



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-second 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, Fundación Latinoamericana por los Derechos Humanos y el Desarrollo Social, 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.

[29 January 2023]

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

## **Unilateral Coercive Measures Continue to Systematically Violate Human Rights**

### **\*Introduction\***

In recent years, an unprecedented proliferation of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) is witnessed globally, particularly by the United States (US). Unilateral sanctions, which are imposed on countries – including the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela - beyond the authority of the United Nations and the rule of law, have turned into peacetime weapons that silently violate human rights in an alarmingly wide scale.

The US policymakers and government officials have resorted to sanctions to punish nations who refuse to submit to the United States political will.

A rich body of literature (1) – including the UN Human Rights Council reports and resolutions in addition to numerous research studies and compilation of data by NGOs (2) - has proven the negative and deadly impact of comprehensive UCMs on populations, condemning the human rights and the humanitarian consequences. Despite the long term efforts, this body of literature is inadequate of capturing the large-scale violation of human rights resulted by sanctions and only represent a tip of the iceberg.

While the artificial alibi by US politicians' claims that sanctions are imposed in the name of human rights, unilateral coercive measures as inherently violent, designed to maintain economic inequality among countries, severely harm populations and continue the transfer of wealth from the Global South to the North. UCMs represent a new form of colonialism and imperialism. They cause income deflation and underdevelopment in sanctioned countries while leading to massive empowerment of western monopolies. Sanctions are a means of controlling Global South sovereignty and blocking the emergence of a multipolar world order.

### **\*UCMs Violate All Human Rights\***

The above mentioned literature, affirmed by the on-the-ground observations of NGOs, emphasize on the alarming scale of human rights violations by accumulation of comprehensive UCMs and the deadly consequences for the target populations, while the sanctioning countries enjoy confident impunity, despite all human rights violations and the crimes being committed through UCMs, including the extensive violations of human rights and the right to access humanitarian items, especially during the man-made and natural crisis.

Overall, UCMs violate all human rights of the target populations including the right to life, the right to health, the right to enjoyment of an adequate living standards (including access to sufficient and secure food, clean water, suitable clothing, adequate housing and affordable medical care), the right to education for both children and adults, the right to work, the right to a sustainable and health environment in addition to all aspects of the right to development and attainment of all sustainable development goals.

UCMs are never a peaceful alternative to war. Instead, the scale and scope of human rights violations resulted by UCMs is so appalling that sanctioned countries have referred to them with terms such as "economic terrorism", "genocide" or "crimes against humanity".

### **\*The necessity of Access to Remedy\***

Given the intensity of human rights violations by UCMs and the continuation of the collective crimes against target populations in sanctioned countries, there is an urgent need to terminate the impunity of sanctioned countries and hold them accountable for the violations of human rights, which is resulted by UCMs, as deadly tools of foreign policy.

On the other hand, all victims of UCMs have the right to accessible, adequate and timely reparations and remedy as a result of all the harms they have tolerated. Therefore, collective

efforts are required to build international systems of accountability to challenge the human rights violations through sanctions and to provide the UCM affected people in Asia, Africa, and South America with adequate redress.

**\*Recommendations\***

We call on the Human Rights Council monitoring mechanisms, including the Special Procedures' mandate holders, the treaty bodies and the subsidiary bodies to study the human rights and humanitarian consequences of economic intervention through UCMs that in some cases have proven to be deadlier than war.

We call on the UN monitoring mechanism and more specifically the special procedures, to offer recommendations on how to eliminate or alleviate the related human rights violations by economic sanctions.

We call on international NGOs to assist UCM victims to access adequate remedy and redress for the harms they have suffered as a result of imposition of economic sanctions.

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1. There are UN HRC reports and resolutions: Reports: A/HRC/48/59; A/HRC/48/59/Add.2; A/HRC/45/7; A/HRC/42/46; A/HRC/36/44; A/HRC/33/48; A/HRC/48/59; A/HRC/48/59/Add.2; A/HRC/51/33; A/HRC/51/33/Add.1; Resolutions: A/HRC/RES/24/14; A/HRC/RES/30/2; A/HRC/RES/34/13; A/RES/71/193; A/HRC/RES/46/5; A/HRC/RES/43/15; Nine studies conducted in Johns Hopkins University available here: [www.rethinkingiran.com/iranundersanctions](http://www.rethinkingiran.com/iranundersanctions)
  2. All the written material submitted by NGOs such as ODVV and FUNDALATIN to the Human Rights Council, especially within the past years, including the oral and written joint and individual statements submitted to the HRC regular sessions, the reports submitted to the special procedures and other monitoring mechanisms.