



## Security Council

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### **Letter dated 24 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council**

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, in his capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Niger, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam in connection with the video-teleconference on “Non-proliferation” convened on Tuesday, 22 December 2020. A statement was also delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus-disease pandemic, the attached briefings and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Jerry Matthews **Matjila**  
President of the Security Council



**Annex I****Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo**

I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting on non-proliferation.

United Nations non-proliferation efforts seek to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and technology, promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament. Those efforts have a bearing on the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict at both the regional and international levels.

The full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and of resolution 2231 (2015) can contribute to regional stability. Regrettably, however, regional tensions have increased. In the past several years, we have witnessed attacks on critical infrastructure, heated rhetoric and the heightened risk of miscalculation. Such actions deepen the differences related to the JCPOA and render efforts to address other regional conflicts more difficult. We call on all concerned to avoid any actions that may result in further escalation of tensions.

The Secretary-General has consistently underscored the importance of the JCPOA and has encouraged all States to support it. He also believes that Iran should address the concerns raised about its activities in relation to the restrictive measures in annex B to the resolution. As we have stated before, issues not directly related to the Plan should be addressed without prejudice to preserving the agreement and its accomplishments.

In the preparation of the tenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2020/1177), we have taken careful note of the developments in the Security Council following the receipt of letters from the United States on 20 August and 23 September. We note the view of the United States that, as of 20 September, all provisions of prior resolutions that had been terminated by resolution 2231 (2015) apply in the same manner. The United States is also of the view that the measures contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 16 to 20 of resolution 2231 (2015) were also terminated.

The majority of Security Council members and Iran have written to the Council stating that, among other things, the 20 August letter from the United States did not initiate the process set forth in paragraph 11 of resolution 2231 (2015). Those States also expressed their strong support for the Plan and the continued implementation of the resolution.

Similarly, the President of the Security Council for the month of August and the President of the Security Council for the month of September indicated that they were not in a position to take any action with regard to the letter from the United States dated 20 August. The President of the Council in October also took note of those developments.

We regret the steps taken by the United States when it withdrew from the Plan, as well as the steps taken by Iran to reduce some of its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan.

The reimposition by the United States of all its national sanctions that had been lifted or waived pursuant to the Plan is contrary to the goals set out in the Plan and in resolution 2231 (2015). Furthermore, steps taken by the United States not to extend waivers for trade in oil with Iran and certain non-proliferation projects may have impeded the ability of Iran and other Member States to implement certain provisions.

During the reporting period, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) informed the Security Council that Iran had decreased its stockpile of heavy water. Iran has also stayed within the JCPOA's limits of no more than 5,060 IR-1 centrifuges installed in 30 cascades at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant.

However, the IAEA verified that Iran had installed a cascade of IR-2m centrifuges at Natanz and begun feeding uranium hexafluoride into them. Iran had also enriched uranium up to 4.5 per cent U-235, and its total enriched uranium stockpile was 2,442.9 kg — surpassing JCPOA stipulated limits in both cases. We also note the 4 December report of the IAEA regarding Iranian intentions to install additional cascades of IR-2m centrifuge machines at Natanz.

Iran has stated its intention to remain in the Plan and that the steps it has taken are reversible. It is essential that Iran refrain from further steps reducing its commitments and return to full implementation of the Plan.

The Secretary-General calls on all participants to work constructively to address their differences within the dispute-resolution mechanism outlined in the Plan. He also underscores the importance of all initiatives in support of trade and economic relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially during the current economic and health challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic.

I will now turn to the measures set out in annex B to the resolution, as outlined in the Secretary-General's tenth report. First, on the nuclear-related provisions, we have not received any reports on the supply, sale or transfer to Iran of nuclear and nuclear-related dual-use items contrary to paragraph 2 of annex B.

The Security Council continued its consideration of requests for the supply, sale or transfer of nuclear and nuclear-related dual-use items to Iran through the procurement channel. Four new proposals were submitted through the channel during the reporting period, bringing the total to 52 proposals received since 16 January 2016. The Council has received five notifications, submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 of annex B, for certain nuclear-related activities consistent with the Plan.

We also note that the 90-day extension of the United States waiver — covering activities related to the existing unit at the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant — expired at the end of August 2020. The United States did not announce any further extension of that waiver.

Secondly, the Secretariat did not receive any official information alleging action inconsistent with the ballistic missile-related provisions of the resolution.

Thirdly, on arms transfers, Israel provided information to the Secretary-General and the Security Council regarding the continued proliferation of advanced weaponry by Iran contrary to resolution 2231 (2015). Iran categorically rejected such claims in its own letter addressed to the Secretary-General.

The Secretariat also provided updates on two arms-related cases from the ninth report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/531). Regarding Israeli information concerning four alleged Dehlavieh anti-tank guided missiles in Libya, the Secretariat was able to ascertain that one of the four missiles had characteristics consistent with Iranian-produced Dehlavieh missiles. Nevertheless, we were not able to determine if that missile was transferred to Libya and/or whether its transfer was inconsistent with the resolution.

Regarding the Australian weapons seizure off the Gulf of Oman in June 2019, we are of the view that the seized ammunitions were not of Iranian manufacture. During the current reporting period, Australian authorities also provided the Secretariat with photos of documents collected from the crew in the course of that

arms seizure. The Secretariat has shared relevant details with Iran and the other Member State concerned to verify the authenticity of the issued documents.

Fourthly, regarding the asset-freeze provisions, the Secretariat continued its review of a case involving an academic institution that signed memorandums of understanding with an entity on the 2231 list. We were informed that such memorandums are not legally binding and do not involve any financial commitment or activities. In addition, the Secretariat received information from a Member State that an entity on the 2231 list had transferred some of its assets to another entity not subject to the asset-freeze provision of the resolution. We are still analysing available information and will report back, as appropriate.

In the current reporting period, the Secretariat also received information pertaining to individuals and entities on the 2231 list. Iran notified the Secretary-General and the Security Council that Mr. Moshen Fakhrizadeh had been “assassinated in a terrorist attack” on 27 November in Tehran province. Council members will recall that Mr. Fakhrizadeh is an individual on the 2231 list.

The Secretariat also received information from a Member State that a listed entity shipped “valves, electronics and measuring equipment suitable for use in ground testing of liquid-propellant ballistic missiles and space-launch vehicles” to Iran. The Secretariat is seeking further clarification from the Member State and will report back accordingly.

The Iranian nuclear issue is an important non-proliferation subject, with consequences for regional and global peace and security. In implementing the JCPOA, the countries concerned had shown that their dialogue and diplomacy, supported by a united Security Council, could forge a path to resolving that issue. We hope that those countries and the Council can do so again.

Let me conclude by acknowledging the leadership of His Excellency Mr. Philippe Kridelka and his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve, in their role as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). As Belgium leaves the Security Council at the end of the year, we look forward to providing our full support to the next Facilitator.

I would also like to thank the Coordinator of the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission for our continued cooperation.

## Annex II

### **Statement by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Olof Skoog**

It is an honour to be addressing the Security Council today on behalf of the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell Fontenelles, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

My first expression of gratitude and thanks goes to Secretary-General António Guterres and to the Secretariat for its determination and professionalism in preparing the tenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2020/1177).

I also want to thank Ambassador Philippe Kridelka of Belgium, who is nearing the end of his tenure as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231(2015), for the excellent cooperation. I look forward to working closely with the next Facilitator.

As this year comes to end, I recognize the tremendous challenges multilateral diplomacy has faced over recent months. The obvious example is how the JCPOA has continued to be tested. Overall, nuclear proliferation remains a global threat with potentially worldwide consequences. It is in our collective interest, but it is also our responsibility as members of the international community, to address those challenges jointly. Ensuring the full implementation of existing robust agreements, such as the JCPOA, should be part of our joint efforts.

As the Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA, I am pleased to note that the Iran nuclear deal, now five years of age, has withstood the pressure over recent years. The remaining participants have demonstrated their conviction and steadfast willingness to work diplomatically to preserve the deal. That determination to preserve the JCPOA and ensure its full and effective implementation by all sides was reinforced again at the Joint Commission meeting on 16 December and yesterday at the informal meeting of JCPOA participants at ministerial level, which I chaired. Such determination proves the importance and value of the JCPOA. It is solid evidence of the need to continue multilateral diplomacy and sustain and support multilateral agreements and institutions.

The JCPOA is a key component of the global non-proliferation architecture, which helps reduce regional and global security risks. It has removed the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran. It has done so in a verifiable way, as the agreement provides for an unprecedented amount of access and monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under Iran's comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol thereto.

It is crucial that the cooperation with the IAEA remain intact. Thanks to the Additional Protocol, the IAEA has access to both declared and undeclared sites in Iran and has installed 24/7 online monitoring systems in key facilities. It is important to remember that the Additional Protocol is implemented by Iran as part of its JCPOA commitments. Losing the JCPOA would also mean losing the Additional Protocol, the access rights granted to the IAEA and, accordingly, the additional unique transparency measures provided in the JCPOA.

Let me stress the EU's deep appreciation for the work and professionalism of the IAEA. Its impartial and technical work is of the utmost importance and is a cornerstone of the credibility of the JCPOA.

There is no positive alternative to the JCPOA, which is the fruit of more than 12 years of negotiation, endorsed at the highest level by the international community and enshrined in resolution 2231 (2015). However, the agreement has clearly come under enormous pressure. The EU deeply regrets the decision taken by the United States in May 2018 to withdraw from the JCPOA. The subsequent reimposition of previously lifted unilateral United States sanctions and the decision to discontinue granting nuclear waivers have hampered the full implementation of the deal. The full implementation of the agreement by all sides is crucial for all JCPOA participants and the international community to reap the benefits of the agreement.

It is against that background that I recognize that Iran continued to fully comply with the nuclear-related provisions for three and a half years, including for 14 months after the United States withdrew from the JCPOA and reimposed unilateral sanctions. However, it is deeply worrisome that Iran continues to decrease its nuclear-related JCPOA commitments. We remain particularly concerned about Iran's continued accumulation of low-enriched uranium in excess of the JCPOA stockpile- and enrichment-level thresholds, its continued research and development with advanced centrifuges and their ongoing transfer underground and the enrichment activities at Fordow. Those activities are inconsistent with the nuclear-related provisions of the JCPOA. We call on Iran to reverse those activities and return to the full implementation of its commitments.

