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ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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ADDRESS

H.E. Mr. Sayyid Abbas ARAGHCHI, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Minister of Foreign Affairs opens his address by stressing that Iran is a peace-loving nation that inherited one of the most ancient civilisations – a country which has brought a significant contribution to human civilisation, culture, and ethics.

Now this nation of nearly 100 million population is subject to an outrageous **act of aggression** by a regime that has been committing a horrible genocide in Palestine for the past two years and that is occupying the lands of neighbouring countries. Standing before the august UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the Minister reminds the Council of the **legal and ethical responsibility** each and every member and observer state has to stand up against this grave injustice.

Israel has launched an **unprovoked aggression on Iran** in a stark violation of Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter and in bold defiance of all the principles and rules that the UNHRC stands for. This is an unjust war imposed on the people of Iran since early hours of Friday, 13 June, when Israel perpetrated a mix of unlawful and criminal operations against off-duty military personnel, university professors, and ordinary people.



Hundreds of Iranians have been **killed and injured** following Israel's surprise armed attacks and terrorist operations on residential areas, public infrastructures, hospitals, health centres, and the Foreign Ministry.

Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities have also been targeted despite their being under full monitoring of IAEA and despite the fact that attacking such facilities are absolutely banned under international law. **Israel's attacks on nuclear facilities** are grave war crimes, given also the danger of environmental and health catastrophes as a result of **radiological leakage**.

As founding member of the United Nations system, Iran rightfully expects each and every country to stand for justice, rule of law, and basic tenets of humanity and ethics. Iran is under a **merciless act of aggression**. This is crystal clear fact – it must not be allowed to be twisted upside down by Israel and its backers. Israel's aggression on Iran cannot and must not be justified by any legal or moral standards.

Any justification for this unjust and criminal war would be tantamount to complicity. Iran is defending itself against the barbaric aggression. Iran is entitled, tasked, and determined to defend its territorial integrity, national sovereignty, and security with all force. This is **Iran's inherent right**, as also clearly recognised under article 51 of the UN Charter.

Peace and the rule of law are at serious stake as a result of Israel's **unlawful invasion of Iran**. Israel is committing **war crimes and crimes against humanity**. International humanitarian law, already brutally undermined as a consequence of Israel's relentless atrocities in occupied Palestine and elsewhere, is now under another extremely serious danger as Israel is committing **grave violations** of 1949 Geneva Conventions.

As the custodian of 1949 Geneva Conventions and Protocols, **Switzerland** has an important responsibility in this regard. Indeed, every state party to the 1949 Conventions shall shoulder their responsibility under these Conventions, in particular Common Articles 1 and 3.

Iran has been attacked in the midst of an ongoing diplomatic process. Iran was supposed to meet with the USA on 15 June to craft a very promising agreement for peaceful resolution of the issues fabricated over Iran's **peaceful nuclear programme**. It was a betrayal of diplomacy and an unprecedented blow to the foundation of international law and the UN system.

If there is any use of costly systems and mechanisms created over the past 80 decades to preserve human rights and dignity, now is the time to do it. Action is needed now. Otherwise, the whole UN-based international law system would corrode badly.

This is a **historic moment for human civilisation** when a civilised nation has come under an unjust war of aggression. The world, every state, every UN mechanism and body has to be alarmed and has to act now to stop the aggressor, to end impunity and to hold criminals accountable for their unending atrocities and crimes in the region.

This is a call from someone who has devoted his whole life to dialogue and diplomacy, but who is also a veteran of an imposed war by Saddam regime and knows how to defend his beloved motherland.