



Security Council

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Letter dated 19 August 2025 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the explanatory note by the People's Republic of China on the relevant issues about Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Fu Cong**
Permanent Representative
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the
People's Republic of China to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 19 August 2025 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Chinese and English]

Explanatory note by the People's Republic of China on the relevant issues about Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)

All the provisions of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and its “snapback” mechanism shall be terminated on 18 October 2025. China would like to deliver the following positions regarding some countries that are threatening to trigger the “snapback” mechanism, as set out below.

The relationship between the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)

The Security Council, in its resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015 as a “fundamental shift” in consideration of the Iranian nuclear programme. JCPOA was welcomed by the international community as a unique achievement of multilateral diplomacy and a role model for resolving disputes through dialogue and engagement. Its conclusion positively contributed to regional and international peace and security.

The endorsement of JCPOA by the Security Council in its resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) made it an inseparable part of the resolution and legally binding. Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) terminated the previous Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions against Iran. The purpose of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) is to ensure the implementation of JCPOA. JCPOA could not be made operational without Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), and Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) would be deprived of its meaning, object and purpose without JCPOA. Therefore, all provisions of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) are dependent on the implementation of the terms and conditions of JCPOA.

The unilateral withdrawal of the United States from JCPOA in May 2018 impeded the implementation of JCPOA and undermined the authority and effectiveness of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). The United States restored and continuously upgraded unilateral sanctions against Iran and adopted maximum pressure measures. As a result, Iran was unable to enjoy the economic benefits granted by JCPOA and was forced to reduce performance of the obligations under JCPOA. In the absence of properly addressing the substantial non-performance by the United States, threatening to trigger the “snapback” mechanism by invoking the Council [2231 \(2015\)](#) will be treated as unilateral punishment against Iran and is unfair.

The lack of due process and valid cause for triggering the “snapback” mechanism

Paragraphs 10 to 15 of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and paragraphs 36 and 37 of JCPOA have set out the procedure for the revocation of the provisions terminating previously adopted Security Council sanctions and for the reimposition of the previous Security Council resolutions. Exhausting the dispute resolution mechanism procedures established by JCPOA is the precondition for triggering “snapback” mechanism. The issue should be submitted by a JCPOA participant to the Joint Commission to properly and orderly go through all the procedures listed by the dispute resolution mechanism.

Due to the withdrawal of the United States, the Joint Commission cannot effectively work and has never made a decision to activate the dispute resolution

mechanism. Therefore, it lacks justification to trigger the “snapback” mechanism. Any attempt to resort to “snapback” in circumvention of the established procedure and the requirements of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) would severely undermine diplomatic endeavours and constitute an abuse of the authority and functions of the Security Council. Any attempt to skip the Joint Commission and the dispute resolution mechanism to push for triggering the “snapback” mechanism is void.

Conclusion

Political and diplomatic settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue remains the only viable and practical option, and the right path to lasting peace. The parties concerned should commit to eliminating the root causes of the current situation, abandoning pressure in the form of sanctions and the threat of force and actively creating conditions for the resumption of dialogue and negotiation. Force is not the right way to resolve international disputes and could only exacerbate confrontations and contradictions. The difficult situation regarding the implementation of JCPOA and Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) was not created by Iran. Disruption of JCPOA implementation caused by the United States and E3 cannot serve as an excuse for reimposing all sanctions on Iran that had previously been lifted.

The core objectives and purposes established by JCPOA remain valid in the next steps of the political settlement process. We should take a holistic approach to the goals of nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Iran should continue to honour its commitment to not developing nuclear weapons and all parties should fully respect Iran’s right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a State Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. On the basis of mutual respect and equal dialogue, efforts should be made to find the greatest common ground that accommodates the legitimate concerns of all parties, seek a solution that meets the expectations of the international community and put the Iranian nuclear activities completely under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

China firmly opposes the triggering of the Security Council “snapback” mechanism and believes that this action will not help to build confidence or bridge differences among relevant parties, but will undermine the diplomatic efforts for an early resumption of negotiations and even lead to unpredictable and catastrophic consequences, ruin all the diplomatic efforts for many years and completely end the political diplomatic settlement process.

Any action by the Security Council must be conducive to negotiating a new agreement and not the opposite. The Security Council must act responsibly to safeguard the legitimacy of multilateral agreements and protect the authority of the Security Council. China calls upon all members of the Security Council to exercise the utmost caution on the “snapback” mechanism and prioritize dialogue and diplomatic solutions in accordance with the principles of international law.

China will continue to engage in peace talks and play a constructive role in bridging the differences among the parties and in finding solutions that resolve all parties’ concerns, so as to safeguard the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and maintain peace and stability in the Middle East region.