



General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 February 2025

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-eighth session

24 February–4 April 2025

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Abshar Atefeha Charity Institute, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[20 January 2025]

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



Negative Impacts of Unlawful Unilateral Coercive Measures on Iranian Women and Children

Introduction

Economic sanctions have had significant impacts on all Iranian citizens, specially most vulnerable of them. Women and children are two groups which suffer the most negative consequences of unlawful unilateral coercive measures, affecting various aspects of their lives.

Here are just some tips of Iceberg:

1. Effects on Children

According to Article 38 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, States commit themselves to respect and to ensure respect for rules of humanitarian law applicable to children. Also, Article 3 of the Convention declares that in all actions concerning children, ... the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration. These articles are being systematically violated on a daily basis as a result of years of economic sanctions against the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Studies have found that (1) after the re-imposition of the United States of America sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2018, food insecurity more than doubled, affecting the most vulnerable populations, including children. Sharp currency devaluation has further reduced household's purchasing power.

Due to imposition of sanctions, many global suppliers avoid business with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Though the country has a sizable domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing industry, production relies on the import of raw materials, the import of which has been disrupted by sanctions and associated de-risking policies of banks and companies, resulting in scarcity of certain medicines and a decline in the quality of medicines produced locally. Although international organizations like UNICEF continuously explore procurement opportunities from the local market, many suppliers are not in a position to apply for the bidding process nor to maintain quotations due to the instability in prices and sanctions on importing raw materials. For UNICEF to continue to deliver medical supplies for children amidst sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran's shipping sector, alternate routes through Türkiye have been used since 2019, at approximately 2.5 times the cost of shipping to Bandar Abbas port, and with significant delays. This combination of financial and supply challenges means that sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran have caused a deterioration of national health standards, affecting children the most. All health commodities have seen an increase in costs, leading to extremely high out-of-pocket expenditures for already distressed households. (2)

2. Effects on Women

One of the most important mal effect of sanctions is devaluation of the Iranian currency, causing prices of essential goods, among other things, feminine hygiene products and medications, to soar. This has made it difficult for women to afford basic necessities. (3)

During last decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran's improvement in the area of higher education for women is remarkable, resulted more balanced society in the field of gender equality. But because of unlawful unilateral coercive measures, the economic downturn has resulted in job losses and reduced incomes, affecting negatively on women's employment and income, despite their education.

These points highlight the multifaceted ways in which sanctions have negatively impacted Iranian women. It's a complex issue with far-reaching consequences.

In addition to these devastating results on the health, employment and life of all vulnerable groups in targeted country (the Islamic Republic of Iran), secondary sanctions have also exacerbated the negative effects. Those imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran's banking sector have strongly discouraged international banks from working with the country, resulting in challenges to complete transactions. In addition, sanctions on the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran (CBI) complicate all trade given its primacy in the country's foreign currency transactions, lending the current targeted sanctions the feel of a traditional trade embargo. The World Bank cites the causes of a major economic slowdown in the Islamic Republic of Iran between 2019 and 2020 to several factors. These include: "plummeting" oil and gas exports following the expiration of relevant sanctions waivers, and the "tightening of banking sector restrictions in addition to new sanctions being imposed on the national petrochemicals, metals, mining and maritime sectors". All these restrictions which are opposed to basic human rights of the people of sanctioned country have direct and indirect small effects on the situation of women and children.

Recommendations

As an NGO active inside of the Islamic Republic of Iran, working with low income families, trying to empower women households and orphans, we call on the international community to take all means possible to bring an end to the unlawful unilateral sanctions and to guarantee the respect of the rules of international humanitarian law in their regard, to protect the most vulnerable people of countries under sanctions, especially women and children against the detrimental impacts of sanctions.

We also ask the Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures to thoroughly examine the deep negative impacts of unilateral sanction on women and children, in her reports to the United Nations. We note the valuable initiatives of the Special Rapporteur such as the "Sanctions Research Platform" and "Sanctions Monitoring & Impact Assessment Tool". We are looking forward to establishment of a universal compensation mechanism for all affected by unlawful UCMs, specially women and children.

1) UNICEF-Global-Insight-Sanctions-and-Children-2022.pdf

2) UNICEF-Global-Insight-Sanctions-and-Children-2022.pdf

3) Why Iranian women are among the most vulnerable to US sanctions | Business and Economy | Al Jazeera