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

Written statement* submitted by Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims, The, a non-governmental organization 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.

[31 January 2021]

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



Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) are violating the citizens' right to health and right to life

In July 2015 the Islamic Republic of Iran (Iran) and the group known as 5+1 (the Russian Federation, China, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, Germany and the United States of America) reached a hard-won agreement on the peaceful Iranian nuclear program “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action” or JCPOA. The agreement received its official support by the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2231 which placed JCPOA in international law, and made it enforceable.

In May 2018, the United States of America (USA) unilaterally pulled out of the agreement and announced that severe sanctions, “unprecedented in history”¹ would be re-imposed on Iran, despite the objection of the rest of the JCPOA signatories.

The re-imposition of illegal, unilateral sanctions led to widespread violation all economic, social and cultural rights including the right to health and life in Iran. UCMs are intentionally designed to inflict pain and sufferings in the target populations² and the scope and intensity of human rights violations caused by UCMs are not the unintended consequences of the measures. In addition, UCM prevents governments from meeting their international commitments including the duty to protect the right to health and life.

With the start of the United States of America’s unilateral sanctions from May 2018, and their impact on the currency exchange rate and bank transactions, uncertain economic conditions and instability took over in Iran, the outcome of which has been in the rise in poverty and unemployment. If we see economic growth, macroeconomics stability and cash, currency and banking stability, as the main factors in reduction of poverty, with a direct impact on these factors, unilateral sanctions in the recent years have strongly resulted in rise in poverty.

Also the imposition of unilateral sanctions have an impact on patients through reduction of access to medicines and medical treatment services. Because of these sanctions, medical equipment and some special medicines are facing shortages, the import of fake and useless medicines has increased, the cost of medicines and medical equipment have sharply risen. Due to the severe restrictions that have been imposed on financial transactions, many foreign drug manufacturers refrain from doing business with Iran.

The conditions of people with disabilities in Iran have also severely been affected by unilateral sanctions. Shortages in medicine and medical equipment that the disabled need, alongside rise in hospital fees, medicine costs special rehabilitation equipment for the disabled, have caused serious problems for these vulnerable individuals for the provision of their needs.

The Special Rapporteur is kindly informed that the adverse impact of UCMs on human rights of the people who live in target countries is widely discussed and condemned in UN reports³ and resolutions⁴.

Recommendations

We believe unilateral sanctions extensively threaten the right to life and health of Iranian citizens. Therefore we call on the Human Rights Council to while support the reporting mechanism of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive

¹ <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/452024/Iran-blocked-to-sell-a-drop-of-oil-in-exchange-for-food-medicine>.

² The idea that the sanctions are designed to make the target populations suffer and feel intensive pain is thoroughly explained in Richard Nephew’s book as the designer of unilateral sanctions: Nephew, Richard. (2017). *The Art of Sanctions: A View from the Field*. USA: Columbia University Press.

³ A/HRC/45/7; A/HRC/42/46; A/HRC/36/44; A/HRC/33/48.

⁴ A/HRC/RES/24/14; A/HRC/RES/30/2; A/HRC/RES/34/13; A/RES/71/193.

measures on the enjoyment of human rights, to work towards strengthening this mechanism through the appointment of a UN Secretary General's special representative on the subject of unilateral coercive measures.

Also we call on the Special Rapporteurs on the right to health and the right to life to pay special attention to the violation of these rights through imposition of unilateral sanctions and work towards stopping these violations.

In line with the UN Human Rights Council reports and resolutions, our organization condemns the negative impact of unilateral sanctions on human rights including the right to physical and mental health and life and calls on the special rapporteurs to study the effect of UCMs on people's access to rights to health and life in all target countries and report the findings to the Human Rights Council.
