

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi**  
**Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations**  
**On “End Unilateral Coercive Measures Now”**  
**At the United Nations Security Council Arria Formula meeting**  
**New York, 25 November 2020**

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

**Mr. Chairman,**

Universal coercive measures including sanctions, disrupt economies, obstruct access to financial systems and foreign reserves, and above all, prevent access to food and medicine.

Contrary to the claims of some Western States, neither there are “smart sanctions”, nor food, medicine and other humanitarian goods are exempt from sanctions.

In practice, sanctions “disproportionately damage the most vulnerable and often the most innocent segments of society” as the Secretary-General has reported.

This means all sanctions target children, women, elderly, patients and the poor the most.

sanctions also have severe humanitarian consequences and sometimes lead to humanitarian crises.

Yet, the impacts of sanctions in a pandemic situation like COVID-19 are very vast, endangering also the health and lives of other nations, as no nation is spared and no one is safe until everyone all over the world is safe. Otherwise, the virus will spread like wildfire and kill more people the world over.

Iran has been under sanctions for over 40 years and now is facing the most extensive sanctions ever imposed on any country. Coupled with COVID-19 outbreak, sanctions continue to drastically inhibit our efforts against the pandemic.

Sanctions obstruct the full realization of the human rights of the targeted nations, including those stipulated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, according to which everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being, including food and medicine.

Ironically, this inhumane tool is applied only by some States who always portray themselves as the greatest advocates of human rights.

Furthermore, sanctions contravene the principles of the freedom of trade and navigation, negatively affecting the right of targeted and other nations.

To explain the effects of sanctions, let me give an example. While Iran has enough financial resources in certain countries, inhumane sanctions have prevented us from using them even for

humanitarian trade like medicine and medical equipment needed for curbing the COVID-19 and treating patients.

As a collective punishment of an entire nation, sanctions have no designation other than economic terrorism and actual war in which economic means replace weaponry.

By any measure, sanctions are immoral, inhumane, illegitimate and unlawful and a clear manifestation of the crimes against humanity.

The international community must take necessary measures for the immediate and full removal of sanctions.

**I thank you, Mr. Chairman.**