

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi
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On Agenda Item 27: “Report of the Security Council”
Before the United Nations General Assembly
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In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. President,

I thank you for convening this meeting. I also thank the Indonesian Presidency of the Security Council for presenting the report of the Council.

According to the Charter, the Council “shall submit” an annual report to the General Assembly and the Assembly “shall receive and consider” it. The *raison d’être* of such a strong obligation is nothing but to ensure that the Council is accountable to the Assembly where all Member States are represented and where the Council obtains its power from.

Therefore, by considering the annual report of the Council, the Assembly is in a position to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council’s actions. This is of particular importance this year, given the conclusion of the current report that “in 2019, the international situation remained quite turbulent”.

In certain cases, the Council’s indecisiveness, indecision and ineffectiveness have undermined regional and international peace and security. In this context, I would like to give certain examples regarding the developments of our region, the Middle East. This is crucial as according to the Council’s report, such situations drew the attention of the Council in 2019 and their impact remained severe.

Last year, parallel to the Israeli regime’s unlawful construction and expansion of settlements, its inhumane blockade of Gaza and its other criminal measures towards the Palestinians, the Council’s historic inaction and utter silence towards this crisis has also continued.

Moreover, last year, meddling and destabilizing activities of the U.S. in the Middle East continued, including through the occupation of parts of Syria, looting its oil and imposing unilateral sanctions against that country amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2019, the U.S., on a number of occasions, intruded Iran’s territorial waters and airspace. Furthermore, in early January 2020, its military adventurism heightened placing the region on the verge of an all-out war when the U.S.’s military forces, in a terrorist act at the direct order of the U.S. President, violated Iraq’s sovereignty and horrifically martyred two regional anti-terror heroes, including Major General Qasem Soleimani, which was called by many international lawyers and scholars as a clear violation of the UN Charter and international law. Again, the Council was utterly silent.

In 2019, the United States also continued violating Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA. This is a gross violation of the U.S. obligations under the Charter's Article 25. It also brazenly continued threatening UN members either to defy that Resolution or face punishment.

In pursuance of this destructive policy, the U.S. now has placed the UN under maximum pressure to ultimately kill the JCPOA. Earlier this month, in violation of Resolution 2231, it first proposed a draft resolution to impose arms embargo against Iran, which was rejected by 13 members of the Council.

Later, on August 20th, through a letter to the Council, the U.S. attempted to purportedly initiate a process to re-impose the Council sanctions on Iran. The reaction of Council members was decisive. Through their letters, again 13 members, including the remaining JCPOA participants, as well as Iran and the EU High Representative and the Coordinator of the JCPOA Joint Commission, strongly refuted the legal merit of the U.S. letter.

Again, on August 25th, in an open VTC of the Council, the overwhelming majority of its members rejected the admissibility of the U.S. letter.

The arguments of the Council members, reflected in their letters and statements, are direct and straightforward: following its withdrawal from the JCPOA, the U.S. is not a "JCPOA participant", has no right to initiate a process to re-impose Council sanctions, and its letter cannot be considered as the qualified notification for the purpose of OP 11 of Resolution 2231, thus is void of any legal effect now and in the future, period.

Accordingly, the President of the Council, in its open VTC on August 25th concluded that, and I quote "it is clear for me that there is one member which has a particular position on the issues while there are significant number of members who have contesting views. In my view, there is not consensus in the Council thus the president is not in the position to take further action", end of quote.

Having failed to convince the Council members through deceptive justifications, pseudo-legal arguments and arbitrary interpretation of Resolution 2231 as well as political pressure and intimidation, now, the U.S. stubbornly argues that the sanctions will return on September 20.

Let's make it quite clear that the legal arguments presented by Council members are rock-solid and the conclusion of the Council President is unambiguous and conclusive: the U.S. is not in a position to initiate anything in the Council.

The U.S. policy regarding Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA challenges the relevance and accountability of the Council. Therefore, in fulfilling its obligation under Charter's Article 15(1), the Assembly must pay due attention to the principle of accountability of the Council and its members.

Finally, to enable the Assembly to have a clear account of the overall situation of international peace and security while considering the Council's report, it is recommended that the introduction of the report be more analytical.

I thank you, Mr. President.