In addition, I have also noted that a new law has been adopted in Iran allowing for and supporting further steps towards an increase to 20 per cent enrichment soon, as well as additional measures. That is very worrisome. I appreciate the indications of the Iranian leadership that Iran is ready to return to full JCPOA implementation. I strongly encourage that sufficient space be ensured for diplomacy in order to be able get the JCPOA back on the track of full implementation in the near future.

The work of the procurement channel remains important as an independent and transparent Security Council mechanism. I am pleased to note that new proposals have been transmitted to the Security Council for decision and endorsement. The tenth report of the Joint Commission to the Security Council on the status of the Procurement Working Group's decisions and on any implementation issues (see S/2020/1164) provides evidence of the channel as an important confidence-building measure that gives assurances to Member States and private-sector actors that transfers of goods and services for civil nuclear purposes are fully in line with resolution 2231 (2015). At the same time, I am also pleased to note that EU-Iran cooperation in the civil nuclear field under annex III continues, despite the challenges of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Alongside the obligations under the nuclear-related commitments for the Islamic Republic of Iran, the obligations to lift sanctions remain central to the JCPOA. The EU lifted all its nuclear-related sanctions upon the conclusion of the deal in 2015.

The EU remains fully committed to supporting efforts to normalize economic and trade relations. In that light, the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges retains significant political and economic potential to facilitate legitimate trade with Iran, consistent with international law and European regulations, as well as to support the needs of the Iranian population.

Allow me to say a word in that context regarding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected the entire world. However, the situation in Iran has been particularly devastating for the Iranian population. That has been partly aggravated by the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced significant difficulties in procuring essential medical and protective equipment and medicines.

Earlier this year, I took note of the United States announcement and its position regarding the statement of the so-called “snapback mechanism” under resolution 2231 (2015). As Coordinator, to me it has been evident that the United States ceased its participation in the JCPOA on 8 May 2018, and did not subsequently attend any of the activities related to the JCPOA. The United States cannot therefore be considered a JCPOA participant State and may not initiate the process of reinstating United Nations sanctions under resolution 2231 (2015). I also note that the position of the majority of the members of the Council regards the United States attempt to initiate the process of reinstating United Nations sanctions under resolution 2231 (2015) as having no legal basis.

Resolution 2231 (2015) remains fully in force — including the sanctions-lifting commitments under the JCPOA. In that context, the EU is grateful to the Secretariat for its balanced and factual approach in monitoring the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). Such work requires continued support and adequate resources.

It is evident to the European Union that the JCPOA needs to be fully and effectively implemented by all and that ongoing implementation challenges, including on nuclear non-proliferation and sanctions-lifting commitments, need to be addressed. I am pleased that yesterday’s ministerial meeting confirmed the unity of all participants to continue on that path. I am also very encouraged that all participants acknowledged the prospect of the return of the United States to the JCPOA and expressed their readiness to positively address that in a joint effort. That leaves me with some confidence that we will be able to preserve and reinvigorate this achievement of multilateral diplomacy, which makes an important contribution to security and stability in the region.

**Annex III****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Philippe Kridelka, in his capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015)**

[Original: French]

I will be speaking in my capacity as Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

As Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo just recalled (annex I), the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was a major achievement in the domains of nuclear non-proliferation, dialogue and diplomacy. I was therefore honoured to serve the Council in that capacity during the few months of my mandate. Given that this will be my first and last briefing to the Security Council in that capacity, I would like to thank my predecessor, Ambassador Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve, and my collaborator, Caroline Pailhe, for their work, as well as the Secretariat team for its unfailing support. I am very grateful to them for their dedication.

Let me turn now to the tenth report of the Facilitator (see S/2020/1244). It was approved by all members of the Council, whom I thank for their pertinent contributions, their spirit of compromise and their flexibility.

The report comprises a factual account that, in conjunction with the tenth report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/1177) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the report of the Joint Commission to the Security Council on the status of the Procurement Working Group's decisions and on any implementation issues (see S/2020/1164), serves to inform the Security Council about activities under the auspices of the 2331 format. My tenth report covers activities that took place from 24 June to 17 December 2020. Members can refer to the text of my report for greater detail, but I would like to mention the following two points.

First, I would like to recall that the Council held a meeting in the 2231 format during the reporting period. On 14 December 2020, representatives of the Security Council responsible for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) considered the conclusions and recommendations contained in the tenth report of the Secretary-General before its public release.

Secondly, 37 notes were circulated under the 2231 format during the reporting period. In addition, I sent 23 official communications to Member States and/or the Coordinator of the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission. I received 23 communications from Member States and the Coordinator. Those communications included the two regular quarterly reports issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during the reporting period in September (S/2020/1003, enclosure) and November 2020 (S/2020/1138, enclosure), as well as four updates in July (S/2020/1002, enclosure), October (S/2020/1137, enclosure), November (S/2020/1139, enclosure) and December 2020.

I cannot overstate the value of the central, impartial, factual and professional role played by the Agency, which continues to verify and monitor the activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran pursuant to resolution 2231 (2015).

Throughout my mandate, it was my ambition to support the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) on behalf of the Security Council by focusing on three specific areas: dialogue, transparency and maintaining the supply chain.

The various letters distributed under the 2231 format reflect the state of the deliberations among the parties concerned. Those communications are listed

and summarized in detail in my report, together with the responses issued by the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations.

Two aspects in particular caught the attention of Member States during the reporting period.

First, on 20 August 2020 the Secretary of State of the United States of America addressed a letter to the President of the Security Council (S/2020/815), indicating that the United States was initiating the process described in paragraphs 11 and 12 of resolution 2231 (2015), which would lead to the reintroduction of the measures that had been lifted pursuant to paragraph 7 (a). Subsequently, 13 members of the Security Council expressed differing views on that letter. All communications submitted in that regard by interested parties, including the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Secretary-General, are duly reflected in my report, as well as the subsequent statement by the President of the Security Council in August.

Secondly, according to annex B, the sanctions against arms transfers to and from the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the travel ban, expired on 18 October 2020. Differing stances on that matter, too, were expressed by Member States in letters circulated during the reporting period.

The divergent views on those two points touch on issues that lie at the heart of the JCPOA and of resolution 2231 (2015). I cannot but commend all interested parties that have shown restraint and a great willingness to cooperate in order to reach consensus on my report. In that collaborative approach, I see some hope for the future.

In that regard, I would like to echo the support expressed by the Secretary-General and the Coordinator of the Joint Commission for maintaining the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

In conclusion, I recall paragraph 2 of resolution 2231 (2015), which

“calls upon all Member States, regional organizations and international organizations to take such actions as may be appropriate to support the implementation of the JCPOA, including by taking actions commensurate with the implementation plan set out in the JCPOA and this resolution and by refraining from actions that undermine implementation of commitments under the JCPOA”.

**Annex IV****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Philippe Kridelka**

[Original: French]

At the outset, allow me to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo and Mr. Olof Skoog for their briefings.

A leitmotif emerges from their statements: a resolute commitment in favour of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), adopted by the international community in 2015. That commitment is also shared by the vast majority of the members of the Security Council, including my country, Belgium. I see three main reasons for that, which were also mentioned by our briefers.

First, since its entry into force the JCPOA has ensured the transparency and the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Specifically, on the ground, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors ensure that constant monitoring, thanks to the most comprehensive inspection system in the world and thanks to Iran's cooperation.

Secondly, the Plan is a landmark of multilateralism. Negotiated by the five permanent members of the Council, accompanied by Germany, Iran and the European Union, the JCPOA is more than a nuclear agreement; it is a tool for building trust and the result of 12 years of intense diplomatic activity based on dialogue and respect among the parties.

Thirdly, the Plan is one of the great successes of nuclear non-proliferation. It occupies a prime place in the non-proliferation architecture, as patiently built and guaranteed by the international community since the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1970.

Those achievements should not, however, obscure the challenges facing the Plan today. I will cite three.

First, I must join my European partners and echo their concerns about the arms transfers by Iran and its ballistics programme. Those behaviours remain incompatible with the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) until 18 October 2020 with regard to arms transfers. However, it would be foolish to believe those challenges could be solved in isolation, without taking into account the regional security context. Belgium therefore encourages any regional approach to dialogue, cooperation and ultimately the construction of a regional security architecture. That idea is not new. The time has come to implement it in practical terms, and the debate organized by the Russian presidency of the Council on 20 October was an opportunity to reflect upon that together (see S/2020/1037).

Secondly, the Plan has suffered due to the United States withdrawal in May 2018 and the various actions it has taken to date, which not only undermine the central objectives of the Plan but effectively prevent other Members of the United Nations from implementing its provisions.

At the same time, we regret the increasing non-compliance by Iran with its nuclear obligations, in particular the law recently adopted by the Iranian Parliament — the Majlis — that could pave the way to the significant development of Iran's enrichment programme and reduced access for the IAEA. Those measures are incompatible with the JCPOA and with our Iranian partners' nuclear commitments.

Belgium therefore calls for the return of the United States to the JCPOA. It urges Iran to end its “less for less” policy and restore the integrity of its nuclear commitments.

Thirdly, the JCPOA must bring economic benefits to the Iranian people. That is and must remain one of its central objectives. Especially amid the current pandemic, the importance of that aim could not be clearer.

In that regard, Belgium welcomes the establishment of the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges by its European partners — France, Germany and the United Kingdom. That instrument aims to facilitate trade with Iran, and my country joined it in November 2019, alongside Denmark, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden. Other countries could follow.

We must not give in to pessimism on account of those challenges. On the contrary, the diplomatic road remains open and the lights are green for re-engagement. In that regard, we welcome the determined efforts of the remaining participating States — France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, China and Iran, as well as the European Union — in the context of the dispute resolution mechanism and the Joint Commission. Only yesterday, on (21 December, in a joint statement, the Foreign Ministers of these countries expressed their resolve to address the current challenges related to the implementation of the JCPO in terms of nuclear non-proliferation and the lifting of sanctions.

