***Organization for Defending Victims of Violence*** *****(ODVV)***

***Reply to Questionnaire on Food Systems***

1. What are the most salient challenges facing the food systems in your country/region? Please explain why.

ODVV experiences of working with vulnerable groups proves that Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s or economic sanctions which directly target the economic system and aim at increasing unemployment and income inequality in order to cause pain and suffering for the target populations are the most important challenge to the realization of the right to food.

The intention behind Iran sanctions is explained in detail in the book “The Art of Sanctions”[[1]](#footnote-1) published by the designer of the unilateral measures against Iran, Richard Nephew. The core idea of the book is that sanctions are designed to target the well-being, happiness and satisfaction of all citizens in the target country rather than aiming to improve human rights. What is even worse is that, on-the-ground, they intentionally jeopardize the life and health of all ordinary people especially the vulnerable groups including children, women, patients, people with disabilities and the poor.

The book uses the word pain 233 times. Inflicting intolerable pain on people especially the most vulnerable is mentioned as the aim of sanctions. What the book refers to as “escalating pain and diminishing resolve” is translated as violation of almost all human rights of the people in the target country, especially the right to food and the right to health. According to the book:

*“Continuously recalibrate its initial assumptions of target state resolve, the efficacy of the pain applied in shattering that resolve.”p.4*

- “*But at the root of their efforts is the desire to inflict some measure of pain in order to change policy, as well as an inclination to match pain levels with the desired outcome”*. p.11

 *“It should be made sure that the pain is felt sever enough”. p.53*

*“Sanctions that aim to increase inflation de facto aim to increase costs to average citizens”. p.143*

The sanctions are resigned to put multiple limitations on the right to life and the right to food. They limit employment opportunities; increase inflation; devaluate the currency of the country and ban import of food stuff by preventing all banking transactions and threatening and intimidating foreign food companies. That is, sanctions have multiple mechanisms for preventing the right to food, including the decrease of food affordability and increase of food scarcity. They use food deprivation as a weapon against the people of sanctioned countries as it is rightly discussed by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food in his report to the Human Rights Council. (A/HRC/46/33)

It should be mentioned that the same findings are reported by NGOs in other countries under sanctions including, Cuba, Venezuela and Syria.

1. What are the examples of ways in which the challenges facing the global food system are having adverse impacts on human rights broadly, and the right to food specifically?

The outbreak of Covid-19 has had adverse effects on the global food security because factors such as increasing unemployment, lowering income levels, reducing the import and export of food stuff and the equipment required in food production industry, lockdowns that affected food accessibility and availability etc., led to limitation of access to food and the already complicated situation is exacerbated by economic sanctions in sanctioned countries.

1. Are there specific challenges that your country has faced in attempting to employ a rights-based approach to transforming food systems without leaving anyone behind?
2. To what extent has the UN Food System Summit considered those challenges in its deliberations? Please explain.
3. What are the specific obligations of States and responsibilities of businesses in terms of preventing and addressing adverse impacts caused by the unsustainable production or consumption of food?
4. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, what are specific examples of rights-based initiatives and good practices (including policy, standards and programmes) that have successfully improved people’s access to adequate food in a sustainable and systemic way?

During the pandemic, there were attempts by NGOs and government institutions to distribute food packs among the disadvantaged members of the population, and volunteer groups tried to repeat the practice regularly, however, the programs would not cover all the people in need.

Participation and access to information during the Food Systems Summit

1. To what extent was the information on the Summit accessible, clear and practical for you and your community and partners?
2. In what ways have you participated in the Summit (events, dialogues, submission of inputs etc.)? Please describe the nature and content of your participation, if applicable.

We have not participated in the Summit.

1. To what extent would you consider your participation in the FSS as active and meaningful? Please explain.

Outcomes of the Food Systems Summit

1. What are your expectations from the Summit’s outcomes following its conclusion in October 2021? How would these outcomes contribute to the full realization of the right to food for all?

We expect all global food platforms to pay equal attention to all challenges to the realization of the right to food for everyone, including the foreign policy unilateral measures of sanctioning countries that prevent the people of sanctioned countries from access to food by banning banking transactions and imposition of unilateral sanctions and penalties on banks and food production businesses and coercing them to avoid having trade with sanctioned countries.

1. . Nephew, Richard. (2018). ***The Art of Sanctions: A View from the Field***. New York: Columbia University Press [↑](#footnote-ref-1)