



# 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 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.

[19 August 2024]

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



## **The Negative Impact of Sanctions on the Environment**

We bring to your attention the grave environmental consequences resulting from the unilateral and unjust sanctions imposed by the United States of America against the Iranian people. These sanctions, which can be likened to a modern form of a cold war, have not only exacerbated the economic challenges faced by the Iranian people but have also inflicted severe damage on our country's environment.

Environmental rights are increasingly recognized as fundamental in international human rights documents. These rights ensure that every person has the right to live in a healthy and sustainable environment. Key international documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) indirectly protect environmental rights through the right to health and an adequate standard of living. These environmental rights have been significantly compromised by the sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran. Evidence of this violation can be found in several ways:

1. **Limited Access to Technology:** The sanctions have restricted the Islamic Republic of Iran's access to advanced environmental technologies necessary for managing pollution, conserving resources, and developing renewable energy. This restriction contradicts the ICESCR's Article 15, which recognizes the right to benefit from scientific progress.
2. **Degradation of Natural Resources:** Due to sanctions, the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced difficulties in importing essential equipment and technology for maintaining and improving its environmental infrastructure, such as water management systems and pollution control. This degradation impacts the right to a healthy environment, a right acknowledged by international human rights frameworks.
3. **Economic Impact:** The economic strain caused by sanctions forces the Iranian government to prioritize short-term economic survival over long-term environmental sustainability. This leads to increased reliance on fossil fuels and the exploitation of natural resources, further degrading the environment and affecting the collective environmental rights of Iranian citizens.
4. **Health Implications:** As the environment degrades due to sanctions-induced neglect, the health of the population is affected. Poor air quality, depletion of groundwater resources, the destruction of rangelands and insufficient waste management lead to increased health risks, which in turn infringe upon the right to health as protected under Article 12 of the ICESCR.

Moreover, one of the most significant impacts of these sanctions has been the negative effect on global cooperation aimed at the development and enhancement of renewable energy in the Islamic Republic of Iran. At a time when the deteriorating state of the environment leaves no doubt about the need to implement renewable energy solutions, these sanctions have forced many companies that previously collaborated with the Islamic Republic of Iran on the development and utilization of new energy sources to cease their operations.

In light of these pressing issues, we urge the United Nations Human Rights Council to take a strong and proactive stance against these sanctions. We appeal to this body to recognize the detrimental impact of these sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran's environment and to work towards lifting these unjust measures that have hindered our ability to protect our environment and ensure the health and safety of our people. We call upon the international community to uphold the principles of justice and fairness and to support efforts to end these sanctions, which threaten not only the livelihood of the Iranian people but also the global environment that we all share.