



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
23 August 2020

English only

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## Human Rights Council

### Forty-fifth session

September–October 2020 (TBC)

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 August 2020]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

## **ID with SR on Unilateral Coercive Measures Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s Continue to Take Lives Round the World**

Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s Continue to take civilian lives especially the lives of patients before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, while many UN resolutions have repeatedly emphasized on the fact that food and medicine should not be used as tools for political change and UN officials including the UN high commissioner and the Special Rapporteur on UCMs continue to reiterate that all people should have access to equal healthcare during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, UN repeated calls fall on deaf ears and the sanctioning countries refuse to take any steps to remove the unilateral sanctions. Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) reiterates on the recent remarks made by the Special Rapporteur on UCMs that such measures are “unlawful and against international law”, they lead to “mass [and] extensive violation of human rights” because the organizations’ on-the-ground experience proves the points raised by the Special Rapporteur.

ODVV notes the contributions made by the Special Rapporteurs on UCMs to this field and repeats their calls on the States to refrain from adopting unilateral sanctions against each other.

ODVV echoes the concerns expressed by the former Special Rapporteur on UCMs that comprehensive sanctions are considered as economic warfare and de-facto blockades,<sup>¶</sup> and should be lifted.

Also, ODVV protests against the collective punishment of people living in the target countries through unilateral sanctions and urges the UN Special Rapporteur on UCMs and the UN High Commissioner to continue to be the voice of the millions of voiceless people whose economic, social and cultural rights and their right to life is being violated by unilateral sanctions.

ODVV urges the HRC to use all the capacities available to it, in order to terminate this form of economic terrorism and genocide that is targeting many lives, especially under Covid-19 pandemic. Now that the international emergency coupled with maximum sanctions and economic pressure is causing a loss of health which is also mentioned in paragraphs 10 to 12 of the recent report of Special Rapporteur on Iran,<sup>¶</sup> ODVV calls on the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council to establish a mechanism to prevent countries from arbitrary imposition of sanctions on other countries, such as holding them accountable for the negative consequences of sanctions or establishing a compensation mechanism for UCM victims.

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<sup>¶</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCJRIAMSqe8>

<sup>¶</sup> A/HRC/39/54, A/HRC/42/46

<sup>¶</sup> A/HRC/43/61