



Security Council

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Letter dated 7 February 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you with reference to the Security Council's debate held today in connection with the agenda item "General issues relating to sanctions: preventing their humanitarian and unintended consequences". In this regard, I would like to bring the following to your attention:

We highly appreciated the convening of such an important meeting in the Security Council as it provided an opportunity for participants to demonstrate the negative consequences of sanctions for civilian populations.

While the Islamic Republic of Iran aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, we would like to highlight our national position on this important issue, transmitted herewith (see annex), as Iran has been subjected to the harshest economic and financial sanctions in history, which have directly affected the lives of Iran's most vulnerable citizens, including children, the elderly and those in need of medical care.

I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Majid Takht Ravanchi
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 7 February 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Iran's position on "General issues relating to sanctions: preventing their humanitarian and unintended consequences"

New York, 7 February 2022

Sanctions, according to the Secretary-General, disproportionately harm the most vulnerable and often the most innocent parts of the society.

All sanctions, unilateral or multilateral, have adverse consequences for civilian populations, disproportionately affecting the children, women, elderly, sick, and poor.

Sanctions also bring about grave humanitarian consequences. In a pandemic crisis like COVID-19, sanctions give rise to far-reaching repercussions, placing the health and lives of civilian populations in peril more than others.

Furthermore, humanitarian actors usually face difficulties working under the environment dominated by sanctions. Unintended effects of such measures can stymie the delivery of life-saving humanitarian supplies where they are needed most, wreaking havoc on populations.

While Article 41 of the UN Charter empowers the Security Council to impose sanctions, the Security Council's mandate is limited by Article 24, which states that "in discharging its duties, the Security Council shall act in accordance with the United Nations' purposes and principles."

In simple words, the security council is not above international law, and its sanction's authority should be exercised in accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter.

In this context, the imposition by the Security Council of sanctions that amount to "collective punishment" and result in widespread death and suffering among innocent people violates the Charter and is thus ultra vires.

It is deeply regrettable that the authority and powers of the Security Council have been repeatedly abused by certain States who, in pursuance of their own illegitimate political objectives particularly against developing countries, regard sanctions as their preferred tools to exert maximum pressure on those countries.

Such behavior constitutes not only a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and basic principles of international law, but also a sign of disrespect for the authority and powers of the Council, undermining its integrity and effectiveness.

We believe that nothing in the UN Charter can be interpreted as authorizing unilateral coercive measures that are contrary to general principles of international law, breach the prohibition on interfering in the internal affairs of other states, and violate their sovereignty.

Disregarding their international obligations and violating the UN Charter and international law, certain Member States are spearheading the application of applying unilateral coercive measures against other countries. The imposition of such unlawful measures against the Iranian people is a case in point.

Iran has been under harshest economic and financial sanctions imposed by the U.S. for decades, unprecedented in history.

These illegal actions have directly impacted the lives of Iran's most vulnerable citizens, including children, elderly and patients.

It is a sad reality that some patients, including children suffering from rare diseases, have lost their precious lives as a result of sanctions on imported medicine and medical supplies.

The illegality of such inhumane measures is clearly underlined by the UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures, who states that "while the right of States to disagree should be respected, harming the human rights of ordinary civilians should not be used as a means of political pressure on a targeted Government. This is an infringement on international human rights law."

We believe that unilateral coercive measures, whether in the form of unilateral sanctions or restrictive measures, that target civilian populations as part of a widespread or systematic policy and create undue suffering constitute a flagrant violation of international law, including human rights and international humanitarian law.

As our President stated in his address to the 76th UNGA session, "imposing unilateral sanctions against the Iranian people, particularly sanctions on medicine and humanitarian items, are criminal acts on par with committing crimes against humanity. Sanctioning countries should not go unpunished for such heinous crimes."
