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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 the Iranian Elite Research Center, 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.

[22 August 2013]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Sanctions and violation of human rights

Sanctions against countries, as a common political instrument had been always used to put pressure on the governments in order to change their policies. Sanctions, particularly economic sanctions, directly affect people; especially when the target government has access to national wealth resources. Considering the late effects of sanctions on the state structure, the paralyzing effects primarily damage the lives of country's population which its span depends to the social conditions and the time of sanctions; the people who are not aware of or involved in the political decision-makings.

Sanctions against banking system of a country have more critical and serious effects. Such penalties actually isolate the economic system of a country which practically deprives people from access to their very basic needs. As a result, the rights of many people are violated and this may even lead to the loss of their lives. Extended sanctions and complexity of the society structure result in a much more disastrous situation.

The effects of these sanctions on people violates "the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being" stated in the article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and also "the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health" stated in Article 12 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. They affect the rights which are included in other conventions such as article 24 of "Convention on the Rights of the Child", article 5 of "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination", article 12 and 14 of "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women", article 25 of "Final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities" as well.

For instance, sanctions against Iran's banking system have led to a series of inflations which is followed by:

- Rapid decline of the value of people's income and deterioration of their quality of life, as many families have gone under the poverty line because of the reduction in their national money value.
- Many businesses have no more economic justification and many have gone under depression and eventually bankruptcy. As a result, there are less jobs and unemployment is rapidly increasing.
- Increasing unemployment leads to more delinquencies and social damage, and less safety.

On the other hand, these sanctions have more severe effects on the healthcare field which is an obvious threat against Iranian's human rights.

- About medicine and equipments, although they are exceptions and not under sanctions, for the difficulties and consequences of trade with this state, foreign companies are not willing to export their products to Iran. In addition, because of the fear from penalties and misunderstandings, foreign banks do not collaborate in the process of money transfer.
- Lack of medicine and equipments leads to more damages and mortalities. Actually, there are enough physicians and necessary specialties, but patients lose their lives because of the lack of medicine and equipments.

- As a result of the gradual devastation of equipments and devices like cancer radiotherapy systems, waiting lists for treatment have become more longer and many patients have lost the golden time of their treatment or even have perished while waiting for their turn.
- With the exorbitant cost of treatment for fatal illnesses, the private centers in the field of healthcare have been disappeared, so a great host of people who had a normal life have turned to charity institutions asking for financial aids. Eventually, in addition to the possible fatalities, the above mentioned difficulties in many cases, leaves the families in the severe poverty.
- There are many patients who have to use some medicines permanently, like those who suffer from hypertension, asthma, or neurotic diseases and mental illnesses. In these cases, any changes in consumption or lack of the medicine will disturb daily lives of the patients. In recent two years, these patients have suffered from serious damages because of the shortage or lack of their medicine, such as continuous coughs, intensified neurotic attacks and other symptoms.
- Those who suffer from Dystonia and heart diseases, or others who have had advanced surgeries, have no more access to the batteries needed for implanted instruments in their bodies and if the battery fail the result would be fatal.
- In addition to the high costs of providing necessary medicines; this situation has led to the creation of black markets and sale of denaturant or expired medicines which are less-effective or harmful, having unpredictable and even fatal effects.
- We should not disregard the effects of sanctions on a country like Iran which provides medical services for the neighboring countries like Iraq and Afghanistan. Iran also offers medical education to the students from Persian Gulf countries; so this issue directly affects the whole healthcare system of the region.

There would be no more questions in this case that the right of people to health and access to treatment has been violated. Actually, many sanctions do not follow their main objective and mostly affect people, not the state structure of the target country. And finally, with weakening the target country and not altering the policies of the target government, sanctions are probably followed by a war, leading to more damages and casualties for the population.

With a more developed world and advanced communications, all the people around the world have become more homogeneous and receptive of each other. Accordingly, the new globalized environment of the societies provides groundwork for the world peace, while the international penalties like sanctions are still following their traditional, fixed structure. Isolating countries just leads to more feelings of difference, hatred, public disagreement and lack of stability in the world peace. Isolation of millions of people with different descents in a territory and depriving them of their basic rights, while they have no other ways to access their rights except through communication with other countries, is simply a kind of racism. Also death of people, who are living in a particular region, from simple or curable diseases in a period of time, in a number comparable to the war casualties, is not much different from genocide.

Considering the bitter experience of sanctions in Iran and other countries, the Iranian Elite Research Center NGO demands that the Commission on Human Rights and Human Rights and Unilateral Coercive Measures make a resolution and clearly state that:

- The current sanctions against different countries in any case should be abolished.

- The Commission on Human Rights declares sanctions as an example of violation of human rights and seriously interdicts such policies.
 - Before implementing what mentioned above, people should be provided by their basic needs in a way in order to avoid further damages from sanctions.
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