Belgium echoes the 7 December joint statement by France, Germany and the United Kingdom in welcoming the encouraging announcements by President-elect Biden in favour of American re-engagement in the Plan.

In conclusion, Belgium encourages all the parties concerned to bravely return to the path of diplomacy, trust and multilateralism, with a view to reaching collective solutions, which are in the interests of all.

**Annex V****Statement by the Chargé d'affaires of China to the United Nations,  
Geng Shuang**

[Original: English and Chinese]

I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo; Ambassador Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, for their briefings.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), on the Iranian nuclear issue, is an important achievement of multilateral diplomacy. Endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 2231 (2015), it is legally binding and should be effectively implemented. To preserve the JCPOA is to uphold multilateralism, maintain peace and stability in the Middle East, safeguard the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the international order underpinned by international law.

The unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA by the United States of America, its continued maximum pressure on Iran and its action to undermine the efforts of parties to uphold the agreement are the root causes of the current predicament on the Iranian nuclear issue. Since the beginning of this year, the United States has openly pushed for the extension of the arms embargo against Iran in the Security Council, demanded the invocation of the snapback mechanism and unilaterally announced the reinstatement of sanctions against Iran.

With disregard for the views of the international community, the United States staged several farces. Faced with the unreasonable demands of the United States, the overwhelming majority of Council members adhered to an objective and fair stand, refused to endorse the United States position and did not recognize any legal, political or practical effects of its actions. The President of the Security Council also concluded to be in no position to take any action on the United States request. That represents a resounding rejection of bullying over fairness and justice, and of unilateralism for multilateralism. It reflects vividly the support of the international community for justice and multilateralism.

At present, the situation regarding the Iranian nuclear issue is facing significant changes and new opportunities and challenges. All parties should maintain calm and show restraint, resolutely implement the JCPOA, resolve differences through dialogue and consultation under the framework of the Joint Commission and restore the balance of rights and obligations under the JCPOA.

A virtual meeting of Foreign Ministers was successfully convened yesterday on the Iranian nuclear issue. The parties reaffirmed their commitment to safeguarding and ensuring the complete and effective implementation of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015), recognizing the prospect of the United States rejoining the JCPOA and agreeing to make joint efforts to push for the swift return of the United States to the agreement. The ministerial meeting sent a strong, positive message to the world. All parties should seize the opportunity to speed up engagement and consultations, strengthen diplomatic efforts and bring the JCPOA back on the right track as soon as possible. The most urgent task at the moment is for the United States to mend its ways, promptly rejoin the agreement unconditionally and return to full compliance.

China understands that certain countries have concerns about issues such as regional security. Yet linking them directly to the JCPOA and demanding the reopening of negotiations on the agreement will create new obstacles and add new complications to resolving the dilemma over the Iranian nuclear issue. At the

ministerial meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the Gulf region held on October 20 (see S/2020/1037), State Counselor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi proposed building up a multilateral dialogue platform for the region to launch an inclusive dialogue, discuss regional security issues and continuously build consensus by addressing the easier issues first, before moving on to the difficult ones. We are willing to link the Chinese initiative with similar ones from Russia and others, learn from each other and forge synergies. Council members and regional countries can use this as a basis, act in good faith, earnestly engage in dialogue and discussion and gradually build up momentum so as to strive for a consensus that addresses the legitimate concerns of all parties and meets the expectations of the international community.

In his report (S/2020/1177), the Secretary-General acknowledges the role of the JCPOA as the best way to comprehensively and completely resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. The Secretary-General calls on all parties to constructively resolve differences through the dispute resolution mechanism, thanks all parties for supporting the operation of the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges and states his belief that it is vital for all parties, under the current economic and pandemic circumstances, to carry out economic and trade cooperation with Iran. China appreciates those positive elements.

Just now, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo presented a few facts in her briefing, including Council members' universal rejection of the United States push for the reinstatement of sanctions against Iran in disregard of the call of the international community, and Iran's incomplete compliance with its obligations under the agreement, as well as the concerns of the Secretary-General about the current tension in the Gulf region. China hopes that the Secretary-General and the Secretariat will continue to promote and facilitate the diplomatic efforts of all parties and continue to play an important role in helping resolve the Iranian nuclear issue.

China has always been committed to maintaining the authority of the Security Council resolution and the effectiveness of the JCPOA. China will continue to stand on the right side of history, firmly uphold multilateralism and work with all the parties concerned to make unremitting efforts to promote a political and diplomatic settlement to the Iranian nuclear issue and safeguard peace and stability in the Gulf region.

Based on the programme of work for the month and barring the unexpected, this is the last Security Council meeting for the year 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to the five departing non-permanent members: Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa. I thank them for their efforts and contributions in advancing the work of the Security Council over the past two years. I hope that, after their tenure, they will continue, as always, to render support and cooperation.

Last but not least, I hope that the upcoming year, 2021, will bring everybody health and tranquillity, peace and security, solidarity and cooperation.

**Annex VI****Statement by the Special Envoy of the Dominican Republic to the Security Council, José Singer Weisinger**

[Original: Spanish]

We thank the speakers for their briefings and commend the performance of their respective duties. We thank the Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) for the excellent work achieved by him and his predecessor during their two-year tenure. We also express our appreciation for the professionalism, dedication and support of their teams.

At the outset, we underscore the importance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a major achievement of multilateralism and the international nuclear non-proliferation architecture. In our view, it is the only option for guaranteeing the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme through a rigorous system of monitoring and verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol thereto. The JCPOA is therefore an integral component of regional and international security.

In that regard, we commend the impartial and objective verification work the IAEA continues to carry out, guaranteeing the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy, despite the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Regarding the information reflected in the tenth report of the Secretary General (S/2020/1177), we regret that, since mid-2019, Iran has pursued a policy of reducing its nuclear commitments, including by exceeding the uranium-enrichment and -storage levels established in the JCPOA. We therefore reiterate our call on Iran to resume full compliance with its commitments under the JCPOA as well as with resolution 2231 (2015).

We also urge the parties to resolve existing differences under the auspices of the dispute settlement mechanism, especially in the light of the significant challenges currently facing the JCPOA. In that regard, we welcome the efforts by Germany, the United Kingdom and France to resolve relevant issues through the mechanism. We also encourage Member States to support and continue making use of the procurement channel as a crucial mechanism for building trust and transparency.

Preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons has been the central objective of the Plan, and that has to date been achieved, among other significant outcomes. However, Iran's decreasing compliance with its nuclear commitments is a matter that demands particular attention, representing a serious threat in terms of nuclear proliferation. A viable solution to this matter must be sought through dialogue without delay.

The international community must make greater efforts to ensure not only the validity of the Plan but also its full and effective implementation. To that end, we commend the commitment of the participants to safeguarding the Plan and upholding full compliance with the agreed obligations.

At the same time, we urge Iran to take into account the concerns expressed by a number of States in the region regarding non-compliance with the provisions on conventional weapons, as well as its alleged participation in destabilizing activities. The concerns of those States must not fall on deaf ears. It is therefore imperative that Iran refrain from any action inconsistent with the established provisions, as well as from engaging in hostile activities that exacerbate existing tensions in the region.

In conclusion, upholding the JCPOA requires the parties to show restraint, foster dialogue with a view to reducing tensions, universally implement their obligations and, in turn, guarantee Iran's reintegration into the commercial and banking world as agreed. Preventing nuclear proliferation is not the sole responsibility of the participants in the Plan, but of us all; which means we must work together and strengthen cooperation to that end.

As this is the last meeting of the year and of our membership in the Security Council, we wish to take this opportunity to extend a few sincere words of gratitude to the members of the Council for the support and cooperation they extended to me and to the Dominican delegation during the two years of our first term as a member of this important body of multilateralism. At the same time, we thank all the Secretariat staff for their hard work, assistance and availability.

We also warmly welcome the newly elected members and wish them every success in the important and arduous task on which they are embarking. We underscore that the Dominican Republic will continue its steadfast support for the international peace and security agenda from the General Assembly.

## Annex VII

### **Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson**

I thank all the briefers for their statements. Allow me to extend my special thanks to our Belgian colleague and his team for their diligent work in facilitating the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) for the past two years.

Five years ago, persistent diplomatic efforts produced an agreement to ensure that Iran's nuclear programme remained exclusively peaceful in nature. Estonia has repeatedly stated its support to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We continue to consider the JCPOA a key element in the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and as crucial for regional and wider international security. Owing to the strict limits and international monitoring mechanisms set by the Plan, the Iranian nuclear programme remains under tight scrutiny and verification. We believe that these transparency measures remain crucial in averting the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran.

In that regard, I would like to emphasize the important role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear commitments under the JCPOA. Estonia commends the impartial and professional work of the Agency. We encourage Iran to continue its constructive engagement and cooperation with the IAEA.

The JCPOA has faced a number of challenges over the past few years. Estonia deeply regrets Iran's decision in 2019 to start reducing its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan. As a result, Iran has again accumulated worrisome levels of enriched uranium and acquired new knowledge through its research and development activities.

We note with concern the latest report of the IAEA informing us of Iran's intention to install additional advanced centrifuge machines at the Fuel Enrichment Plant in Natanz, contrary to the JCPOA commitments. We also note with great regret the recent laws adopted by the Iranian Parliament with the purpose of further expanding Iran's nuclear programme and restricting IAEA inspectors' access to key nuclear sites. Those steps are counterproductive to preserving the agreement. We strongly urge Iran without delay to reverse those and other measures contrary to its commitments and to refrain from taking further escalatory steps.

Besides the nuclear domain, Iran's other actions are cause for concern. The taking by Iran of steps inconsistent with the restrictive measures set out in annex B of resolution 2231 (2015), along with other Security Council resolutions and with international obligations, makes it difficult to consider Iran a responsible actor. I refer here to Iran testing and developing ballistic missiles and technologies related to them, attacking commercial shipping in the Gulf of Oman, damaging Saudi oil facilities and transferring arms to its proxies in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. Such weapons-proliferation activities have a highly destabilizing effect to the region. They only increase mistrust and feed into the escalation of tensions. Such activities are unacceptable and need to stop immediately.

