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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 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.

[5 February 2023]

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



Consequences Of Unilateral Sanctions On Academic Community

Introduction

The sanctions will affect the people of the target country and its negative dimensions are sometimes so deep that they would remain for years. The right to education, as an empowering right, is not immune from the detrimental effects of economic sanctions. The implementation of this fundamental right by the governments has been recognized in article 26(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 13(2) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and article 18 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Although these documents have recognized everyone's right to education, unilateral sanctions posed by some countries against Iranian citizens have resulted in violations of the rights of Iranian students inside and outside the Islamic Republic of Iran. Even a large number of students studying abroad at the world's most prestigious universities have faced sanctions challenges, too.

Consequences Of Unilateral Sanctions On Academic Community

The sanctions began with visa denial of students and professors from certain specialties such as nuclear mechanics, nuclear engineering, and many other engineering fields. Also, the problem has been worsened by increasing currency fluctuations. On one hand, the cost of living has risen sharply and on the other money transfer for Iranian students to pay their tuition is impossible.

Scientific and academic research and the dissemination of its findings should not be conditioned by decisions other than those based entirely on scientific and academic considerations. They should not be contingent upon political decisions and enforcement of sanction regimes against countries and their nationals.

As the UN human rights experts said in July 2022: “We are gravely concerned at the growing negative impact of existing sanctions regimes on academic and scientific research, as well as on initiatives of international academic cooperation, adversely affecting the participation of scholars and academics from sanctioned countries”. The sanction-induced impediments to academic freedom and the right to benefit from scientific progress and its applications is a matter of concern. These impediments included imposed restrictions in the review and publication procedures of research conducted and submitted to international journals by authors and scholars from sanctioned countries.

Other adverse effects of sanctions are the disruption of some agreements between Iranian and other universities in the world as well as the provision of necessary equipment for university workshops and laboratories. In addition, some of our universities are directly sanctioned by foreign countries, meaning that all Iranian universities that have worked or published a paper in the field of nuclear physics have been put on the sanction list owing to the fact that some countries are suspicious of the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear activities. Meanwhile, some well-known academic publications such as Elsevier, Willey, and Taylor & Francis clearly refuse to publish Iranian articles.

We are deeply concerned about the adverse impacts of the current sanctions on academic and scientific research and international academic cooperation since it will negatively affect the participation of scholars and researchers at international levels and restricts the scientific contacts of Iranian scientists with foreign countries. We believe that scientific research and publications should not be subject to any decisions other than those based entirely on scientific and scholarly considerations.

Recommendations

- urge the Human Rights Council to remind the member states that scientific collaboration at international levels has turned into an international obligation and scholars from all over the world should collaborate with each other to exchange and communicate with their counterparts.
 - Unilateral sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran`s academics would deal a severe blow to scientific progress. This situation has made us concerned about the future of Iranian students. We urge academic associations, publishing companies and editorial boards to take all necessary measures to eliminate over-compliance with existing sanctions regimes.
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