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

Written statement* submitted by Institute of Sustainable Development, 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]

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



Unilateral Sanctions and Violation of Environmental Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Economic sanctions are used as policy tools to “normalize” the behavior of a state that is believed to behave “abnormally” and threaten the interests of the sanctioning parties. By imposing pressure on the economy of the sanctioned state, the sanctioning parties seek to force the sanctioned to change its actions that are deemed “abnormal” according to the sanctions' norms. The impacts of economic sanctions can go beyond the sanctioned economy. In practice, sanctions can cause significant collateral damages to ordinary citizens and their economic welfare. Sanctions can be associated with major collateral damage to ordinary citizens and their economic welfare. The degeneration of human rights and the emergence of food and health insecurity problems as the result of sanctions are among the frequently used humanitarian grounds to criticize the legitimacy and effectiveness of sanctions. The environment is another sector that could be impacted by economic sanctions.

Environmental protection is a problem faced by almost all countries, including developed, developing and less developed countries. The environmental problems of the countries are such that their solution requires the active cooperation and participation of international law subjects. It is natural that placing a country under isolation or embargo can have direct and indirect effects on the environment of that country. The most important negative consequences of sanctions include the following: restrictions on the import of environmentally, violation of the citizens' right to a healthy environment, violation of international environmental obligations regarding financial, technical and scientific aid to the embargoed country and the inability of the embargoed country to He pointed out the improvement of environmental standards and quality.

The Negative Impact of Sanctions on the Environment in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Iranian people has been the target of major international economic sanctions over the past four decades. The sanctions not only prevent the Iranian government from addressing them effectively; they contribute to making the challenges worse.

The United States of America's sanctions are contributing to environmental harm in the Islamic Republic of Iran and preventing all people in the Islamic Republic of Iran from fully enjoying their rights to health and life and contributing to additional negative factors like air pollution.

Sanctions had also caused foreign energy companies to abandon projects to build large solar power plants in the Islamic Republic of Iran to generate electricity on a scale that Iranian entities could not replicate. This is also a result of the sanctions; since they prevent foreign investment.

The sanctions impede Iranian scientists from engaging in joint environmental research projects abroad, and even prevent Iranians from accessing online databases and courses about environmental issues and sustainability. The effects of the sanctions on the right to education and the right to benefit from scientific progress are also blocking progress in improving the Islamic Republic of Iran's environment.

Illegal and inhumane economic sanctions against nations, along with their negative consequences for the enjoyment of fundamental human rights are in clear contradiction with the spirit of the UN Charter and the content of the Sustainable Development Goals. Sanctions have hampered timely and cost-effective access to the goods and technologies needed to ensure the ecosystem's safe management and recovery.

Air pollution is a particular concern in the country, reportedly causing higher levels of respiratory and other diseases that lead to premature deaths. The United States of America efforts to enforce its sanctions by threatening to penalize foreign companies doing business in the Islamic Republic of Iran have led foreign car manufacturers to leave the country. So the Islamic Republic of Iran must rely on locally made motors and other equipment that cannot use the latest technologies.

The United States of America's sanctions force people to prolong the use of older vehicles that burn fuel less efficiently, while making it impossible for the Islamic Republic of Iran to obtain equipment and technology to reduce vehicle emissions.

The United States of America obviously recognizes a clean environment as a right that affects other human rights. The UN General Assembly recognized the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in a resolution it passed in July 2022 and the United States of America voted in favor of this resolution.

We recommend to the Human Rights Council to:

Monitor the human rights impact of their sanctions compliance policy on an ongoing basis to eliminate, mitigate or prevent any harmful impact; due diligence relating to the human rights impact of over-compliance with sanctions is both an initial act and an ongoing process;

Recognize the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right; affirms that the promotion of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment requires the full implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements under the principles of international environmental law

Enhance international cooperation, strengthen capacity building and continue to share good practices with countries under sanctions in order to scale up efforts to ensure a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for all.

1. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/12/us-sanctions-violate-iranian-peoples-rights-clean-environment-health-and>