



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Fiftieth session

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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, Association of Iranian Short Statured Adults, Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims, The, Disability Association of Tavana, Ertegha Keyfiat Zendegi Iranian Charitable Institute, Humanitarian Ambassadors NGO, Iran Autism Association, Iranian Thalassemia Society, Maryam Ghasemi Educational Charity Institute, Medical Support Association for Underprivileged Iranian Patients, Network of Women's Non-governmental Organizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pars Non Trading Development Activists Co., 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", The Society for Recovery Support, 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.

[21 May 2022]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.

## **Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health Iranian NGOs Draw the Special Rapporteur's Attention to the Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s on the Right to Health**

We welcome the common concerns expressed by the Special Rapporteur on the right to health in the statements joint by the Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s and other UN experts, published on the negative impact of UCMs on human rights, especially the right to mental and physical health (1) in targeted countries.

We also welcome the joint remarks expressed on the detrimental effect of UCMs and over-compliance of pharmaceutical companies on the health and lives of the children suffering from epidermolysis bullosa (EB) (2) , as only one example illustrating the situation of people and children suffering from chronic or severe disease in sanctioned countries.

However, in line with our previous statements, in previous regular sessions of the Human Rights Council on interactive dialogues with the Special Rapporteur on the right to health, once again we ask for her Excellency's special attention to the malignant impact of unilateral sanctions on the physical and mental health of millions and millions of people including women and children whose lives are being endangered by UCMs.

Despite the abundance of country-specific evidence and policy debate on the humanitarian effects of sanctions, the illegal UCMs continue unabated, to threaten the lives and health of all people, especially the vulnerable groups, including patients, children and the elderly with chronic disease, disability or Covid-19 infection in all sanctioned countries. The NGOs that support patients, including people suffering from autism, thalassemia, physical and secondary disability and mental disability have expressed serious concerns over the accessibility and affordability of quality medicine, medical equipment and medical care as a result of sanctions.

In addition, the NGOs who support, refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and the forcibly displaced, including Afghans and Iraqis have expressed worries over the effect of UCMs on the health and living standard of their clients as well as on their organizations' financial capacity to offer services to their target groups.

Similar concerns have been voiced by NGOs who work for protection of other vulnerable groups including the disadvantaged people, the women, the female-headed households, and the street children. The NGOs have witnessed the harmful effect of UCMs on the life quality as well as mental and physical health of their clients.

The dual impact of sanctions on the right to health is created on the one hand with prevention of pharmaceutical imports to the sanctioned countries because of the sanctions imposed on the interbank messaging systems that render the sanction exemptions ineffective and on the other hand with the declining impact of sanctions on targeted economies leading to escalation of inflation and unemployment rates that impact the affordability and accessibility of medicine and healthcare for the patients residing in targeted countries.

Additionally, the economic ambiguity and instability eventuated by unilateral sanctions tend to increase anxiety about the future and decline optimism, hope and general mental health among a major proportion of the population of sanctioned societies.

Considering the detrimental effects of economic coercion on physical and mental health and the immense scale and scope of human rights violations entailed, we Iranian NGOs urge Your Excellency to raise voice against widespread violation of the right to physical and mental health as a repercussion of imposition of unilateral sanctions.

We also, call on Your Excellency to discuss the health repercussions of UCMs for targeted populations in the thematic annual reports submitted to the UN.

Finally, we call on Your Excellency to add the sub-category of "patients living under UCMs" to the category of "groups in vulnerable situations" in the page of the mandate in order to raise international awareness on the humanitarian effects of UCMs.

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1 . UN experts urge States to consider humanitarian impacts when imposing or implementing sanctions, available at: [https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/un-experts-urge-states-consider-humanitarian-impacts-when-imposing-or-;](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/un-experts-urge-states-consider-humanitarian-impacts-when-imposing-or-) UN Experts: Sanctions proving deadly during COVID pandemic, humanitarian exemptions not working, available at:

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

2 . OHCHR | Over-compliance with US sanctions harms Iranians' right to health, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27665&LangID=E>