



INDIA
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STATEMENT

BY

**AMBASSADOR MANJEEV SINGH PURI
ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

AT THE

**64TH SESSION OF THE
UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,

At the outset, please allow me to express our sincere appreciation for scheduling this discussion on an important subject that demands our collective attention - The situation in the Middle East. Today's discussions that follow the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people are timely and appropriate.

Mr. President,

As a nation with age-old historic and cultural ties with the Middle East, India has an abiding interest in the early resolution of the unresolved issues that have troubled the region since the inception of the United Nations.

The West Asian region is of vital importance to India. The region is home to nearly 5 million Indians and is an important source for India's energy needs.

India's commitment to the Palestinian cause, as well as its solidarity with the Palestinian people, are well-known. Our ties with the friendly people of Palestine are rooted in our common history. India remains unwavering in its support to the Palestinian people in their struggle for their legitimate rights.

Mr. President,

The conflict in West Asia being essentially political in nature, it cannot be resolved by force. We have consistently supported the Middle East Peace Process in all its tracks and wish to see the creation of an environment for the earliest possible resumption of dialogue in the Middle East Peace Process.

We favour a negotiated solution wherein a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine can live within secure and recognized borders, side by side at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap and UNSC Resolutions 1397 & 1515.

We are also supportive of the Arab Peace Plan and have called for an end to Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory along with early easing restrictions within Palestine of free movement of persons and goods.

Mr. President,

India is aware that genuine peace in the region also requires resolution of other issues on the remaining tracks of the Middle East Peace Process, including restoration of other Arab lands that remain under occupation. Progress in the Lebanese and Syrian tracks of the peace process is important for achieving comprehensive and durable peace in the region. We are in regular touch with our interlocutors at the highest level.

Mr. President,

India remains steadfast in its commitment in rendering assistance to the Palestinian people, including in capacity building and national reconstruction.

India has also contributed to United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the region.

Mr. President,

Given the complexity of the task, unprecedented determination, goodwill and capacity to offer and accept compromises and concessions are needed on all sides. It is here that the members of the international community have a collective duty to help in creating a favourable environment within which the negotiations can move forward. Concerted and all round action is necessary to invigorate the peace process with the objective of achieving a durable, comprehensive and just settlement. We remain convinced that lasting peace in the region will contribute to global stability and prosperity.

Thank you, Mr. President.