Despite the challenges, we remain hopeful that there is a way to preserve the JCPOA and ensure its full implementation. Estonia welcomes the JCPOA participants' commitment to the JCPOA and efforts to address and find a viable solution to the issues of non-compliance. We believe that, once the participants engage constructively and substantively in the dispute resolution mechanism and return to full compliance with the deal, it will serve as a way to build confidence and create opportunities to address other regional security concerns.

## Annex VIII

### **Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nathalie Broadhurst Estival**

[Original: English and French]

I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union and the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) for their comprehensive and interesting briefings.

First of all, I welcome the tenth report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/1177) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), which was just been presented to us by Ms. DiCarlo. The report not only recalls the Secretary-General's unswerving support for resolution 2231 (2015) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) but also shows the support provided day after day by the Secretariat for the concrete operational implementation of the resolution in its various dimensions, thereby confirming that resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA remain the only legal framework in force today. The recently adopted report of the Facilitator (see S/2020/1244) for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) is also particularly useful in that regard, and I thank him. I would also like to stress that it is essential that the Secretariat continue to have the necessary means to monitor the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

Together with Germany and the United Kingdom, France has worked tirelessly for the preservation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Iranian statements aimed at making the E-3 — France, Germany and the United Kingdom — responsible for the current situation are therefore particularly unwelcome. That agreement is an essential achievement of multilateral diplomacy and the non-proliferation architecture. We negotiated the JCPOA with the conviction that it would decisively contribute to international peace and security and to building confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It remains the best way to verifiably monitor Iran's nuclear programme in order to ensure that Iran develops nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful ends.

We stand today at a key moment for the preservation of that agreement. Our first priority is to end Iran's violations of the agreement, which deprives it of its substance, and to prevent any action by Iran that would further weaken it.

We are very concerned about Iran's recent announcement of its intention to install three new advanced centrifuge cascades at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant and about the law recently passed by Iran's Parliament, which if fully implemented would substantially ramp up the enrichment programme, significantly reduce the verification capabilities of the International Atomic Energy Agency and result in a resumption of activities that have no credible civilian justification and were abandoned by Iran some 20 years ago. Such measures would be absolutely incompatible with the JCPOA and Iran's other nuclear commitments. Their implementation would jeopardize the balance upon which the agreement was built by putting Iran in a more serious situation than it was in before the conclusion of the JCPOA.

Our second priority is to ensure the full return of all stakeholders to full compliance with the agreement, as Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian clearly recalled yesterday during the meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission's participating States. That is essential to preserving the JCPOA. In that regard, we are very encouraged by the recent statements made by the future American Administration with regard to the JCPOA, which could pave the way for the return of the United States to the

Vienna agreement, opening the diplomatic prospect for the return of the United States and Iran to the agreement and for addressing broader concerns regarding Iran.

The priority today is clear: to preserve the space for diplomacy in order to allow all the parties to return to the full implementation of the agreement. In a context in which the risks and challenges are many, there is no alternative to full compliance with resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA in all their aspects. We are pleased that message was clearly expressed in the ministerial declaration adopted yesterday by the participants to the agreement.

My third and final point is to echo what we unanimously agreed at the Security Council meeting on 20 October (see S/2020/1037), that is, that we must also address regional security concerns. To that end, the return of all parties to the Vienna agreement could contribute to restoring trust and opening up dialogue on those issues in order to find political solutions to the conflicts in the region and prevent any escalation. In that regard, it is important that Iran comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions on the prohibition of the transfer of arms to non-State actors in the Middle East. Along with its E-3 partners, France is ready to commit to a constructive dialogue on regional security issues with the Secretary-General, the countries of the region and the main partners, because the security of the region is also a matter of international peace and security and concerns us all.

Since 2003, the E-3 has played a key role in the Iranian nuclear dossier. Today we are determined to continue to meet our responsibilities.

**Annex IX****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Cristoph Heusgen**

Let me start by first thanking the briefer, Mr. Olof Skoog, for reminding us of the important role of the European Union (EU) High Representative with regard to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). I would like to pay special tribute to Ms. Helga Schmid, who was the Secretary-General of the European External Action Service and a kind of godmother to the JCPOA. After many years, she has now become the Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. I would also like to thank Mr. Philippe Kridelka and his predecessor, Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve, and their teams for their dedicated work as Facilitators over the past couple of years. Last but not least, I once again thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing and the continuing support of the Secretariat in the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). We also thank the Secretary-General personally for his continuing support of the JCPOA.

In that context, I would like to address a point made by our Russian colleague regarding ongoing discussions in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. I support the point that he made. We should stand united in blocking the attempts of our United States partners to cut funds to the Secretariat for tasks related to the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

Our position on the JCPOA has not changed. As the E-3 — France, Germany and the United Kingdom — we have worked tirelessly to preserve that agreement. Just yesterday — 21 December — at an informal virtual meeting of JCPOA participants at the ministerial level, all remaining participants reaffirmed their commitment. They also acknowledged the prospect of a return by the United States to the agreement and underlined their readiness to positively address that in a joint effort.

However, the Foreign Ministers also discussed current implementation challenges. There is a pressing need for Iran to stop all actions that run counter to its nuclear-related commitments and refrain from any further action that might violate and hollow out the JCPOA. Iran needs to return to full compliance with the JCPOA. We are deeply concerned about its installation of advanced centrifuges at the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant, which would be in clear violation of the JCPOA. We are also concerned that, if implemented, the recent law passed by the Iranian Parliament would substantially expand Iran's nuclear programme, in violation of the JCPOA, and limit monitoring access for the International Atomic Energy Agency.

With regard to annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), I would like to briefly reiterate that we continue to consider Iran's development of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles and related technologies as inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B. We reaffirm the need to ensure compliance by all States with the provisions in annex B, including the prohibition on the transfer to and from Iran of items listed under the Missile Technology Control Regime.

The situation is bleak with regard to many files on the agenda of the Security Council; it is not necessarily so with the Iran nuclear file. Resolution 2231 (2015) survived four years of frontal attacks and remains a cornerstone of the non-proliferation and security architecture in the region. I would like to thank everyone around the table who contributed to preserving the JCPOA and pay special tribute to the Ambassadors of Indonesia and the Niger during their presidencies. Once the JCPOA implementation is fully back in place, we should jointly address the wider challenges of the region. We must also continue to address the dismal human rights record of Iran.

**Annex X****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani**

We thank Under Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Ambassador Olof Skoog and Ambassador Philippe Kridelka for their briefings.

Back in June 2019, when my delegation made our first remarks on this item, we stated that we shared the view of the Secretary-General that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a hard-won achievement of successful multilateralism, nuclear non-proliferation, dialogue and diplomacy (see S/PV.8564). As we make our remarks at this meeting, our view has not changed. We are now halfway through the Security Council's consideration of the Iranian nuclear issue. We cannot afford to restart from zero and waste so much effort. In that regard, allow me to highlight the following.

First, it is more important than ever to preserve and support the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). All parties must refrain from actions that run counter to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). We remain concerned about the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA, the reimposed sanctions and Iran's decision to reduce its operational commitments under the JCPOA.

All differences must be swiftly resolved through dialogue and diplomacy, particularly through the dispute resolution mechanism under the JCPOA. Issues that are not directly related to the JCPOA or resolution 2231 (2015) need to be treated separately and should not affect or hamper the progress that has been achieved.

We continue to welcome cooperation between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency for monitoring purposes, as transparency is also an important element of the confidence-building aspect of the JCPOA.

We also commend the joint ministerial statement by the JCPOA participants adopted on 21 December, in which they re-emphasized their commitment to preserve the JCPOA. Our views on the issue of JCPOA are clear and principled, as we stipulated in August (see S/2020/805). The provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) are still in force.

Secondly, we underline the importance of upholding the rule of law. The rule of law and multilateralism are the cornerstones of the United Nations. Unilateralism has no place in our international community. Everyone must also act in good faith and take all necessary measures to meet their responsibilities, and all parties must abide by the rule of law to create order and stability.

There are times where our endeavour to maintain the rule of law and stability have been tested. However, then as now, we must hold fast to principles and not be swayed by temporary short-term gains. All efforts must remain focused on our main common objective — to ensure Iran's peaceful use of nuclear energy, protect the legitimate interests of Iran and, more broadly, to maintain peace and stability and achieve prosperity for all.

Thirdly, we must continue to take one step forward towards a world free of nuclear weapons. The JCPOA remains a significant element of the global non-proliferation architecture. It contributes to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, which is critical to achieving a world free from nuclear weapons and promoting a balanced implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The entire international

community — not just the parties to the JCPOA or the members of the Security Council — is obliged to support it fully.

Our position on that issue is clear, as we are party to important treaties in that area, including the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Indonesia is also one of the main proponents of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and will welcome its entry into force on 22 January 2021.

Before I conclude, since this is our last meeting on resolution 2231 (2015), my delegation would like to express its appreciation to all the members of the Council's 2231 format for their cooperation. I would also like to thank the Facilitator, Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, and his team for their leadership over the past two years and for managing to adopt the report (see S/2020/1244) in time. I also would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve for his service to the Council.

As our term in the Council is coming to a close, we continue to hope that the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015) will be effectively implemented and continue to contribute to the non-proliferation regime, as well as ensuring stability and peace in the region. Our commitment to support that goal will remain even when we are no longer a Council member.

Since this is also the last scheduled Council meeting for this month, I would like to thank brother Jerry Matjila for his excellent presidency this month. He has presided over the meetings with flair, charm and grace. He mentioned that the outgoing five members will leave based on the English alphabetical order, so I shall say my goodbye right before him.

As our term comes to a close, I would like to say a few words. We hope that we have been able to fulfil the wishes of the whole United Nations membership over the past two years as a member of the Security Council, and hope we have duly fulfilled our mandate as Council members, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security and in order to save as many as human lives as possible. We would like to thank all United Nations States Members that placed their trust in us for their support.

