



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Forty-seventh session

21 June–9 July 2021

Agenda item 3

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

**Joint written statement\* submitted by Organization for  
Defending Victims of Violence, Abshar Atefcha Charity  
Institute, Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims,  
The, Disability Association of Tavana, Family Health  
Association of Iran, Iran Autism Association, Iranian  
Thalassemia Society, Jameh Ehyagaran Teb Sonnati Va  
Salamat Iranian, Maryam Ghasemi Educational Charity  
Institute, Network of Women's Non-governmental  
Organizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Peivande Gole  
Narges Organization, Rahbord Peimayesh Research &  
Educational Services Cooperative, Society for Protection of  
Street & Working Children, Society of Iranian Women  
Advocating Sustainable Development of Environment, The  
Association of Citizens Civil Rights Protection "Manshour-e  
Parseh", non-governmental organizations 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.

[25 May 2021]

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



## **Unilateral Coercive Measures Continue to Threaten Many Lives under Covid-19**

We note the Special Rapporteur's joint statement on March, 1st 2021 that billions of people, living in developing countries risk limitation of access to Covid-19 vaccine and the reiteration that "Recovery from the pandemic is impossible unless it ends for everyone," realizing that the States need co-operation to overcome the pandemic and the bitter reality that "almost 95 percent of vaccines produced ... have gone to 10 wealthy countries."

We also note the Special Rapporteur's joint statement<sup>1</sup> that "Sanctions are bringing suffering and death in countries like Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela [Bolivarian Republic of] and Yemen." We would like to echo the Special Rapporteur's call in the joint statement that "Sanctions should be lifted – or at a minimum eased ...to keep people alive."

Our experiences of working with civilian populations and the vulnerable groups prove the deadly effect of sanctions on all human rights especially the right to mental and physical health. Within the past year, we have been witnessing that the complications, already in place by Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s, are multiplied by the spread of Covid-19, and we been expressing concern over the detrimental effect of UCMs on all economic social and cultural rights and specially the right to health.

In the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, within the past three years, following the United States of America (the US) unilateral withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the United Nations' Security Council Resolution 2231, multiple and comprehensive UCMs are re-imposed on Iran and within the past year, UCMs are added to the effects of Covid-19, threatening many lives. Therefore, we repeat our previously expressed concerns to Your Excellency and the United Nations Human Rights Council that the comprehensive UCMs have a notorious effect on the health of all sanctioned people, especially the most vulnerable sector, and the-already-difficult situation keeps worsening by the Covid-19 emergency. The people who are living in countries targeted by economic sanctions, cannot have equal access to health care the same as the people living in other countries of the world. As Iran based NGOs, we clearly see the challenges created by US sanctions for the people living in Iran. Prevention of banking transactions, leads to lack of access to basic medical treatment, and purchase of medical equipment, maintenance of the available machinery and equipment, import of medicine and more importantly the Covid-19 vaccine.

We express deep sorrow that despite the emergency of the pandemic, Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s systematically continue to take lives in target countries, despite the repeated calls made by the UN officials and experts on the necessity of lifting sanctions especially during the pandemic.

Also, we are seriously alarmed by the scope, intensity and disproportionally of UCM effects on target populations human rights, especially the right to health and for the continuous collective punishment of civilian populations, by UCMs even during the emergency of Covid-19.

Now that the international emergency, coupled with maximum sanctions and economic pressure, is causing a loss of health, we call on Your Excellency to continue joining the other UN Experts to repeat the call for an immediate lift of the sanctions on all sectioned countries including Iran, both in written reports and oral public statements, so that the countries can use their full capacity to fight the virus and the new mutations.

We urge the Special Rapporteur to continue supporting the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on UCMs, so that the voice of the hundreds of millions of people living in sanctioned countries with limited access to Covid-19 vaccination, medicine, necessary medical equipment and food is heard.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26155&LangID=E>.

Finally, we call on the Special Rapporteur to study the deadly impact of UCMs on the people living in the sanctioned countries, especially during the emergency of the Covid-19 pandemic and include the findings in the thematic reports submitted to the UN Human Rights Council.

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