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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 Medical Support Association for Underprivileged Iranian Patients, 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.

[19 August 2024]

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



Obstacles to the Right to Development for Future Generations

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to development to HRC 57, on “the right to development of children and future generations. We support this inalienable human right and believe that all individuals, including the present and the future generations, must have the right to participate in and contribute to economic, social, cultural and political development. Additionally, everyone should have the right to benefit from the achievement of sustainable development goals.

However, we would like to emphasize that the people, especially the children, in many developing and less developed countries are living under challenging economic conditions and an inequitable international economic order imposed by other States. This situation deprives them of their inalienable right to development and hinders the attainment of nearly all Sustainable Development Goals.

We are particularly concerned about the imposition of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs), on certain developing countries and the extensive proliferation of these measures in recent years. Based on the available data from our own experiences, research conducted by experts, - some of which referenced in this statement - reports and resolutions adopted (1) by the United Nations, in addition to the Article 14 of the Draft UN Resolution on the Right to Development, we strongly believe that these measures, continuously have adverse impacts on the human rights of all children

UCMs have been proven to negatively affect the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals; for example, UCMs undermine all efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. They perpetuate inequalities and increase poverty levels in the target countries, negatively affecting children, health, to food, their equal access to education as well as their overall wellbeing.

Good Health and Wellbeing

Global concerns have been raised over the impact of UCMs on children's access to health, including raising the cost of healthcare and banning access to certain types of medicine. In some sanctioned countries children with special disease have lost their lives due to lack of access to life saving medicine.

For example, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, children suffering from EB and Thalassemia have lost their lives because European companies have refrained from importing that lifesaving medicine to the country, due to fear of sanctions (2).

Zero Hunger

The right to food has been extensively targeted by sanctions. A 2022 UNICEF report, along with numerous other documents, has found that economic sanctions negatively impact access to sufficient food. Focusing on the situation in several countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic, the report confirms that sanctions have led to rising inflation rates and UCMs are partially responsible for food insecurity affecting tens of millions of people in the country. According to the report, “by the end of 2021, the price for the average food basket had almost doubled compared to December 2020 and reached its highest ever recorded level since monitoring started in 2013.” The report’s alarming findings indicate that 12.4 million Syrians (3) – nearly 60 percent of the population – are food insecure.

Equal Access to Education

Alarming findings prove the adverse impacts of UCMs on the Right to Education for the next Generation, such as dropping children, especially girls, out of school:

“...economic sanctions decreased the enrollment rate at the high school by 4.3 percentage points among children at high school dropout age (16 years old) with a larger effect among girls and decreased the probability of attending college at age 18 (the average age of matriculation) by 15.4 percentage points (4) ”.

Recommendations

Given the harmful impacts of UCMs on children’s rights, we call on the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development to:

- Study the negative impact of UCMs on the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals for the next generation in all sanctioned countries.
- Offer recommendations to sanctioned countries on how to mitigate the negative impact of sanctions on children’s equal access to education, food security, and overall health and well-being.
- Draw the attention of the international community, especially the sanctioning countries, to the Article 14 of revised draft convention on the right to development. This article calls on States to refrain from adopting, maintaining or implementing "economic or political measures, or any other type of measure, to coerce a State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights in violation of the principles of the sovereign equality of States, the freedom of consent of States or applicable international law (5)" as such actions violate the right to development.

Helping Hands Foundation Compassionate Mother NGO NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.