We thank all the members of the Security Council, starting from its 2018 composition. We learned from their experience. We also thank its 2019 and 2020 composition for their constructive cooperation and meaningful support to our delegation. We thank our comrades in the outgoing five for their collaboration and wish the incoming five members all the best and are confident that they will enhance the work of the Council.

We extend our sincere and special thanks to Hasmik Egian and the Secretariat team, the interpreters, sound engineers, security personnel and everyone who worked behind the scenes to ensure that the Council could continue to work even during the coronavirus disease pandemic. We also wish to thank the members of the press, non-governmental organizations and think tanks who have been following our work and have become valuable partners for discussion.

I would like to thank my entire team in the Indonesian Mission to the United Nations, to whom I feel incredibly indebted and grateful for their hard work over the past two years. They are the real machinery that makes Indonesia's membership in the Council a success.

Lastly, I hope that we have brought colours, values and principles that we hold dear and near to the Council. We have championed the faithful implementation of the

Charter and United Nations resolutions. We have tried our best to foster unity and consensus and to broker peace.

We came into the Council in 2019 with a batik shirt, and we leave the Council with dignity, with that batik shirt intact. Farewell to one and all.

**Annex XI****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Niandou Aougi**

[Original: French]

I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Ambassador Philippe Kridelka and Mr. Olof Skoog for their briefings.

My delegation has taken note of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the tenth report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/1177) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and calls upon Member States and all stakeholders to comply with the obligations to which they have freely subscribed.

I wish to reaffirm the Niger's commitment to the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), which endorses the JCPOA on Iran's nuclear programme.

It is undeniable that, as an expression of the will of the international community and with the support of the Security Council, the JCPOA is an essential instrument in the fight against nuclear proliferation. It must therefore be preserved. That is why we urge all parties to the agreement to adhere to the strict application of its provisions, with regard to both obligations and rights, and to make use of its dispute settlement mechanism should difficulties arise in the implementation of its provisions.

For my country, the Niger, the press release issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency on 26 August, indicating that the Islamic Republic of Iran had granted it access to two sites to which it had requested access and was facilitating verification activities aimed at resolving problems relating to the application of safeguards, seems to be a step forward as the international community needs to lay the foundations for a new relationship, based on mutual trust and respect, with the Islamic Republic of Iran. In that regard, we call on Iran to reverse all activities undertaken recently that could contravene the provisions of the JCPOA, which must be pursued in good faith by all parties.

My delegation echoes the Secretary-General's call, on humanitarian grounds, to alleviate all unilateral economic measures that could prevent Iran from mobilizing the means to fight the coronavirus disease pandemic.

It is therefore urgent to take into account the current situation in the Persian Gulf region. If adequate measures are not envisaged, it could compound today's difficulties and could have unforeseeable consequences with incalculable implications for international peace and security.

**Annex XII****Statement by the First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Dmitry Polyanskiy**

[Original: Russian]

I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Mr. Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union, and Mr. Philippe Kridelka, Permanent Representative of Belgium and Security Council Facilitator for the format under resolution 2231 format (2015), for their briefings.

The past year has not been easy for any of us, and not only because of the coronavirus. Beginning in June, attempts by the United States to punish Iran at any cost — or rather, to punish a regime that is inconvenient for the United States — have become reckless and increasingly irrational. Our partners in Washington, D.C., first tried to force Security Council members to impose an unprecedented harsh arms embargo against Iran by means of a new draft resolution (S/2020/797), without any convincing grounds. Then they claimed that they had the right to unilaterally reinstate the United Nations sanctions against Iran, which had been in effect until 2015, through a so-called snapback. Our American partners have been tightening the screws against Tehran almost daily, seeking to convince themselves and the rest of the world that a policy of maximum pressure on Iran was the only way to solve all the issues that had arisen.

All those attempts failed. I would like to stress that this file was the rare case in the Security Council where its members were overwhelmingly unanimous in opposing the United States. That is a very telling point. There are certainly varying and nuanced positions among Council members in their assessments of the Iranian dossier, including among our colleagues with regard to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), but all of them objectively pale in comparison to the degree of absurdity and destructiveness that the United States has shown over the past six months in effectively opposing all the other members of the Council.

To its credit, the Council did not succumb to provocation by Washington, and acted exactly as it should by remaining committed to international law and its obligations to strengthen international peace and security, strictly following the letter and spirit of resolution 2231 (2015) and employing common sense. We are proud to note that, in those six months, the authority of the Security Council in relation to the Iranian case has only increased.

Since there has been no snapback, the international legal regime established by resolution 2231 (2015) remains fully in place and the document itself continues to be implemented in accordance with the previously agreed parameters and time frames. The illegitimacy of the claim of the United States to launch the snapback process has been confirmed by 13 Council members. The Presidents of the Council for August and September clearly indicated that they were not authorized to take any follow-up action. The Secretary-General unequivocally took the same position. The Russian Federation, which assumed the presidency of the Council on 1 October, also publicly stated that the snapback would not take place. The Foreign Ministers of the countries participating in the JCPOA put the matter to rest just yesterday — 21 December — in their joint statement at the end of their meeting.

Those are the facts. Whether our American colleagues like them or not is another story. But they will still have to accept the reality determined by the collective political will of the majority of the members of the Security Council. Another uncomfortable reality for our American colleagues is the fact that the

special regime for arms transfers to or from the Islamic Republic of Iran expired on 18 October.

We regret that the process of “psychological adaptation” by our colleagues to this reality is taking too long. We see those phantom pains in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, where the United States delegation is trying to secure in the draft United Nations budget for next year financing for a sanctions committee that exists only in its imagination. We hope that a majority of General Assembly members will be just as reasonable as Council members and reject those absurd attempts.

The tenth report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/1177) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) provides yet further confirmation that the snapback does not exist in reality. The report makes it abundantly clear that the only State that claims otherwise is the United States. The others regard those claims as devoid of any legal basis, and therefore without any political, legal or practical consequences. In particular, we welcome the call to fully support and use the procurement channel, which continues to be a key confidence-building measure in the context of the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

We note with satisfaction that, in his report, the Secretary-General regrets the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA and the subsequent steps that followed those actions as contrary to the objectives of resolution 2231 (2015). Equally important is the Secretary-General’s conclusion that such actions could have a negative impact on the implementation of the resolution by other parties.

Nevertheless, the Secretary-General’s report still cannot be called fully balanced. The problem is the same as before: one side cannot be called to return to full implementation of an agreement without the other, especially since it is clear to all of us that Iran’s retreat from its commitments is a direct response to the destructive and provocative actions of the United States.

Moreover, the Iranian side warned about those consequences in advance, as stipulated in annex A, paragraph 26, of the JCPOA. We regret that the United Nations leadership again lacked the courage to clearly issue a call for the United States to return to full and unconditional compliance with resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA, as well as to rescind the steps the United States has taken that run counter to them.

For the second time, we are struck by the cynical language of the Secretary-General’s report on the assassination of the Iranian representatives. The report contains not a word of condemnation of those acts or any mention of their potential negative consequences. Just as in the case of Qasem Soleimani, there is not a word of regret about the death of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, save the mention that he was on the sanctions list. It is hard to call it anything but cowardice.

It is also difficult for us to find an explanation for the Secretary-General’s sudden increased interest in the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency on the Iran dossier, in particular with regard to monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. We have not seen that mentioned in previous reports, and there has generally been an understanding — as far as we know — that the Vienna platform is being discussed in Vienna alone, as New York lacks the expertise for that.

As the Council is well aware, for a year now Russia has been calling on the Secretariat to strictly follow its administrative and technical mandate regarding the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). We do not support any investigations under its auspices, or any other non-transparent activity by the Secretariat behind

the backs of Security Council member States. The staff of the Secretariat simply do not have the authority to carry out such activities. We would ask our United States colleagues, who are trying to ignore that fact, to duly consider it.

The Secretary-General's report has further illuminated the futility of attempts to expose Iran's violations of annex B of resolution 2231 (2015) on the special procedure for arms transfers to and from Iran, as well as of the section on missiles. In that regard, we would like to emphasize once again that attempts to portray Iran as the source of all troubles in the region and a threat to its security lack any clear justification. If we do not provoke Iran and do not exacerbate the situation, then the problems in the region would be considerably fewer.

We are grateful to the Belgian Facilitator for his efforts to organize the work of the 2231 format. The period of his mandate has been extremely turbulent. However, Belgian diplomacy has proved effective in taking very seriously its responsibilities as Facilitator. That is what led to the strict factual reporting of the work of the format. We know that compromise on the Facilitator's most recent report (see S/2020/1244) was not easy. We cannot say that the final version can be considered fully balanced, as the text would have needed to reflect Tehran's position more fully and fairly. We hope that the future Facilitator will consider those shortcomings and serve as an honest broker by giving the parties equal opportunity to express their views in the report.

In Russia there is a saying: "it is much easier to break than to build". Over the past six months, we have seen with our own eyes the fragile balance of interests and checks and balances that underpin the 2015 nuclear deal. So far, we have been able to preserve the deal through our joint efforts. We hope that the United States side will eventually reach the right conclusions for itself. No one asked the United States to take on the role of world policeman. Today attempts to conform to it look anachronistic. So does an irresponsible and arrogant policy of unilateral pressure that will ultimately backfire on its practitioner. That is why the most logical step for the United States would be to fully and unconditionally return to the agreements previously reached under the JCPOA, without preconditions. We trust that the new United States Administration will realize that and take the right steps in the near future. The whole world would benefit from that.

We also pay tribute to the statement of the Iranian leadership that it is ready to return immediately to the full implementation of the JCPOA as soon as the United States does so.

