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**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 Atefeh Charity
Institute, Association of Iranian Short Statured Adults,
Bachehaye Asemane Kamran Rehabilitation Institute,
Ertegha Keyfiat Zendegi Iranian Charitable Institute, Family
Health Association of Iran, Humanitarian Ambassadors
NGO, Imam Ali Charity Institution, Iran Autism
Association, Iranian Thalassaemia Society, Jameh Ehyagaran
Teb Sonnati Va Salamat Iranian, Maryam Ghasemi
Educational Charity Institute, Medical Support Association
for Underprivileged Iranian Patients, Peivande Gole Narges
Organization, Rahbord Peimayesh Research & Educational
Services Cooperative, 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.

[22 August 2023]

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

Written Statement of Iranian NGOs to HRC 54 for the Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s: "The Impact of Sanctions on the Right to Health"

We note the reports submitted to HRC 54 by the Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s, Prof. Alena Douhan, including the report on the "Impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to health" and the report on the Special Rapporteur's "Visit to the Syrian Arab Republic".

We also note with interest, the valuable efforts of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures including the launch of the Sanctions Research Platform as well as the draft tool for "Monitoring and assessment of the impact of unilateral sanctions and over-compliance on human rights", while making consultations with NGOs and all stakeholders.

In addition, we note the constant attention of Prof. Douhan on the impact of UCMs on the right to health as one of the most important rights violated by unilateral measures.

Patients, First Targets of UCMs

UCMs are imposed on countries in the name of human rights and under the excuses such as promotion of democracy, claiming that humanitarian exemptions exist in the unilateral sanctions regimes to protect essential human rights including the right to life, to health and to food. However, one more time we emphasize that, the reality on the ground, proven by the experience of NGOs residing in sanctioned countries and the reports of the Human Rights Council Experts is totally different from the notions expressed by the officials of the sanctioning countries.

For example, the HRC reports submitted by the Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures, following her visits to targeted States – including the Islamic Republic of Iran (A/HRC/51/33/Add.1; A/HRC/51/33/Add.4); the Syrian Arab Republic (A/HRC/54/23/Add.1; A/HRC/54/23/Add.2); the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (A/HRC/48/59/Add.2;) and Zimbabwe (A/HRC/51/33/Add.2; A/HRC/51/33/Add.3) confirm that the so-called humanitarian exemptions are insufficient and inadequate.

On the other hand, within the past years, Iranian NGOs have submitted joint written statements to the Human Rights Council (1) where they have voiced collective concerns on the inhuman consequences of the UCMs on the human rights of the Iranians, including the right to health of the patients.

In addition, NGOs based in Iran, especially the NGOs that support patients with chronic disease, including thalassemia, hemophilia, Multiple sclerosis (MS), Epidermolysis bullosa (EB), various types of cancer, autism as well as the NGOs that offer livelihood support, healthcare or education services to vulnerable groups such as the disadvantaged, the people with disabilities, Afghan and Iraqi refugees and asylum seekers, abandoned and street children or NGOs that work in the field of environment, protection of wild life or sustainable development, have been collectively echoing concerns over the negative impacts of UCMs on all human rights and the deadly impacts of unilateral measures on patients, reiterating that limitation of access to items such as life-saving medicine, medical equipment, medicine raw materials and mobility equipment, are exposing patients to premature death, un-necessary sufferings, prolonged disease or further complications of physical and mental issues, that amount to illegal collective punishments.

The United Nations Criticized the Imposition of UCMs

Over the past years, numerous resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly (2) and the UN Human Rights Council (3), as well as the reports submitted by the UN Special

Rapporteurs to the HRC (4) have collectively criticized the human rights impacts of UCMs, calling for concerted efforts to mitigate such impacts.

Recommendations

- Considering the fact that under international law UCMs violate all human rights and humanitarian rights and the sanctioning countries must be held accountable for the death, pain and sufferings of thousands of people living in target countries who have paid the price of the sanctioning countries wrongful tools of foreign policy, we call on the international community to establish an international compensation mechanism for UCM victims.
- Sanctioning countries must immediately lift the illegal UCMs imposed on SWIFT and formal inter-banking transactions that impede import of essential medicine, necessary medical equipment, medicine raw materials and mobility equipment required by Iranian patients.
- Sanctioning countries must avoid economic bullying and threatening international companies and businesses including banks, shipping, insurance and pharmaceutical companies with heavy fines for getting involved into business with Iran, that lead to their over-compliance with UCMs and widespread violation of human rights of the whole Iranian population.
- Finally, we call on the Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures to continue her noteworthy efforts to protect the rights of the people targeted by sanctions and to move toward the establishment of a mechanism to provide the millions of UCM victims with adequate, accessible and timely remedy and redress.

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1. e.g., A/HRC/51/NGO/19; A/HRC/50/NGO/47; A/HRC/49/NGO/18
 2. e.g., A/RES/77/214, in addition to all GA resolutions that condemn the unilateral sanctions imposed on Cuba and Venezuela.
 3. e.g., 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; A/HRC/RES/46/5; A/HRC/RES/49/6; A/HRC/RES/52/13.
 4. e.g., 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