria.

Thank you.