



Security Council

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Letter dated 14 January 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you with reference to the letter dated 18 December 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ([S/2018/1171](#)). Upon instruction from my Government, I would like to bring to your kind attention the following:

In the letter, a misleading reference was made once again to the Missile Technology Control Regime and, accordingly, the test-firing of a ballistic missile was wrongly assessed to constitute an “activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons”, which Iran is called upon not to undertake in paragraph 3 of annex B to Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). This is yet another abortive attempt for the arbitrary interpretation of that paragraph by invoking the criteria contained in the exclusive club of the Missile Technology Control Regime. As we have repeatedly stated, including in my letter dated 28 November 2018 ([S/2018/1061](#)), there is no implicit or explicit reference in paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) either to the Missile Technology Control Regime or to definitions and criteria contained therein. Accordingly, as none of those criteria or definitions are applicable to paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), we categorically reject any attempt to reinterpret that paragraph by means of definitions or criteria contained in the Missile Technology Control Regime. The criteria of this exclusive and closed export control regime are only political understandings between its 35 member States and therefore are not legally binding, even for them. Therefore, any attempt to portray such criteria as the universally agreed definition is definitively premature and thus completely unacceptable.

It is also worth noting that the ballistic missile launches have been previously discussed by the Security Council and, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General, “there was no consensus reached among Council members as to whether those launches were covered under resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)” ([S/2016/589](#)).

The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes once again that the addition of the phrase “designed to be” to the wording “capable of delivering nuclear weapons” used in the already terminated Security Council resolution [1929 \(2010\)](#) was a deliberate modification following lengthy negotiations in order to exclude Iran’s defensive missile programme that is “designed” to be exclusively capable of delivering conventional warheads. Therefore, since none of Iran’s missiles are “designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons”, paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231](#)



(2015) does not limit, in any way, the activities related to the conventional ballistic missiles of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Consequently, Iran's related activities not only are not inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), but also fall outside of the purview of the resolution.

Additionally, the assessment of the authors of the letter is extremely bizarre and erroneous and continues to be inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015). The provisions of that paragraph, which are extremely clear and therefore void of any interpretation, have nothing to do with "Iran's programme to develop ballistic missiles". Therefore, extending the specific scope of that paragraph to areas well beyond that, namely, all activities related to "Iran's programme to develop ballistic missiles", is with no doubt a mischievous attempt. This politically motivated approach, representing the complete inconsistency in, and absolutely paradoxical nature of, the position of those countries, clearly indicates that there is no genuine concern about the possible development by Iran of ballistic missiles "designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons", as there is no single piece of evidence to substantiate it. Rather, the attempts by these countries – either through resorting to unrelated criteria like the Missile Technology Control Regime to accuse Iran of being inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015) or through arbitrarily extending the scope of that paragraph to the whole ballistic missile programme of Iran – to introduce the entire defensive and exclusively conventional ballistic missile capability of Iran as a source of concern clearly signifies their ill intention.

It is exactly based on such a vicious approach that, in their letter, these countries expressed that Iran's "ballistic missile activity is also destabilizing and increases regional tensions", while as a deterrent capability against security threats, Iran's ballistic missile programme is a strong source of regional stability. Contrary to the views of such countries, the main source of regional insecurity and instability is the aggressions by the Israeli regime against regional countries, including Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the four-year-old brutality against the oppressed people of Yemen by other regional aggressors, all of which are carried out, sustained and aggravated through sophisticated weapons exported massively by France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States that turned the entire region into a tinderbox. The ongoing unbridled export of weaponry to the region by these countries reminds us of their past practice in providing unconditional support to Saddam's regime in its aggression against Iran, including providing his military with advanced warplanes and missiles to target Iranian cities and also chemical agents to kill civilians in Iranian as well as Iraqi cities and villages. It is evident that such irresponsible policies and other malign regional activities of these countries can in no way be whitewashed by any amount of disinformation, fabrication and accusation against the deterrent conventional capability of regional countries.

Likewise, their unfounded allegations against Iran cannot distract attention away from the expansionist policies and warmongering practices of the Israeli regime as well as its destabilizing role in the region, the latest examples of which are the threat of nuclear annihilation it made on 29 August 2018 (S/2018/859) and the development of "offensive missiles" that can reach "anywhere in the area" and "any target", thereby implicitly threatening all countries in the region (S/2018/1156). Furthermore, the baseless claims of these Western countries against the defensive conventional capability of Iran on the one hand and their deadly silence vis-à-vis the danger of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction of the Israeli regime on the other hand indicate how prejudiced, irresponsible, inconsistent and hypocritical their policies are.

Welcoming all genuine efforts aimed at “promoting the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) by all States” as stated in that letter (S/2018/1171), we would like to stress that this should be a consistent policy and should be applied to all countries, in particular those with a documented track record of violating its provisions and those taking subversive measures in its implementation. Accordingly, the three concerned European countries are expected, instead of making baseless claims about Iran’s defensive conventional capability and arbitrary interpretation of paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015) to take concrete practical measures against the blatant systematic violation of that resolution by the United States and to do their utmost efforts to fulfil their obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that is part and parcel of resolution 2231 (2015).

I would also like to emphasize that as a country living in the most unstable and volatile region of the world, the Islamic Republic of Iran is fully entitled to build a credible conventional capability to deter and defend against any security threat, aggression or armed attack, including terrorist actions. Accordingly, as stated in the statement of the Islamic Republic of Iran following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) endorsing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (S/2015/550), “Iran will continue to take necessary measures to strengthen its defence capabilities in order to protect its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity against any aggression and to counter the menace of terrorism in the region. In this context, Iranian military capabilities, including ballistic missiles, are exclusively for legitimate defence. They have not been designed for WMD capability, and are thus outside the purview or competence of the Security Council resolution and its annexes.”

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Eshagh Al Habib
Ambassador
Chargé d’affaires a.i.