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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.

[27 January 2021]

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



Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) Illegally Violate People's Right to a Healthy Environment

While the world is working toward collective efforts to achieve sustainability, conserve the nature and mitigate the hazardous effects of climate change and pollution on the Planet, the illegal Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) of the United States of America (U.S.) reverse all efforts of targeted states¹ to protect the environment and force the target populations to be left behind the global efforts to preserve a healthy and sustainable environment.

Unilateral sanctions disrupt all national programs that aim at management of water crisis, including water pollution and water scarcity, and prevent the targeted States from meeting their obligations to improve the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment for their populations, violating their right to life, the right to health, the right to safe and clean water and the right to an adequate standard of living among other human rights².

Our non-governmental organizations (NGOs) strongly believe in the fact that States must seriously assist other States in responding to and preventing water pollution, water scarcity and floods³, instead of intentionally inflicting pain and suffering to target populations⁴ through imposition of UCMs and preventing them from having access to the information, the nature-friendly-technology and the financial resources required for preserving a sustainable environment, reducing environmental harms or improving environmental conditions.

Recommendations

In line with the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (HRC) reports⁵ and resolutions⁶, our organizations condemn the negative impact of unilateral sanctions on human rights of all people in target countries, especially the rights of people to a healthy and sustainable environment and the right to sufficient, clean and safe water and call on the Special Rapporteur to study the effect of UCMs on environment in all target countries and report the findings to the Human Rights Council.

Since the Special Rapporteur has addressed good practices on the promotion and implementation of the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, our NGOs call on the Special Rapporteur to discuss the negative impact of unilateral sanctions as one of the main obstacles of preserving a sustainable environment and addressing water crisis in target countries in his future reports as well.

Also, we call on the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment 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 HRC resolutions⁷ and join her in her public statements that criticized the impact of unilateral sanctions on human rights of the target populations especially the right to a healthy environment.

¹ Including the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

² Environmental damage can have negative implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of all human rights, A/HRC/RES/37/8.

³ U.S. sanctions have prevented the Iranian Red Crescent from obtaining any foreign financial aid to assist victims of flooding...”, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-floods-redcrescent-idUSKCN1RJOGY>.

⁴ Nephew, Richard. (2018). *The Art of Sanctions: A View from the Field*. New York: Columbia University Press.

⁵ A/HRC/45/7; A/HRC/42/46; A/HRC/36/44; A/HRC/33/48.

⁶ A/HRC/RES/24/14; A/HRC/RES/30/2; A/HRC/RES/34/13; A/RES/71/193.

⁷ Ibid.

We call on the Special Rapporteur to recommend all UN State parties to immediately stop the resort to UCMs for political purposes, so that target states are able to address the adverse impacts of the global environmental crisis in line with their obligations articulated in the framework principles on human rights and the environment, the international environmental agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals.
