



INDIA भारत

Statement by

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Deputy Permanent Representative

On the Question of Palestine

Agenda Item 35

29 November 2016

Mr. President,

Thank you, for convening this important discussion on the Question of Palestine at the General Assembly, as we mark the International day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Mr. President,

2. May I draw attention to the message from the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi issued on this important occasion.

3. In his message, Prime Minister Modi has reaffirmed India's support for the cause of Palestine and solidarity with the Palestinian people for their struggle for a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side by side and at peace with Israel, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

4. He has stated that India will continue to support the development and nation-building efforts of Palestine by extending technical and financial assistance. India has been actively helping Palestine in its reconstruction process through various kinds of projects assistance. India also contributes annually to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) fund. India has recently enhanced its contribution to UNRWA to US\$ 1.25 million. Five projects are also being undertaken in Palestine from the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Fund.

5. India reiterates its advocacy for a peaceful dialogue between Palestine and Israel and is hopeful of its early resumption.

6. On this important day, Prime Minister has further conveyed that our best wishes will remain with people of the State of Palestine on their journey in achieving the objectives of a just cause.

Mr. President,

7. Earlier this month, India's Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. M.J. Akbar visited Palestine for the first meeting of the India-Palestine Joint Commission. The Joint Commission will facilitate further cooperation in a range of sectors including Information Technology, Security, Youth Affairs and Sports, Education, Health, Agriculture, Tourism and Culture.

8. During his visit, foundation stone was laid for a US\$ 12 million Techno Park project in Ramallah. The project aims to contribute to Palestine's economy, create jobs for the Palestinian youth and facilitate expertise in the digital sector.

Mr. President,

9. India appreciates the commendable work done by the UNWRA over the last seven decades. India contributed US\$ 4 million to the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza. The Government of India also helped set up 2 vocational training centers in Yatta and Hebron. The India-Palestine Centre for Excellence in ICT and Innovation in Al Quds University, Abu Dees and its satellite Center in Ramallah are fully functional now and in July 2016, the first batch of students graduated from the Center.

10. More than 12,000 Palestinians have so far graduated from Indian universities. India offers 100 training slots in a range of sectors annually to Palestinians. This is in addition to 25 scholarships for higher education. India has also offered training to Palestinian security forces, Palestinian customs officials and diplomats.

Mr. President,

11. Regrettably, the security situation continues to deteriorate. The imperative need is of restraint and moderation. We firmly believe that dialogue is the only viable option in the search for a just, durable and comprehensive peaceful solution of the Palestinian issue. We hope that both sides will demonstrate the necessary political will to return to the negotiations.

I thank you, Mr. President.