Of course, the situation in the Persian Gulf cannot be seen only through the prism of the JCPOA. Steps are needed to strengthen mutual trust among neighbours of the region, prevent crises and mitigate the risk of military clashes. To that end, Russia proposes a regional dialogue on security issues in the Persian Gulf. In October, under our presidency, the Security Council held a separate open meeting on this topic (see S/2020/1037), which allowed us to ascertain that there is a demand from virtually all players for finding real ways to stabilize the situation in the Persian Gulf. Once again, I would like to emphasize that regional security issues are a separate topic, above and beyond the JCPOA situation. However, that does not diminish its importance. We hope that we will be able to continue that discussion in the near future — not in general terms but with a view to reaching concrete solutions. The Gulf region, it seems to us, is ripe for a pragmatic and reasonable conversation among all interested parties. For our part, we are ready to do everything we can to start such a dialogue as soon as possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the delegations of all five countries leaving the Council on 1 January for working together. We are grateful

for their contribution to the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council that they chaired. It is a pity that we were not able to meet in person, because the occasion undoubtedly warranted it. I wish our colleagues good luck in all of their endeavours. We will continue our work together in the General Assembly and other United Nations organs.

## **Second statement by the First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Dmitry Polyanskiy**

[Original: Russian]

I am compelled to take the floor once again, although I had not planned to do so, to respond to my German colleague, Mr. Christoph Heusgen. During his time on the Security Council, he seems to have developed a peculiar addiction to criticizing Russia at every meeting, even if it is not relevant to the topic at hand. I hope that unhealthy symptom will disappear after 1 January.

Mr. Heusgen quite inappropriately mentioned the Navalny blogger story a few minutes ago and recommended that we read the recent piece in *Der Spiegel*. We read the press, of course, but we do not take journalists' claims as the absolute truth, especially when they rely on sources long known to be a kind of journalistic arm of Western intelligence services. We trust only facts that are not in doubt. In this case, however, the degree of absurdity of the journalistic assertions he mentions is simply off the scale. It is even embarrassing that Mr. Heusgen, a political diplomat with a reputation as a serious, yet very emotional, man, would promote such base and unprofessional nonsense. Perhaps the many years of intensive reading of *The New York Times* is taking its toll. Not everyone's sanity can handle the strain of fake news. We warned him about that.

As for the so-called Navalny poisoning case, I should like to remind our German colleagues that both our numerous specific questions to the German side as well as the five official requests for legal assistance from the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation remain unanswered. It is therefore ridiculous to say that the German side is taking that story seriously. I ask him to please keep that in mind as he plays along with Mr. Navalny's new phantasmagorical revelations. Sooner or later, that smear campaign unleashed by Berlin at his behest will have to be answered for.

Finally, I would like to leave Mr. Heusgen with an aphorism from recently departed writer Mikhail Zhvanetsky: "What a pity that you are finally leaving." We will honestly miss him. I wish him good luck in whatever career he decides to pursue and all the best.

**Annex XIII****Statement by the Counsellor of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Diani Jamesha Prince**

I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Ambassador Skoog and Ambassador Kridelka, in his capacity as Facilitator of the format under resolution 2231 (2015), for their briefings.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) remains a central pillar of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and multilateral diplomacy. It is fundamental to the maintenance of regional and international peace and security, and its preservation is therefore of critical importance. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), and we remain strongly in support of the JCPOA.

We deeply regret the May 2018 withdrawal of the United States from the agreement. Its subsequent decisions and actions to reimpose sanctions, terminate waivers and issue a notification to the Security Council in August run counter to the requirements and goals of the resolution and the JCPOA. Regarding the August notification, we maintain the position, outlined in the 20 August 2020 joint letter by the members of the group made up of the three African members of the Security Council — the Niger, South Africa and Tunisia — and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, that:

“having confirmed its withdrawal from the JCPOA and by not participating in any of the JCPOA structures or subsequent activities, the United States ceased to be a JCPOA participant and is, therefore, ineligible to submit a notification to the Security Council under the terms of resolution 2231 (2015).”

We continue to urge the United States to rejoin the JCPOA. Furthermore, we appeal for the lifting all unilateral coercive measures, which not only contravene resolution 2231 (2015) and run counter to the objectives of the JCPOA, but also considerably debilitate the Islamic Republic of Iran’s ability to combat the coronavirus disease pandemic. In an interconnected global community, this public health emergency demands international cooperation to ensure that all States are able to effectively and efficiently respond to the challenges. Political disputes must therefore be set aside to foster solidarity and to save lives.

We also regret Iran’s decision to cease performing several of its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA. We take note that Iran has indicated that those steps are reversible, having undertaken them subsequent to the withdrawal of the United States from the agreement. However, we urge Iran to return to full compliance to fulfil the totality of its obligations and to assist in safeguarding the agreement. In that regard, we recognize Iran’s continued cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in its verification and monitoring activities. Our support for the mandate of the IAEA to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology is steadfast.

Resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA were not only conceived in order to guarantee that Iran’s nuclear programme would be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. They are also intended to nurture an environment that promotes and facilitates the development of normal trade and economic relations with the country. As such, the procurement channel must continue to function to ensure that both the resolution and the JCPOA indeed confer the benefits of the relationship that they were envisaged to cultivate. Similarly, the sustained operation of the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges is essential.

It is only through commitment to dialogue and negotiation and the effective fulfilment of all obligations that current differences between JCPOA participant States can be resolved. Furthermore, we urge the entire international community to refrain from taking actions that could exacerbate tensions and deter positive engagement or the full implementation of the agreement. In that connection, we firmly condemn all targeted extrajudicial killings, which are a grave violation of international human rights law, for which perpetrators must be held accountable.

We reiterate that the JCPOA remains the only viable path to ensuring a peaceful, comprehensive and long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The international community must therefore support it and all other multilateral instruments aimed at promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. For its part, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its commitment to achieving a nuclear-weapon free world.

In conclusion, we say goodbye to Belgium and thank it for its dedicated work as Facilitator of the 2231 format. We also bid farewell to our colleagues from the Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa. We congratulate South Africa on a well-organized and immensely successful presidency — even though there is still a week to go. We wish South Africa a well-deserved, quiet rest of its presidency. It was certainly an honour to work with everyone this year.

**Annex XIV****Statement by the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Jerry Matjila**

Allow me first to express my thanks to today's briefers, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing on the Secretary-General's report (S/2020/1177); Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, as the Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015); and Ambassador Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union (EU), on behalf of the Joint Commission, for their insightful presentations.

We join others in welcoming the tenth report (S/2020/1177) of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). South Africa continues to welcome the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as one of most important diplomatic achievements in the area of nuclear non-proliferation since the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The JCPOA remains an excellent example of collective action to consolidate peace through cooperation and collaboration on the basis of a binding agreement. We are also of the view that the JCPOA has contributed significantly to the reduction of tensions over Iran's nuclear programme and remains vital in promoting peace, stability and the normalization of relations.

As a matter of principle and deeply rooted in its foreign policy, South Africa supports multilateral diplomacy, adherence to international law and the peaceful resolution of conflict. In that regard, we call on all parties to the JCPOA and all Security Council members to uphold and implement resolution 2231 (2015), which is essential for the Council's fulfilment of its mandate to maintain international peace and security. We therefore welcome the 21 December joint ministerial statement on the JCPOA.

The JCPOA remains the only legitimate international agreement aimed at addressing the Iran nuclear issue, and also contributes to the realization of an effective global non-proliferation regime. My delegation therefore fully supports the Secretary-General's view that such diplomatic efforts must be preserved and built upon.

South Africa notes the concerns raised in the Secretary-General's report regarding the steps undertaken by Iran to gradually and partially cease the implementation of some of its commitments under the JCPOA. South Africa urges Iran to fully implement its obligations under the JCPOA in order to preserve its prospect for success and to reassure the international community of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

South Africa remains regretful of the decision by the United States to withdraw from the JCPOA, and we share the disappointment expressed by the Secretary-General on the matter in his reports with regard to the decision by the United States not to renew waivers for nuclear non-proliferation projects in the framework of the JCPOA.

In our view, the decision by the United States inadvertently affects the ability of Iran to fully implement the provisions of the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). It is important to recall that the lifting of sanctions, especially on certain nuclear-related materials, was part of the JCPOA. It is important that the United States reconsider its position regarding its withdrawal from the JCPOA.

South Africa calls on the EU partners to accelerate the implementation of the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges mechanism so as to ensure that Iran receives the economic benefits outlined in the JCPOA, particularly as humankind continues to be confronted with the persistent coronavirus disease pandemic, which,

according to the World Health Organization, has affected more than 76 million people to date in confirmed cases and has resulted in more than 1.6 million deaths.

While we commend the JCPOA as an essential instrument of nuclear non-proliferation, we reiterate that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee that they will never be used again by anyone under any circumstances.

South Africa wishes to remind the Council that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes, and that lack of progress on nuclear disarmament will inadvertently affect the gains made on nuclear non-proliferation. We further wish to underline the importance of respecting the inalienable right of States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

South Africa is a staunch supporter of nuclear-weapon free zones as major contributors to nuclear non-proliferation and critical building blocks towards the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. In that regard, my delegation wishes to highlight the urgent need for the establishment of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In that connection, we take note of the communiqué agreed to during the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held from 18 to 22 November 2019.

In conclusion, in the interest of the broader security of the region, South Africa will remain resolute in supporting efforts to resolve tensions between all stakeholders in the Gulf region and will always promote dialogue over antagonism in order to safeguard gains already made in support of the maintenance of broader international peace and security.

**Annex XV****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations**

I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Ambassador Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, on behalf of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission established by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA); and Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, Permanent Representative of Belgium, in his capacity as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), for their detailed briefings.

Tunisia reiterates the view that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is an important addition to the global non-proliferation architecture and that it significantly contributed to reducing the tensions over Iran's nuclear programme. While reaffirming the importance of addressing the legitimate security concerns in the region, we believe that the collapse of the JCPOA would in no way serve that purpose. We therefore renew our call for the full and effective implementation of this agreement and of resolution 2231 (2015) by all parties.

Since resolution 2231 (2015) clearly states that the notification, envisaged in paragraph 11, should be received

“from a JCPOA participant State of an issue that the JCPOA participant State believes constitutes significant non-performance of commitments under the JCPOA”,

and since the United States has, of its own volition, unilaterally withdrawn from the JCPOA, Tunisia was among the Security Council members that considered that the United States is ineligible to submit such a notification pursuant to resolution 2231 (2015). Accordingly, we could not support the actions requested in that regard at the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, including the facilitation of the re-establishment of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) and its Panel of Experts.

