



Security Council

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Letter dated 29 November 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Further to our letters dated 8 June 2022 ([S/2022/464](#)) and 13 July 2022 ([S/2022/554](#)), as well as numerous previous communications on the implementation of paragraph 3 of annex B to Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), I would like to once again reiterate the principled position of the Russian Federation on this issue in connection with the letter from the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations dated 22 November 2022 ([S/2022/878](#)).

It is regrettable that these States continue their attempts to manipulate information concerning Iran's activities related to missiles and space launch vehicles and level unsubstantiated accusations against Tehran. We have emphasized on numerous occasions that such assertions are based upon erroneous logic and faulty arguments.

Moreover, the above-mentioned letter conveys a misleading message that Iran has been violating Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) in order to acquire ballistic missiles as potential means of delivery of nuclear weapons.

However, in reality, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been the State most verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Iran has never possessed nuclear weapons, nor does it possess these weapons now, nor, we expect, will it ever possess them in the future. Even when the integrity of the "nuclear deal" was challenged by irresponsible and destructive actions of other Member States, Iran exercised restraint and demonstrated determination to uphold the non-proliferation regime. The leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran on several occasions officially "rejected weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons". Iran expresses willingness to retain the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and continues to be actively engaged with IAEA.

We would like to reiterate that none of the existing international instruments and mechanisms, including the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, either directly or implicitly prohibit Iran from developing missile and space programmes.

France, Germany and the United Kingdom once again attempt to misuse the criteria prescribed by the Missile Technology Control Regime, which is an informal political understanding between 35 States on export control issues. The category I parameters of the Missile Technology Control Regime annex are a mere reference tool for exporting States and have no connection to the implementation of resolution



[2231 \(2015\)](#), including the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Therefore, the Missile Technology Control Regime criteria cannot be used to determine if specific ballistic missiles are designed to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

Moreover, the repeated assertion that category I systems are recognized through “long-standing international consensus” as being “the systems of most concern” is a purposeful misstatement. The Missile Technology Control Regime guiding principles clearly state that the category I systems are the “items of greatest sensitivity”, which is a substantially different term.

Russia has always attached the utmost importance to the Missile Technology Control Regime and is committed to the full implementation of its obligations. In this regard, we firmly oppose the attempts to misuse this Regime as an instrument to restrict the development of space capabilities by other countries.

The European delegations claim that “the technologies and trials necessary for the conception, fabrication and launch of a satellite launch vehicle are closely related to those required for the development of a long-range ballistic missile or an intercontinental ballistic missile”. Applying this logic, they, by analogy, accuse all spacefaring nations, which conduct such tests, of developing means of delivery of nuclear weapons. In the same vein, the statement that “actual launches of satellite launch vehicles provide Iran with empirical results that can be used to optimize capabilities related to the development of such missile systems” can be applied to a peaceful space programme of any State and can be used as a pretext to impose restrictions on it.

More than that, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, while promoting a far-fetched and misleading conclusion that the Iranian systems are “inherently capable nuclear” ones, are referring to some non-transparent “modelling and simulation” that cannot be viewed as solid proof, nor can it withstand any scientific scrutiny.

In particular, such an inconsistent and subjective approach reveals itself in speculative assessment of the range of the alleged Iranian “ballistic missile”. The European delegations use fundamentally different terms throughout the text, equating “intermediate-range” missiles with “intercontinental” ones, mixing “long-range” and “intermediate-range”, etc.

The references to Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) in the letters of the European delegations are irrelevant since this mechanism of cooperation, rather than coercion, has no relation to Iran’s missile programme and has never been aimed at imposing restrictions on it.

Paragraph 7 (a) of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) stipulates that resolution [1929 \(2010\)](#) in its entirety, including paragraph 9, which prohibited Iran from undertaking “any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons”, has been terminated. However, even at times when this resolution was in force, the Panel of Experts’ assumptions gained no consolidated support either in the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1737 \(2006\)](#) or in the Security Council.

As for the letter from France, Germany and the United Kingdom dated 21 October 2022 ([S/2022/781](#)), we proceed from the understanding that this is an explicit attempt to give instructions to the Secretariat of the United Nations in violation of paragraph 2 of Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations. 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](#)) sets forth an exhaustive list of tasks comprising the mandate of the Secretariat; namely, the functions of the Secretariat are solely technical and are reduced to the following:

- To assist the facilitator in the organization and staffing of informal meetings of the Security Council;
- To manage all incoming and outgoing communications and assist the facilitator in corresponding with Member States on behalf of the Security Council;
- To draft correspondence, speaking notes and briefings of the facilitator;
- To maintain and archive all information and documents relating to the Security Council's work related to the implementation of the resolution;
- To maintain and promote publicly available information on the restrictions imposed by the Security Council, including through the Council's website and outreach activities.

Paragraph 6 (f) of the above-mentioned note states in detail how the Secretariat provides administrative support for the Council's review of recommendations from the Joint Commission.

Paragraph 6 (g) stipulates that the Secretariat may perform any other task upon request from the Security Council. However, no such request has ever been submitted by the Security Council.

As stated by the delegation of the Russian Federation at the Security Council meeting on 26 October 2022, the above-mentioned note directly states that the Security Council itself should monitor the implementation of the resolution. We once again urge the Secretariat to strictly abide by its mandate and fully respect the Charter of the United Nations. We also urge the delegations of France, Germany and the United Kingdom not to instigate the Secretariat to do the contrary in violation of Article 100 of the Charter.

It is regrettable that European delegations continue to bring biased claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Such an approach undermines the spirit of the negotiations in Vienna and is detrimental to multilateral efforts to facilitate the full restoration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

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 call addressed to it in paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) to refrain from activities related to ballistic missiles that are designed to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

We would be grateful for the circulation of the present communication as a document of the Security Council and its full and thorough reflection in the upcoming report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**