

# INDIA TERMS GAZA VIOLENCE AS GRAVE CONCERN IN UN MEET

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Calling for immediate resumption of talks between Israeli and Palestinian governments during an emergency session on violence in Gaza at the UN Security Council, India thanked the Egyptian government in particular for helping broker a ceasefire effective midnight on Tuesday.

The ceasefire came after three days of Israeli bombardment of Gaza buildings, in which more than 40 people, including 15 children were killed, while hundreds of rockets from Gaza were aimed close to Jerusalem, in violence that India said it views with “grave concern”.

“Long-term peace in Israel and Palestine can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution leading to the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side by side, at peace with Israel, taking into consideration the legitimate security needs of Israel,” said India’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ruchira Khamboj, adding that the “immense suffering” and loss of “precious civilian lives” was a matter of “grave concern” for India.

Speaking in one of her first interventions after presenting her credentials to UN Secretary General last week, Ms. Khamboj, India’s first woman Ambassador to the UN, said that of particular concern to India was the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, and called on the international community to prioritise a return to talks on the conflict.

Israeli defence forces claimed that the aerial bombardment was an operation targeting a militant group called the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and that Israeli jets had killed several of the group’s leaders during the weekend bombing.

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