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

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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.



The Impact of Unilateral Sanctions on the Right to Development in Sanctioned Countries

The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every all peoples are entitled to enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development. Today, enjoying this right has faced a major challenge. Unilateral sanctions, as levers of pressure on governments, directly and indirectly, have negative effects on the enjoyment of this right for the sanctioned countries. In addition, over compliance with Unilateral sanctions leads to a complete disengagement with targeted countries, inevitably excluding whole populations from development. This intensification of inequality effectively results in developmental discrimination on the grounds of nationality, place of residence or birth, disrupting progress on SDG.

The Consequences of Unilateral Sanctions on Development

Unilateral sanctions by imposing restrictions on foreign investment banning on financial-banking relations, and cutting off exports and imports have created obstacles in the development of these countries.

The sanctions generally prevent a sanctioned state from trading its resources because a trade embargo is meant to cut economic ties between a sanctioned state and the international market. In precedence, unilateral sanctions are a reason the countries' GDP is highly affected. They possess a massive reserve of resources yet need to obtain profit or revenue from selling them to other states. Certain countries rely heavily on their agricultural output for international trade, whilst others rely on natural resources, such as oil and natural gas.

On the other hand, the sanctions harm citizens by either depriving a state of engaging in foreign exchange and hindering the production process, which could lead to citizens losing their jobs, or by harming a country's revenue used for the importation of essential and life-saving goods. The impact that unilateral sanctions hold to restrict states from international trade and impose a constraint on their economies ultimately leads to the consequences on citizens and essentially infringing their human rights.

Therefore, considering that the guarantee and implementation of the right to development requires international cooperation, global solidarity and shared responsibility, the unilateral sanctions' consequences increase the cost of development for the sanctioned countries and deprive the people of these countries of an equal opportunity for development in regionally and internationally. This action is a clear violation of the right to development in human rights documents:

- The right to development ensures the freedom, development, and the enjoyment of the right of every human being to the spiritual resources of the international community. The imposition of economic sanctions is in contradiction with that and, with the weakening of the economic system of countries, stops their development in various cultural, economic and social spheres. Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights approves this. Unilateral sanctions against these countries, blocking their assets and boycotting the key industries, were serious obstacles to the Islamic Republic of Iran's development and the incompleteness of the conventions in question.
- Article 2 of the Declaration of the Right to Development recognizes this right as an individual right; all states are primarily responsible for providing the grounds for the manifestation and exercise of this right. The declaration recognizes the right to development as a collective, and at the same time an individual right. The right to development includes the right to a clean environment. In the human right of development, the task of the state is limited to the extent that the tools and conditions allow it. Against all these, the EU's economic sanctions restrict the ability of the government to enforce this right. It can therefore be concluded that all sanctions have an anti-development nature.

- Ms. Alena Douhan, the SR on the negative impact of UCMs in the 54th Session of the HRC highlighted how the isolation of targeted countries and their populations has been shown to increase poverty rates, strain national protection systems, and prevent decent work and economic growth thus impeding progress on SDG 1 on No Poverty, SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG 17 on Partnership for the Goals. The Special Rapporteur also advocated for those in vulnerable situations (especially women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and migrants) who are disproportionately affected by UCM implications and made the connection to hindered progress on Sustainable Development Goal 3 on good health, Goal 5 on gender equality, and Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth.

Recommendations

Remembering that development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom;

Considering sanctions hold countries back from development, they hold back people as well, and in a globalizing world, that hurts everyone;

Reaffirming that Sanctions hamper the transportation of goods needed for economic development, result in the waste of natural resources, undermine environmental sustainability and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Activities essential to every country's development suffer when unilateral sanctions are imposed;

We believe that members should take the following actions:

- Urge sanctioning States to immediately lift unilateral sanctions against the countries;
 - Urge the international community to pay heed to the devastating effects of sanctions and to take prompt and concrete steps to address over-compliance by businesses and banks in accordance with international human right law.
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