

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
On the “Middle East - Syria / political-humanitarian”
Before the United Nations Security Council
New York, 25 November 2020

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Madam President,

After almost 10 years of conflict, the Syrian people continue to suffer from aggression, foreign occupation and terrorism.

Through unlawful occupation, inhumane sanctions, politicizing the return of refugees and IDPs and preventing international support for Syria’s reconstruction, certain countries are responsible for the prolongation of the conflict as they attempt to impose their own will on the Syrian people.

Such attempts are unlawful and immoral and doomed to fail.

Syrian crisis can only be settled through political means and the right to determine the future of Syria belongs exclusively to Syrians and the international community should assist them to realize this right.

It means sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria must be fully respected by all.

Any separatist agendas as well as illegitimate self-rule initiatives must be rejected and all foreign forces whose presence is not permitted by the Syrian Government must leave Syria.

In this context, the full, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Syria is essential. Instead of combatting terrorism, they continue supporting UN-designated terrorist groups such as Al-Nusrah Front (Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham) as well as looting the oil and wealth of the Syrian people.

Combating terrorists in Syria must be continued until the full removal of their threats. Obviously, this must be done with the utmost care for the lives of civilians. Terrorists must not be allowed to continue taking a large number of civilians as hostages and to turn places like Idlib into their safe haven.

We strongly condemn Israel’s continued aggressions against Syria’s sovereignty. The occupation of the Syrian Golan by Israel is unlawful and the recognition of its annexation to Israel by the U.S. is null and void. The recent provocative visit to the Syrian Golan of the U.S. Secretary of State was designed to legitimize the annexation. Golan is and will remain a part and parcel of the Syrian territory.

Underlining the importance of a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned and UN-facilitated political process, we continue to support the efforts of the United Nations and the SRSR Pedersen for political settlement of the Syrian crisis. Iran will spare no efforts to that end.

In this context, useful consultations including on the work of the Constitutional Committee took place during the recent visit of Mr. Pedersen to Tehran where he met with our Foreign Minister and other high-ranking officials.

Supporting the Constitutional Committee, which must operate without any external interference or pressure or setting any artificial deadline to conclude its work, we are hopeful that the true interests of the Syrian people will prevail over all interests.

Parallel to political process, international efforts must continue to facilitate Syria's reconstruction and the safe and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs to their original places of residence in Syria.

As an important effort in this regard, we welcome the international conference on the return of Syrian refugees, held on 11-12 November in Damascus, which has unfortunately been boycotted by some countries who politicize almost every issue related to ending the conflict, return of refugees and Syria's reconstruction. The interest of millions of Syrian refugees must not be held hostage for political gains by certain powers.

While the Syrian people are facing challenges of conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic, avoiding to assist the return of refugees will only increase and prolong their sufferings, which has already been deteriorated due to the imposition of inhumane unilateral sanctions by the United States.

The international community should not leave the Syrian people alone in their struggle to overcome the threats of terrorism and foreign occupation as well as economic terrorism resulting from these unlawful sanctions.

I thank you, Madam. President.