



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Statement

By

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Before

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Excellencies, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor for me to speak before you, individuals all committed to the principles of justice and international law. The first point I wish to address is my heartfelt gratitude to the Rapporteur and the members of the Group of Friends for their unwavering support in organizing this vital conference. Your commitment to defending the United Nations Charter is both inspiring and essential.

Foundations of Illegal Sanctions

The imposition of unilateral coercive measures reflects a strategic exploitation of dualities in international policies, particularly by states leveraging their economic dominance. These measures contradict the core principles of the UN Charter and international law, such as sovereignty, non-intervention, and peaceful settlement of disputes. These unilateral acts, rooted in foreign policy agendas, weaponize economic and financial power to interfere coercively in the economic relations of other states. Beyond their illegitimacy under international law, such measures cause indiscriminate harm to populations, disregarding age, gender, or status, and undermine fair and peaceful international relations.

Why are sanctions primarily imposed by certain international actors? Those countries, seek to shift discussions on key issues to platforms of their preference, where dissenting voices are silenced. Rather than engaging in dialogue within the United Nations, these countries have resorted to forming exclusive groups and self-selected partnerships, where they impose sanctions on others. Such groups operate without

regard to the UN Charter, exerting pressure on targeted nations. The imposition of sanctions is, therefore, a reflection of this flawed and unilateral system.

The imposition of sanctions on Iran's aviation industry, including Iran Air on 14 October 2024, and the European Union's sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) on 18 November 2024, demonstrate the preference of Western actors for exclusive and unilateral platforms over the inclusive framework of the United Nations. The United Kingdom, following its departure from the EU, has reinforced this pattern by replicating these sanctions within its independent regime, further underscoring the shift away from multilateral dialogue toward self-selected coalitions. These actions expose the contradiction between their proclaimed commitment to a 'rules-based order' and their practice of sidelining international norms in favor of unilateral pressure.

Due to the severe humanitarian consequences and malign intentions behind their imposition, UCMs can only be categorized as unlawful acts entailing international responsibility of the sanctioning State and entitle the sanctioned State to seek reparation.

If UCMs are wrongful, their recognition and implementation by other States lack any legal or moral justification. States are obliged under international law not to recognize or give effect to the consequences of any wrongful act. They should therefore avoid enforcing unilateral sanctions; otherwise, they could be held accountable as complicit in the unlawful act.

Impact of Sanctions

Unilateral sanctions have negative impacts on the full enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to life, the right to health, and the right to development.

As it has revealed often, there is absolutely no so-called 'humanitarian exception' other than on the paper. UCMs also hinder humanitarian assistance in the event of disasters, as well as deprive patients' access to critical and lifesaving medicine and medical equipment. For instance, U.S. federal laws obstruct sanctions related to the sale of agricultural goods, food, medicine, or medical equipment; however, financial sanctions and other economic measures render these exceptions ineffective.

Research indicates that sanctions can alarmingly reduce life expectancy. Specifically, the World Health Organization has highlighted the negative effects of sanctions on populations, reporting a 29 percent increase in mortality rates for children under five years old and an increase in the risk of malnutrition from 61 to 79 percent.

The adverse effects of UCMs on the enjoyment of human rights have been widely discussed. However, the paramount concern must be how we can effectively expose the true nature of UCMs, which are not merely detrimental but egregious in their impact. How can we raise awareness, particularly in the Western world, regarding the illegality of unilateral sanctions? The general public remains largely uninformed about

the devastating consequences these sanctions impose on the targeted populations.

It is of utmost importance to elevate public consciousness, especially in developed countries, about the severe and harmful impacts of UCMs. Mainstream Western media, however, have often been either reluctant or reductive in their coverage of the catastrophic consequences of unilateral sanctions. These outlets are frequently complicit in downplaying or even concealing the humanitarian toll of such measures. This is not a mere oversight but a deliberate strategy, aligned with the policies of their respective states, to justify unilateral sanctions as a lawful instrument to alter the behavior of adversaries or as the lesser evil to avert war.

Unilateral sanctions systematically coerce economic operators to sever normal business relations with the sanctioned countries, thereby stalling the development of industrial infrastructure and the transfer of technology. They also undermine the right to development by directly violating the educational rights of the affected populations. It is imperative that the responsibility of the states imposing UCMs is fully addressed. States have a legal obligation under international law to refrain from recognizing or giving effect to the wrongful acts of other states. They must ensure that their sovereign rights and international human rights commitments are not compromised through passive participation in the secondary sanctions imposed by foreign powers.

Guiding Principles of the Rapporteur

The current conference examines the draft guiding principles and related explanatory notes, considering the significant aspects of interactions among various countries and businesses under sanctions. These principles hold substantial political and ethical importance and should be reinforced as an international framework to prevent illegal and unjust sanctions.

While the Special Rapporteur on UCMs has put forth valuable initiatives, it is important to highlight the systematic resistance faced within the UN system, where mandate holders have shown a reluctance to engage with the Special Rapporteur on UCMs. Notably, related UN bodies frequently avoid using the term ‘UCMs’ in their documents, and in some resolutions mentioning multiple Rapporteurs, the Special Rapporteur on UCMs with expertise and responsibility in those area is intentionally excluded. We condemn this approach and reject such practices, demanding full cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures, as failure to do so constitutes a violation of the principles of justice and fairness.

Conclusion

Sanctions will ultimately fail to achieve their intended goals, particularly regarding Iran, as the Islamic Republic is not merely a political system but a steadfast and unwavering value system that will never compromise on its lofty principles and ideals. Iran's resilience against the relentless waves of pressure—from wars and external threats to internal strife and disturbances instigated by the West—is a testament to the

indomitable will of the Iranian people and government in safeguarding these values. Iran's nuclear and scientific achievements over the past two decades, despite the repeated efforts of Western countries to obstruct this path through sanctions, are a clear symbol of Iran's greatness and strength in breaking the chains of oppression.

I thank you.