



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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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 Imam Ali Charity Institution, 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.

[21 August 2023]

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



## **Sanctions and Their Impact on the Global Spread of Poverty**

Eliminating poverty and promoting human rights are interrelated objectives mentioned in many international treaties and commitments. The persistence of extreme poverty and the recurrence of violations of civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights are mutually reinforcing. The elimination of extreme poverty should not be seen as a question of charity but as a pressing human rights issue. Its persistence in countries that can afford to eliminate it amounts to a clear violation of fundamental human rights and the eradication of poverty is now a mandatory legal aim for governments and non-state actors supported by a set of national and international law instruments and principles that demand the inclusion of all, not only of those who are functional to economic growth.

### **Extreme Poverty and Sanctions**

Economic sanctions aim to inflict economic harm on a targeted country, select industries within it, or organizations or specific individuals with the intended goal of changing that entity's malign behavior. For one to deem a sanction regime effective, it must inflict economic harm and subsequently change the targeted state's behavior. As a result, sanctions can increase poverty and cause harm to citizens of the countries that suffer from them.

Sanctions, intended as punitive measures, unfortunately, tend to disproportionately affect innocent civilians, particularly those living in poverty. The collateral damage they inflict includes hindering access to necessities such as food, medicine, clean water, and education. These deprivations directly contribute to a vicious cycle of poverty, underdevelopment, and human suffering.

Moreover, the economic strain caused by sanctions can disrupt local economies, hinder trade, and limit opportunities for growth and investment. This can lead to job losses, reduced income, and a decrease in the overall well-being of individuals and communities. The erosion of economic stability inevitably leads to increased vulnerability and a higher likelihood of individuals falling into poverty.

We firmly believe that there must be alternative approaches that prioritize the protection of human rights, including the right to a decent standard of living. Sanctions should not serve as a means to punish the innocent, nor should they be allowed to perpetuate poverty.

To achieve sustainable development and ensure the welfare of all individuals, we call upon the international community to reconsider the use of sanctions as a tool for achieving political goals. We urge governments and organizations to adopt measures that respect human rights and promote dialogue, diplomacy, and cooperation. It is only through inclusive, empathetic, and collaborative efforts that we can create a world that truly upholds the values of justice, equality, and the eradication of poverty on a global scale. Continuing on this path, we stress the importance of prioritizing humanitarian exceptions within sanctions regimes. By ensuring that essential goods and services, such as food, medical supplies, and education, reach vulnerable populations even during challenging times, we can prevent the deepening of poverty and human suffering.

Furthermore, increased transparency in the design and implementation of sanctions is one of the key steps. Clear and accountable mechanisms should be established to assess the potential humanitarian impact of sanctions before their imposition, to minimize unintended consequences on innocent civilians.

Recognizing the interconnectedness of the global community, the eradication of poverty requires international cooperation and empathy. Efforts to alleviate poverty should be at the forefront of international agendas, transcending political differences. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that measures aimed at addressing conflicts and disputes do not inadvertently contribute to the suffering of the most vulnerable among us.

## **Suggestions and Conclusion:**

To address the complex issue of sanctions and their impact on global poverty, we propose the following recommendations:

1. **Humanitarian Exceptions:** Prioritize humanitarian considerations by implementing exceptions within sanctions regimes to ensure the availability of essential goods and services to vulnerable populations.
2. **Transparency and Accountability:** Establish transparent mechanisms for assessing the potential humanitarian impact of sanctions before their imposition. This will help minimize unintended consequences on innocent civilians.
3. **Diplomacy and Cooperation:** Encourage diplomatic solutions and international cooperation to address conflicts and disputes. Prioritize dialogue over coercion to prevent the exacerbation of poverty.
4. **Empathy and Compassion:** Keep the human factor at the forefront of decision-making. Recognize that behind every statistic are real lives impacted by sanctions. Let empathy and compassion guide our actions.
5. **Research and Analysis:** Conduct comprehensive research and analysis to better understand the long-term effects of sanctions on poverty. This will provide valuable insights for designing more effective policies.
6. **Support for Development:** Direct resources towards development projects that empower vulnerable communities, providing them with sustainable livelihoods, education, and access to basic services.
7. **Advocacy and Awareness:** Raise awareness about the impact of sanctions on poverty through public campaigns, media, and educational initiatives. Encourage public engagement to promote informed and responsible policies.
8. **International Commitments:** Reiterate the commitment to international agreements and conventions that uphold human rights, including the right to a decent standard of living, even in times of conflict.

## **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, as we strive for a world free from poverty and injustice, we must critically examine the impact of sanctions on innocent lives. Let us work collectively to explore alternative solutions that uphold human rights, promote peace, and prioritize the well-being of all individuals, irrespective of their geographical location or circumstances. By choosing compassion over coercion, dialogue over discord, and cooperation over conflict, we can pave the way for a more equitable and prosperous global society for generations to come.

Furthermore, addressing the impact of sanctions on global poverty requires a comprehensive approach that values diplomacy, human rights, and empathy. By considering the unintended consequences of sanctions and prioritizing the well-being of vulnerable populations, we can work towards a world where poverty is diminished, human dignity is respected, and peace is achieved through cooperation and understanding.

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