We note that the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2020/1177) continues to state that the withdrawal of the United States from the agreement and the reimposition of national sanctions are contrary to the goals set out in resolution 2231 (2015), and that other steps taken by the United States may prevent Iran and other States Members of the United Nations from implementing their commitments under resolution 2231 (2015). We sincerely hope that this situation will soon be reversed.

At the same time, we encourage Iran to reconsider its decision to no longer comply with its nuclear commitments. We take note of the continuing differences of interpretation regarding the implementation of the provisions of annex B of resolution 2231 (2015), in particular with regard to ballistic-missile related activities, and we renew our call to all the parties concerned to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve those differences.

In the meantime, we encourage Iran to refrain from any activities that can deepen mistrust and exacerbate tensions in the region, which already reached an extremely dangerous level beginning in May 2018. We also reiterate our condemnation of all the unlawful attacks that have been perpetrated in the region and call on all parties to avoid all actions that could further aggravate the situation.

Lastly, Tunisia welcomes all initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and trust among the parties concerned, in particular the countries of the region, including through the creation of new platforms and mechanisms.

At the same time, we reiterate our belief that the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, established by the General Assembly, which successfully held its first session in November 2019, can be used as such a platform for regular dialogue and confidence-building on all issues related to non-proliferation, disarmament and regional security, and help reduce the tensions in the region. We therefore once again encourage all the parties concerned to constructively participate in the coming sessions of the Conference.

**Annex XVI****Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Barbara Woodward**

I would like to start by joining others in welcoming the Secretary-General's tenth report (S/2020/1177) on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). I also thank the Secretariat for its continued professionalism and support to the Secretary-General in enabling the issuance of this report. I would also like to thank Belgium for its role as Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and for the latest Facilitator's report (see S/2020/1244).

The United Kingdom remains resolutely committed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We have frequently stated our unequivocal regret and concern about the United States decision to leave the agreement and to reimpose sanctions on Iran. We understand the continued impact that has had on Iran and on the Iranian people. The joint statement by the JCPOA's remaining participants at yesterday's Joint Commission meeting, held at the ministerial level, is the most recent expression of our commitment.

Since May 2018, we have worked tirelessly to preserve the JCPOA and have fully upheld our commitments. We have taken on the role of co-Chair of the Arak Modernization Project in order to bring about a proliferation-resistant facility, and we have developed the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges, which is ready to play an important role supporting legitimate trade with Iran. Recent Iranian criticism of the approach of the E-3 — France, Germany and the United Kingdom — is therefore regrettable.

It is also deeply regrettable that, since 2019, Iran has taken nuclear measures contrary to its JCPOA commitments. As the Secretary-General's report notes, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that Iran has continued to install cascades of IR-2M centrifuges at Natanz and to expand its uranium enrichment programme and stockpile beyond the limits of the JCPOA. Those actions seriously undermine the non-proliferation benefits of the agreement.

Along with our French and German colleagues, we are also deeply worried about Iran's recent announcement that it intends to install three cascades of advanced centrifuges at Natanz, and about the recent law passed by the Iranian Parliament, which, if implemented, would substantially expand Iran's nuclear programme and limit IAEA monitoring access. Those measures are incompatible with the JCPOA and Iran's wider nuclear commitments.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Secretary-General's recognition, in his report, of the vital role of the IAEA, whose monitoring and verification is essential to securing international confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

While we recognize that Iran has not conducted any test launches during the reporting period, we remain concerned about Iran's development of advanced ballistic missile technologies. We note Iran's announcements, in August, of two new ballistic missile systems and, in November, of a missile system located in an underground facility that is capable of multiple launches.

The Secretariat has an important and ongoing role monitoring and reporting on the restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile programme that remain in place under annex B of resolution 2231 (2015). The United Kingdom therefore opposes any

proposal in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly that aims to reduce the 2021 budget beyond that recommended by the Secretary-General.

This year has seen a continuation of Iran's destabilizing activity around the Middle East. We are concerned by the Secretariat's findings on imagery of four anti-tank guided missiles in Libya, one of which has been found to be consistent with weaponry manufactured in Iran.

There is also broader evidence of continued Iranian transfer of missiles to armed groups, including the Houthis in Yemen, in violation of several Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2216 (2015) and 1540 (2004). Such proliferation is destabilizing for the region and escalates already high tensions; it should stop.

The circumstances of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh's death remain unclear. To date, no State or non-State actors have claimed responsibility, but the United Kingdom has repeatedly and consistently condemned extrajudicial killings whenever and wherever they take place. Iran is no exception.

I would like to conclude by reiterating our concern about current tensions across the region. Escalation would be in no one's interest. We once again welcome the joint statement issued by the JCPOA's remaining participants at yesterday's Joint Commission meeting held at the ministerial level.

We hope next year will see the United States rejoin the JCPOA and Iran return to compliance with the agreement. A return to diplomacy represents the best means of bringing greater security to the region, upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime and preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

Finally, although I am the newest member of the Security Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues for their warm welcome, and join those paying tribute to our departing colleagues from Belgium, South Africa, the Dominican Republic, Germany and Indonesia. In the words of Shakespeare, "parting is such sweet sorrow." I look forward to continuing to work with all my colleagues.

**Annex XVII****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Richard Mills**

I want to thank our briefers for their presentations this morning. I have a relatively straightforward message to deliver today: the tenth report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/1177) provides an unmistakable indication of Iran's continued destabilizing behaviour.

Take, for example, the Secretary-General's assessment that an anti-tank guided missile discovered in Libya has characteristics consistent with Iranian-produced anti-tank guided missiles. That demonstrates that Iranian weapons continue to proliferate in Iran's immediate region and beyond.

Moreover, reports that an entity designated by the Security Council may have been involved in shipping valves, electronics and measuring equipment suitable for use in ground testing of liquid propellant ballistic missiles to Iran demand the Council's attention.

Yet, as Iran continues to flout the Council's resolutions, too many Council members, unfortunately, are eager to ignore or overlook Iran's disregard for the restrictions that the Council has put in place, including those that the United States has reimposed through our legitimate snapback process.

The Security Council has a responsibility to address Iran's destabilizing behaviour. A failure to do so, I fear, would call into question the credibility of this organ. A reluctance to act would also send a dangerous message to other rogue actors and despots around the world.

Members of the Council must condemn Iran's behaviour, which threatens international peace and security, instead of rewarding the regime's dangerous gamesmanship with economic appeasement. If the Iranian regime seeks sanctions relief and economic opportunities, it must first demonstrate that it is serious about fundamentally changing its behaviour. Iran must cease its nuclear extortion and negotiate a comprehensive deal that includes enduring nuclear restrictions and addresses its development and proliferation of ballistic missiles, as well as deals with its continuing support for terrorism, the unjust detention of its citizens and its other destabilizing activities in the region.

Finally, we recognize the report's attention to the snapback of previous United Nations sanctions on Iran. We regret, however, the decision of the Secretary-General to encourage the continued use of the procurement channel in resolution 2231 (2015), which is inconsistent with the snapback. We once again call on the Secretary-General and every member of the Council to fully implement all United Nations sanctions measures, including those reimposed through snapback.

I also want to take a minute to note that the discussion of the waiver issued by the United States for activities related to the existing unit at the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant pertains to a domestic administrative process that did not result in any sanctions designations. We believe that such matters should not be the focus of the Secretary-General's 2231 report.

Iran's failure to abide by its Security Council obligations should be met with continued diplomatic and economic pressure and the further isolation of the Iranian regime. The United States will continue to work with our partners around the world, especially those in the region that face the devastating effect of Iran's destabilizing influence most directly, in order to jointly address Iran's reckless disregard for its Security Council obligations. We hope that the members of the Council will join us

in those efforts, and we look forward to the Secretariat's continued reporting on this pressing issue.

**Second statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Richard Mills**

Since this is the last scheduled meeting of the year, I would like, on behalf of my Mission and Ambassador Craft, to take a moment to thank the five outgoing members of the Council — Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa — for their work over the past two years. I have been here only about two months, but during that time I have seen what I was told in Washington, D.C., before I arrived here — that these five elected members brought great commitment, great willingness to speak the truth to the Council and, every now and then, a bit of feistiness to the work. It has been a great pleasure for me to be a part of that over the past 60 days. All of us here at the United States Mission wish our departing colleagues continued success and look forward to working with all five delegations on other issues.

**Annex XVIII****Statement by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Pham Hai Anh**

I would like to thank Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Ambassador Olof Skoog, Head of the Delegation of the European Union, for their comprehensive briefings. I also commend Ambassador Philippe Kridelka for his able leadership, and his team for its efforts in facilitating the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). I also welcome Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to this meeting.

It is Viet Nam's conviction that the people in the Middle East, like people everywhere, deserve to live in peace, harmony, friendship and cooperation. That is why Viet Nam always stresses the importance of upholding international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and its purposes and principles, especially the principles of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and of the fulfilment, in good faith, of obligations under international law.

That was our consistent policy during Viet Nam's term as Chair and member of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) from 2013 to 2014, and from 2013 to 2015, respectively. We always stressed the utmost importance of implementing non-proliferation obligations. We did it by example, joining all treaties, and were among the first to adhere to the International Atomic Energy Agency's highest standards in this field. We also called for the settlement of differences by peaceful means through dialogue and negotiation.

That is why we were sincerely glad when the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was reached, and actively engaged with other members in discussing its implementation with earnest optimism. In that regard, we share the assessment of the Secretary-General that the JCPOA is the best way to ensure a comprehensive, long-term and proper solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, as well as to contribute to regional and international peace and security.

We take note of the tenth report of Secretary-General (S/2020/1177) on the implementation of the resolution 2231 (2015). We commend the efforts of JCPOA participants in implementing and preserving the agreement.

Viet Nam has consistently supported the full implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. We call on all the relevant parties to continue dialogue and negotiations to resolve differences, including by utilizing existing processes and procedures under resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA, and to exercise restraint and refrain from actions that could exacerbate the situation, erode trust and escalate tension.

