



Security Council

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Letter dated 29 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Further to my letters dated 3 January 2020 ([S/2020/13](#)), 7 January 2020 ([S/2020/16](#)) and 8 January 2020 ([S/2020/19](#)) regarding the assassination of Major General Qasem Soleimani, I am writing to you regarding the letter dated 8 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations ([S/2020/20](#)), in which, through a series of disinformation, fabrication and baseless accusations, as well as an extremely arbitrary interpretation of international law, particularly Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, a desperate attempt was made to justify the unlawful act of the United States armed forces in assassinating Martyr Soleimani. In this regard, I would like to bring the following to your kind attention.

In different parts of the letter, terms such as “Iran-supported militias” or “Qods Force-backed militias” have been used to attribute to Iran any action carried out against American forces in Iraq. The Islamic Republic of Iran categorically rejects the attribution to Iran of any armed attack against the United States by any entity or individual in Iraq and the region. Therefore, such an attribution is not only factually wrong but also professionally void of the minimum requirements of authenticity and reliability, thus making it legally null and void.

The United States has claimed that a “series” of “armed attacks” in recent months was conducted by Iran “on United States forces and interests”. In this context, I must stress that, during the years 2019 and 2020 and in gross violation of international law, the territorial waters and airspace of the Islamic Republic of Iran have been the subject of several intrusions and invasions and its armed forces have been the subject of armed attacks by the United States. Yet, in many cases, including on 20 June 2019, when a United States aircraft with 35 people on-board obviously violated Iran’s airspace, the Iranian armed forces exercised maximum restraint and avoided taking any action in self-defence. The details regarding this case and information on a number of other unlawful actions of the United States against my country are reflected in my letter dated 9 August 2019 ([S/2019/652](#)).

At the same time, in two cases that occurred in the years 2019 and 2020, specifically on 20 June 2019 – when a United States unmanned aircraft system, despite repeated radio warnings, violated Iranian airspace – and on 8 January 2020 – following the terrorist attack by the United States against Martyr Soleimani – the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran took measured and proportionate military action in self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The details of these actions are reflected in Iran’s letters dated 20 June 2019 ([S/2019/512](#)), 9 August 2019 ([S/2019/652](#)) and 8 January 2020 ([S/2020/19](#)).



Recalling the two aforesaid cases in self-defence, my Government firmly rejects the claim that the Iranian armed forces conducted armed attacks against the United States in the years 2019 and 2020.

I must also stress that the claim regarding an incident on 18 July 2019, with respect to the targeting of an Iranian unmanned aerial system by the United States, was rejected in Iran's letter dated 9 August 2019 (S/2019/652). Furthermore, the claims regarding Iran's "attacks on commercial vessels off the port of Fujayrah and in the Gulf of Oman", as well as "missile and unmanned aircraft attacks on the territory of Saudi Arabia", are mere fabrications by the United States, which were categorically rejected by Iran in our letters dated 19 August 2019 (S/2019/667) and 2 October 2019 (S/2019/785).

In light of the above and in the absence of any credible evidence or reliable fact to substantiate the conduct of even "one armed attack" by Iran, it is evident that the United States claim that "a series of escalating threats and armed attacks" was carried out by Iran is an absolute fabrication.

Additionally, the United States argument that it had used force to "deter" Iran from conducting "further attacks" has no factual or legal ground, as it is founded on mere fabrication as well as arbitrary interpretation of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, which is totally rejected.

Consequently, the attack to assassinate Martyr Soleimani is a "terrorist act", the legitimacy and legality of which cannot be justified on any ground whatsoever. As I stressed in my letter dated 3 January 2020 (S/2020/13), the designation, by one State, of an official branch of the armed forces of other State(s) as a so-called "foreign terrorist organization" is unlawful and cannot justify any threat or use of force against them.

The terrorist attack against Martyr Soleimani was a big gift from the United States to Daesh and other terrorist groups in the region – who welcomed his assassination, calling it "an act of divine intervention that benefitted"¹ them. However, in an outrageous act of cruelty, an official of the Department of State of the United States has threatened that Martyr Soleimani's successor will "meet the same fate".² This is an explicit and public threat to commit a terrorist act by a State, violating all principles of international law, norms of civility and responsible conduct. Warning about any further military adventurism or any possible terrorist act against Iran and Iranian citizens, including our armed forces, Iran stresses that it will not hesitate to exercise its inherent right to self-defence.

The United States has attempted deceitfully to portray itself as advocating dialogue and peaceful means in resolving differences with Iran. This is far from the truth. Recalling that, in only three consecutive days after the assassination of Martyr Soleimani, the President of the United States threatened in five separate instances to use force against Iran – the details of which are reflected in my letter dated 7 January 2020 (S/2020/16) – it is crystal clear that such an assertion is mere duplicity and void of any sincerity. Furthermore, the imposition of illegal and inhumane sanctions by the United States, as well as its other hostile practices against Iran, runs contrary to such a claim.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Majid Takht **Ravanchi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

¹ See www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-51021861.

² See www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-usa-envoy/successor-to-slain-iran-general-faces-same-fate-if-he-kills-americans-u-s-envoy-idUSKBN1ZM0KT.