



Security Council

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Letter dated 23 May 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Referring to the letter by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland dated 18 May 2023 (S/2023/362), the letter by the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom dated 22 May 2023 (S/2023/368), as well as claims by some States concerning the implementation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) in general, and further to our previous communications, including letters dated 13 July 2022 (S/2022/554), 29 November 2022 (S/2022/889), 6 December 2022 (S/2022/911) and 7 December 2022 (S/2022/922), I would like to reiterate the principled position of the Russian Federation in this regard.

We are deeply worried by continuing attempts to impose politically driven assertions about Iran allegedly being in non-compliance with resolution 2231 (2015). The Russian Federation condemns in the strongest terms the propagation of such false allegations that are not only aimed at deliberately misleading the international community, but also at manipulating the mandate of the Secretariat of the United Nations for the sake of serving political interests that hinder the efforts on ensuring full-fledged implementation of the above-mentioned resolution.

We would like to underline once again that the Islamic Republic of Iran has never possessed nuclear weapons, nor does possess these weapons now, nor, we expect, will it ever possess them in the future, as envisaged by its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and resolution 2231 (2015), as well as ensured by the ongoing cooperation between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Speaking of claims casting doubt on Iran's compliance with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), we deem politically biased and erroneous allegations about the Iranian space launch vehicles being "virtually identical" to ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons as inadmissible. Such insinuations are technically groundless and based solely on speculative assessments. We strongly reject the false logic that equates the global space rocket production to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means.

Furthermore, none of the existing international treaties and mechanisms directly or implicitly prohibit the Islamic Republic of Iran from developing its space programme. The category I parameters of the annex to the Missile Technology Control Regime, that are misused by some States for levelling unsubstantiated accusations against Iran, are not supposed to be applied in the context of the



implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) for determining if any ballistic missiles are designed to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

Since no viable information to the contrary has ever been provided to the Security Council, the Russian Federation continues to proceed from its previous assessment that Iran is respecting in good faith the relevant call addressed to it in paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).

As for the claims in the above-mentioned letter by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland dated 18 May 2023 and its attachment, as well as in the letter by the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom dated 22 May 2023 basically repeating the same narrative and referring to some “open-source reporting”, we would like to underline that neither the letters, nor the document by the Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom, provides any credible evidence of so-called “violations” of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). On the contrary, they contain nothing more than the subjective opinion of British authorities (as particularly highlighted by wording “the UK assesses ...”). In fact, London admits that it has not even completed relevant procedures (as shown by references to “initial inspection”, “initial UK assessment”, “the items are now undergoing technical assessment”, etc.). Such hastiness by the United Kingdom clearly demonstrates that the British authorities have no certainty about the veracity and validity of their own conclusions, as well as their politically motivated nature.

Regarding so-called “evidence from HMS Lancaster maritime interdiction in the Gulf of Oman”, we would like to underline that the accusations against Iran via their linkage to Security Council resolution [2216 \(2015\)](#) are farfetched. The Russian Federation expresses its most serious concern over “interdictions”, possibly staged, in the Gulf of Oman in January and February 2022 as well as in February 2023. There is no evidence of the affiliation of the vessels in question and their cargo with the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as there is no clear indication that the missile components allegedly seized are of Iranian origin. All the arguments contained in the presentation by the Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom are limited to assumptions underpinned by certain “suspicions” (for instance, “suspected to be from the Iranian ‘Qiam’ series of missiles”) and “understandings” (“the UK’s current understanding of the parts of the consignment”).

So-called “evidence from Ukraine” and related false accusations do not withstand any scrutiny. It is sadly ironic that the States propagating these assertions use them as a pretext for diverting the attention of the international community from the facts of their own blatant violations of this resolution. We would like to recall that strict observance of its provisions is not a question of their choice or free will, but of their obligations stemming from Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations.

While preparing the above-mentioned presentation, the Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom disregarded any possible standards of bringing trustworthy evidence, as it consists of hardly identifiable debris of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), incoherent photographs, some “open-source” information and results of “visual comparison” produced by the United States Defense Intelligence Agency. The in-depth analysis shows that the photographs of components and debris do not contain any signs tracing them to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Moreover, one of the photographs contains an alleged fragment of a UAV with a hand-written inscription in the Ukrainian language on it, eloquently demonstrating the provocative character of this fake evidence brought by London and Kiev in the absence of any credible arguments of violations of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).

As for the United Kingdom having “invited the Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) Secretariat team to visit the United Kingdom”, and for the “desire for an investigation by the United Nations Secretariat team for monitoring the

implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)” expressed by the United Kingdom along with France and Germany, we face yet another blatant and explicit attempt to give instructions to the Secretariat in violation of paragraph 2 of Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations and in contradiction with the note by the President of the Security Council entitled “Security Council tasks under Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)” dated 16 January 2016 ([S/2016/44](#)). We brought this inadmissible situation to the attention of the Security Council at its meeting on 26 October 2022, as well as by our letters dated 29 November 2022 ([S/2022/889](#)), 6 December 2022 ([S/2022/911](#)) and 7 December 2022 ([S/2022/922](#)).

We once again urge the Secretariat of the United Nations to strictly abide by its mandate, as set out in the note by the President of the Security Council entitled “Security Council tasks under Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)” dated 16 January 2016 ([S/2016/44](#)), to fully respect the Charter of the United Nations and not to yield to the pressure of some States acting in bad faith and trying to legitimize unsubstantiated and politically motivated assertions. The Russian Federation would regard any non-mandated activity by the Secretariat, including inspections on the ground, as deliberate provocations aimed at undermining implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and the process of restoration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

I would be grateful for the circulation of the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**
