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# India Pledges \$2.5 Million for Palestine and Reaffirms the Two-State Solution

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# India Pledges \$2.5 Million for Palestine and Reaffirms the Two-State Solution

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HOW

## WHY IN NEWS

At a **UN Security Council Open Debate** on the Middle East, India announced it will hand over **\$2.5 million** as the first tranche of an annual **\$5 million** contribution toward Palestine refugees through the **United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)**, and for development projects in Palestine. India's Permanent Representative to the UN, **Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni**, reaffirmed India's support for a **negotiated two-state solution** and called for a sustained ceasefire in Gaza.

## WHAT INDIA ANNOUNCED

ASPECT	DETAIL
Contribution	\$2.5 million (first tranche of an annual \$5 million)
Channel	UNRWA and development projects in Palestine
Forum	UN Security Council Open Debate on the Middle East
Spokesperson	Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni (India's PR to the UN)
Position reaffirmed	A sovereign, independent, viable State of Palestine alongside a secure Israel
Call	A sustained Gaza ceasefire

India described a negotiated two-state solution as the only path to lasting peace and security in the region.

## WHAT IS UNRWA?

ASPECT	DETAIL
Full form	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
Created	By UNGA Resolution 302(IV) of 1949; operations began 1950
Mandate	Relief, education, health and social services for about <b>5.9 million</b> registered Palestine refugees
Funding	<b>Voluntary contributions</b> only; mandate renewed every three years

### Why India's Pledge Matters Now

UNRWA is passing through its most precarious moment. It is funded **entirely by voluntary contributions**, and after Israel's 2024 allegations of staff links to Hamas, several major donors, including the **United States**, suspended funding, deepening a financial crisis at the agency serving Gaza's refugees. India's contribution is therefore both humanitarian and a **Global South signal** at a time when traditional donors have pulled back.

## INDIA AND PALESTINE: THE HISTORICAL ARC

India's stand is not new; it rests on a long and consistent record.

YEAR	MILESTONE
<b>1947</b>	India voted <b>against</b> the UN partition plan for Palestine
<b>1974</b>	India became the <b>first non-Arab state to recognise the PLO</b> as the sole representative of the Palestinian people
<b>1988</b>	India was among the first to <b>recognise the State of Palestine</b>
<b>1996 / 2003</b>	Opened a Representative Office in Gaza, later shifted to Ramallah
<b>2026</b>	Pledged \$2.5 million (of an annual \$5 million) and reaffirmed the two-state solution

This continuity is the bedrock of India's credibility on the issue.

## INDIA'S WEST ASIA BALANCE

India's position illustrates its "**de-hyphenated**" approach to West Asia, in which it builds strong, independent relationships with each major actor rather than viewing them through one another. The real skill is holding together partners who are often at odds:

- **Strong ties with Israel:** deep defence, technology and agricultural cooperation, making Israel a key strategic partner.
- **The Gulf:** an estimated **9 million-strong Indian diaspora** and major energy imports tie India closely to the Gulf states; India is part of **I2U2** (India, Israel, the UAE and the US).
- **Iran:** engagement through the **Chabahar port** and connectivity, despite sanctions pressure.
- **Palestine and the Global South:** the two-state stand and humanitarian support reinforce India's leadership credentials in the Global South.

The genuine tension is real: India must balance **strategic dependence on Israel and the Gulf** against its **Global South solidarity** with Palestine. The two-state line is precisely what lets it hold all of these at once.

## The IMEC Link

The **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**, announced at the **2023 G20 summit in New Delhi**, would connect India to Europe through the Gulf and the Levant via rail, ports, energy and digital links. Its viability depends directly on **regional stability**: continued conflict in Gaza stalls IMEC's northern leg, which is why a durable ceasefire and a two-state settlement are not just humanitarian goals for India but **strategic and economic interests**.

## UPSC RELEVANCE

### Prelims

- India pledged **\$2.5 million** (first tranche of an annual **\$5 million**) for Palestine refugees via **UNRWA**
- **UNRWA** was created by **UNGA Resolution 302(IV) of 1949** (operations from 1950); it serves ~5.9 million refugees and is **voluntarily funded**
- India was the **first non-Arab state to recognise the PLO (1974)** and recognised the **State of Palestine (1988)**; it voted against the **1947 partition plan**
- **IMEC** (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor) was announced at the **2023 G20 New Delhi summit**
- Note: UNRWA is a **UNGA** body; the pledge was announced at a **UNSC** Open Debate (India's last non-permanent UNSC term was 2021-22)

### Mains Angles

- 1 **GS2 International Relations:** Examine India's "de-hyphenated" West Asia policy and its balance between Israel, the Gulf and Palestine.
- 2 **GS2 Strategic Interests:** "For India, a two-state solution is a strategic and economic interest, not only a moral stance." Discuss with reference to IMEC.

- 3 **GS2 Global Institutions:** Analyse the UNGA-versus-UNSC dynamic on the Palestine question and India’s humanitarian diplomacy.

## FACTS CORNER

FACT	DETAIL
Contribution	\$2.5 million (first tranche of \$5 million annual)
Agency	UNRWA (UNGA Res. 302(IV), 1949; ~5.9M refugees; voluntarily funded)
Forum	UN Security Council Open Debate; Amb. Harish Parvathaneni
First non-Arab to recognise PLO	India, 1974 (recognised State of Palestine, 1988)
1947	India voted against the UN partition plan
Connectivity	IMEC, announced at the 2023 G20 New Delhi summit
Policy frame	De-hyphenated West Asia approach; I2U2; Chabahar (Iran)
Diaspora link	~9 million Indians in the Gulf

Sources: ANI, Ministry of External Affairs, UNRWA

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