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

Joint written statement* submitted by Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, Fundación Latinoamericana por los Derechos Humanos y el Desarrollo Social, non- governmental organizations 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.

[25 January 2021]

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



Unilateral Sanctions Violate all Human Rights of the People with Disabilities

Our non-governmental organizations (NGOs) echo the concerns expressed by the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Mr. Gerard Quinn, in his statement, in the thirteenth session of the Conference of State Parties (COSPI3), that Covid-19 has affected basic services and preventive measures which aim at meeting the needs of the people with disabilities and the fact that the pandemic has affected food, nutrition and health care services while increasing domestic violence for these people.

We would also add that the Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM)s or unilateral sanctions make the negative impacts of Covid-19 multi-fold in all countries targeted by the unilateral sanctions including, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

We reiterate on the fact that UCMs systematically violate all human rights of the target populations especially the people with disabilities. UCMs undermine the international rule of law, the multilateralism principle, the friendly relations among states and the international peace and stability. The sanctions are illegal and imposed beyond the authority of the United Nations.

The on-the-ground experiences of our NGOs prove that comprehensive UCMs can be considered as “economic terrorism”, “crimes against humanity” and “genocide” because they intentionally deprive the target populations (in general and the disabled in particular) from access to essential items including food, medicine and health care.

The illegality of UCMs are reiterated upon in numerous UN Human Rights Council reports¹ and resolutions² that call on the United Nations (UN) member states to refrain from imposition of unilateral measures. In addition to the UN documents, the NGOs’ on-the-ground experience proves the destructive nature of unilateral comprehensive sanctions and the widespread human rights violations caused by UCMs as well as the fact that unilateral sanctions prevent all target countries from meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Recommendations

In line with the UN Human Rights Council reports and resolutions, our organizations condemn the negative impact of unilateral sanctions on human rights of all people in target countries, especially the rights of people with disabilities to have access to food, medicine and medical care and call on the Special Rapporteur to study the effect of UCMs on the access of the persons with disabilities to medicine and food in all target countries and report the findings to the Human Rights Council.

Also, we call on the Special Rapporteur on the rights of the people with disabilities to support the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in line with the UN resolutions³ and join her in her public statements that criticized the impact of unilateral sanctions on human rights of the target populations especially the most vulnerable groups.

Since the Special Rapporteur is going to address the rights of those who are left behind in his future studies, we reiterate on the fact that all of the people with disabilities in UCM-target countries including the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela are left behind, in terms of meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), because of the UCMs imposed by the United States of America on other countries, beyond the authority of the United Nations.

¹ A/HRC/45/7; A/HRC/42/46; A/HRC/36/44; A/HRC/33/48.

² A/HRC/RES/24/14; A/HRC/RES/30/2; A/HRC/RES/34/13; A/RES/71/193.

³ Ibid.