We reaffirm our strong support for the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — disarmament, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We believe that this is a joint effort and responsibility. It is incumbent on us all to maintain peace and stability and to honour our obligations under international law with a view to ensuring a safe and prosperous world for all of our peoples, including the people in the Middle East. Conflicts and wars need to be stopped, not fuelled. Friendly relations need to be established and nurtured. International law, including treaties, needs to be upheld and implemented.

Viet Nam remains strongly committed to making meaningful contributions to fostering an environment conducive to dialogue and cooperation in the name of peace, stability and prosperity in this region and the world at large.

As this is the last meeting this month and year in the programme of work in which we are allowed to speak, we would like to warmly congratulate the five outgoing members — Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa — for a successful tenure. We thank them for their tireless efforts and their important contributions to the work of the Security Council in the service of humankind everywhere. As an elected member, it is a personal privilege and a privilege as a representative of Viet Nam to serve together again with Belgium, Indonesia and South Africa, as we did 12 years ago. Now they are leaving us in the very good hands of the current and incoming members, just as they did 12 years ago. We thank all the outgoing members for their cooperation, support and friendship.

Last but absolutely not least, I would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Jerry Matthews Matjila, Permanent Representative of South Africa, and his team for a successful presidency, with many important activities and outcomes.

**Annex XIX****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Iran to the United Nations, Majid Takht Ravanchi**

Almost four months after the failed move by the United States to destroy the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Security Council is again considering the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA.

According to resolution 2231 (2015), the JCPOA was concluded as “a comprehensive, long-term and proper solution to the Iranian nuclear issue” in order “to build a new relationship with Iran” and to promote and facilitate “normal economic and trade contacts and cooperation with Iran”. The JCPOA is an agreement coming out of hard-won negotiations involving difficult gives and takes, and any proposal for its revision, renegotiation or extension would run counter to resolution 2231(2015) and is absolutely unacceptable to Iran.

After its withdrawal from the JCPOA, on 8 May 2018, the United States reimposed all its nuclear-related sanctions. By pursuing a hostile policy towards the JCPOA and Iran since then, the United States has also engaged in persistent widespread public and private harassment of Iran’s business partners. By doing so, the United States has committed multiple cases of “significant non-performance” under the JCPOA. As such, it is in continuous systematic material breach of its legal obligations under resolution 2231 (2015), the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Likewise, by brazenly threatening other States to either violate resolution 2231 (2015) or face punishment, the United States has not only failed to honour its own commitments under that resolution but has also substantively obstructed the implementation of commitments by other Member States.

The United States has also defied the unanimous order of the International Court of Justice, issued on 3 October 2018, which includes an obligation to remove impediments to humanitarian trade with Iran.

Nevertheless, instead of taking remedial measures, as authorized in the JCPOA, Iran, upon the request of the E-3 — France, Germany and the United Kingdom — exercised restraint and strategic patience for one year. That maximum restraint was met with the so-called “maximum pressure” of the United States and its ever-increasing unlawful sanctions, as well as the utter failure of the E-3 and the European Union to implement their commitments.

That left us with no choice but to take certain remedial steps, in full conformity with the paragraphs 26 and 36 of the JCPOA, pursuant to which, in the case of “a re-introduction or re-imposition of the sanctions”, Iran has the right “to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part”.

Therefore, Iran’s steps are in full accordance with our rights and commitments under the JCPOA and, more important, are completely reversible. The damages and suffering inflicted upon Iran, however, are almost entirely irreversible.

Over the past four years, the United States has imposed over 1,500 sanctions against Iran, targeting nearly every sector of our economy and practically removing every benefit Iran could draw from the JCPOA. Such sanctions, which are expected to increase even up to the very last minute of the current United States Administration, is, in fact, an all-out war with economic measures instead of weapons. According to the United States officials, the objective of sanctions is the “starvation” of the Iranian people through weaponizing food and medicine, which is prohibited even in wartime.

Sanctions prevent the import of humanitarian goods, including vital medicines and medical equipment needed for patients, particularly those with rare or complicated diseases. At a time when Iran is experiencing one of the worst outbreaks of the coronavirus disease, sanctions are drastically hindering our national response to the pandemic.

The United States claim that humanitarian goods are exempt from sanctions is an absolute lie. As an example, even today, we cannot easily import medicine for relieving the breathing problems of those injured by chemical weapons that were provided by some Western countries to Saddam and used by him during his aggression against Iran.

The United States also claims that sanctions are “not directed at the people of Iran”. This is also a sheer hypocrisy, as sanctions target the most vulnerable people the most, harm the poor more than the rich, the ill people more than the healthy ones and infants and children more than adults. Sanctions do not merely create economic hardships; in many cases, sanctions claim the innocent lives of people from all walks of life.

By any measure, the United States sanctions are illegal, illegitimate, immoral, inhumane and oppressive, and have no designation other than economic terrorism and crime against humanity.

Yet sanctions are only one part of the destructive bullying policies and practices of the United States against my country, which include its systematic Iranophobia campaign, warmongering, military adventurism in the Persian Gulf, interference in our domestic affairs and many other unlawful and provocative actions.

The living example of this bankrupt policy is the horrific assassination of martyr Qasem Soleimani, almost one year ago. This terrorist act, conducted at the direct order of the United States President, is a gross violation of international law.

There are also serious indications that the assassination of martyr Fakhrizadeh, a prominent Iranian scientist, on 27 November 2020, was conducted by the Israeli regime — the closest regional ally of the United States with a long dark record of such terrorist acts against Iranian nuclear scientists in the past.

During the past four years, the United States and its regional allies have, through a series of orchestrated measures, employed all possible means, including illegitimate and unlawful measures, to destroy the JCPOA. As an example, you, Mr. President, and Council members witnessed this summer how stubbornly the United States attempted to abuse the process of the Council and the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) to extend the arms-related provisions of that resolution.

However, even when the United States proposed draft resolution (S/2020/797), in addition to United States itself, received only one more affirmative vote, the United States did not stop its destructive policy and unsuccessfully attempted, through abusing the so-called snapback mechanism, to destroy the JCPOA and 2231 mechanism altogether.

This time, none of the Council members supported the United States request and, more importantly, 13 members of the Council rejected it, orally and in writing, and consequently two consecutive Presidents of the Council stated that they were not in a position to take any action with regard to the United States claims. Hence, the United States move faced a total defeat in the Council.

The United States is now desperately attempting to raise the same issue in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. This unlawful move aims to establish and fund a Security Council sanctions regime without a Council mandate. United

Nations Member States are expected not to allow United Nations mechanisms to be misused and, if needed, vote against United States proposals on the programme budget for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) for 2021.

Once again, I sincerely thank members of the Council for their valuable support. Their votes and voices were not merely in support of the JCPOA as a historic achievement of diplomacy but were strong support for multilateralism and the rule of law and a loud and clear “no” to unilateralism and bullying. The continuation of such support is critical for ensuring the full and unconditional implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA by all its participants.

As the arms- and travel-related provisions of resolution 2231 (2015), consistent with the established timelines in the resolution, were terminated on 18 October 2020, all other provisions of the resolution must be implemented and terminated according to the timelines identified therein.

Iran has paid a heavy price and has done much more than its fair share to preserve the JCPOA. Therefore, no one can expect us to do more. In fact, those JCPOA participants who have for years violated their commitments under resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA must bear more responsibility.

Iran has been implementing its commitments under the JCPOA. However, the illegal United States sanctions as well as the E-3’s non-compliance with their JCPOA commitments have not only deprived Iran from its benefits foreseen in the JCPOA, that is, to enjoy normal economic and trade relations with others, but have also inflicted severe damages and sufferings upon our economy and people.

The so-called maximum pressure policy of the United States against Iran has faced with our maximum resistance and has not been able to bring us to our knees, as United States officials have been dreaming. It should have been clear by now that the policy of intimidation and pressure on Iran does not and will not yield any result. The only way out is to go back to the prompt, full and unconditional implementation of the JCPOA.

As has been clearly stated by our officials, as soon as all JCPOA participants start implementing their commitments unconditionally, effectively and in full, Iran will also resume implementing all its JCPOA commitments. This has always been our principled position throughout recent years, and now it has become a binding legal obligation for the Government following the recent adoption of a new law by our Parliament.

The JCPOA cannot be linked to any other issues, as the agenda of the nuclear talks from the beginning was the nuclear issue. We decided not to allow other issues to complicate the already difficult negotiations. That was a very wise decision made by all JCPOA participants. Therefore, any attempt now to link the future of the JCPOA to extraneous issues will be doomed to fail.

We have on numerous occasions made our position on the defensive capabilities of our country quite clear. To develop a conventional missile programme is an inherent right of any country under international law, and Iran is no exception. Consequently, Iran will not negotiate its legitimate ballistic missile programme. Living in such a volatile region as the Middle East, we will not allow our security and conventional defensive capability be compromised, restricted or undermined. Bullying policies of certain Powers will not intimidate Iran to relinquish its legitimate defensive means.

The only source of instability and insecurity in our region is the presence of a large number of American forces in almost all Iran’s neighbouring countries, the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea, as well as the flow of unprecedented amounts of the

most sophisticated weaponry by the United States and other Western countries to this region. The United States must leave our region immediately.

The Persian Gulf region has been suffering from many years of foreign intervention and conflicts. This region is turned into a powder keg as a result of the unfettered flow of dangerous weapons from Western countries. In order to sell more weapons to this region, these countries sow discord and apply a divide and rule policy among countries in the region.

It is high time for regional countries to engage in good faith and work towards the establishment of a better, safer and more prosperous region. Our Hormuz Peace Endeavor is a recipe for bringing regional countries closer to each other with the aim of resolving their differences and establishing friendlier relations among them. We hope that our honest and sincere call for opening a new page in regional cooperation will be heeded by our neighbours in the Persian Gulf soon.

Finally, our observations on Secretary-General's report (S/2020/1177) are contained in my letter already sent to the Council covering our views on issues that I did not address in my remarks today.

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