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ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

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US GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS

Ms. Alena DOUHAN, the Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights

The Special Rapporteur draws the Council's attention to the fact that today, the world is all the more witnessing the growing use of unilateral sanctions on different forms, means of enforcement by states and overcompliance by private and other actors. Therefore, Ms. Alena DOUHAN starts from expressing her solidarity with her colleague, **Ms. Francesca ALBANESE**, Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, who has recently been subjected to unilateral sanctions by the United States. Ms. Alena DOUHAN reminds that Special Rapporteurs are experts whose status and immunities shall be protected by all states.

PRESENTATION OF THE THEMATIC REPORT

The Special Rapporteur presents her **thematic report** shedding light on the **impact of unilateral coercive measures on economic, labour and social rights**. Unilateral sanctions are applied and enforced today despite the multiple reports on their negative humanitarian impact, including on the enjoyment of all economic, labour and social rights.



Cumulative effects of primary and secondary sanctions and extensive overcompliance produced wider implications for the economy of and economic rights in targeted countries, third states and even sanctioning states themselves, affecting indiscriminately the freedom from poverty, the right to health, the right to education, the right to water and sanitation, the right to a decent standard of living, the right to food, and other economic and social rights.

Unilateral sanctions take many forms and are targeted against states, regions, specific sectors of economy, companies and individuals. Since such measures are designed to directly affect the economies of targeted states, they produce a direct and indirect negative impact on the enjoyment of all economic, labour and social rights with **spillover effect for third states**, sanctioning states and world population, hampering states' ability to ensure economic, labour and social rights. The complex effect of unilateral sanctions, means of enforcement and overcompliance on all economic, labour and social rights is very serious, especially in respect to the most vulnerable groups such as elderly, children, women, homeless people, refugees and many others.

In particular, UCMs have adverse effects on the enjoyment of all aspects of the right to work. Sanctions often result not only in the **higher unemployment rates**, but also wage reductions, deterioration of working conditions and a shift towards informal employment, emplacing labour rights and standards, negative impact on entrepreneurship. Unilateral sanctions meaningfully affect the right to development and the achievement of all SDGs.

Additionally, unilateral sanctions have an extensive adverse implications on economic, labour and social rights in third states, especially countries of the **Global South**, depending on assistance, trade or supplies from the states under sanctions or neighbouring countries. Such impact affects in turn labour markets; the rights of local workers due to migration status; contract clauses and companies' closure; the availability and quality of some social and development progress; access to food, gas and fertilisers; the right to food; and stimulates emigration. Naturally, unilateral sanctions and overcompliance are not the only factors affecting human rights and the humanitarian situation in a given country.

Under Article 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), all states, including states under sanctions, bear the primary responsibility to ensure within their territory or jurisdiction all **economic, labour and social rights within maximum resources available**. However, unilateral sanctions reduce these resources substantially. Such states are under obligation to take all possible measures within available resources to promote and protect such rights; to mitigate negative impact of unilateral sanctions on human rights; and to assist persons under their jurisdiction or control in the promotion and protection of human rights affected by unilateral sanctions.

At the same time, **states adopting, enforcing or implementing unilateral sanctions** - which undermines the ability of states under sanctions to implement progressively economic, labour and social rights - are responsible for the violation of such rights or **retrogression in their implementation** in targeted societies due to the reduction of national capacity and to the imposition or enforcement of unilateral sanctions by their organs and officials. States imposing UCMs are also responsible for the violation of an **obligation of due diligence** and consequent violation of human rights affected by overcompliance by private actors under their jurisdiction

and control in accordance with approach taken by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its multiple general comments.

There is a long list of other elements which can be discussed as relevant to the impact of unilateral sanctions, means of enforcement, and overcompliance on economic, social and labour rights. However, due to the limited time, the SR will focus on some of the **recommendations** she formulated.

Sanctioning states and regional organisations shall **review measures** taken without or beyond the authorisation of the UN Security Council and lift those which do not meet the criteria of retortions and countermeasures in full conformity with the standards and limitations of the Law of International Responsibility as constituting unilateral coercive measures. They shall ensure that the **implementation of humanitarian resolutions** taken by the UN Security Council aimed to meet basic needs of the people **is not impeded by any unilateral measure**, including any impediments to transfer money, to deliver or to insure humanitarian cargo and many others.

Sanctioning, enforcing and implementing states shall take all possible legislative, institutional and administrative measures to **avoid and minimise overcompliance** and to ensure that activities of private businesses under their jurisdiction and control do not violate their rights to property, work, social security, food, housing, health, education and other human rights extraterritorially as reflected in the Guiding Principles on Sanctions, Business and Human Rights. They shall ensure that unilateral sanctions are not affecting the functioning of critical infrastructure relevant to healthcare, food, agriculture, electricity, water supply, irrigation, sanitation, gas and fertilisers, all of which are necessary for the survival and well-being of population.

The SR invites **states affected by unilateral sanctions** to take all steps within maximum of available resources to mitigate negative impact of unilateral sanctions; to use means of diplomatic protection; and to report on all types of challenges arising from unilateral sanctions and overcompliance on economic, labour and social rights in their engagement with all relevant UN entities and specialised agencies, and within the UPR and UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies within the scope of their mandates.

The SR calls upon UN agencies and organs to **monitor - within their mandates - the impact of unilateral sanctions and overcompliance** on the ability of states under sanctions to fulfil their international obligations under the relevant human rights conventions on the rights to adequate food, adequate housing, education, health, water and sanitation, and social security. The SR invites **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** to take the lead in monitoring:

- The unhindered exercise of the right to work, the right to decent work, labour rights and social security in the face of unilateral sanctions, means of enforcement, and overcompliance.
- The impact of unilateral sanctions on the ability of states under sanctions to **fulfil their obligations under ILO conventions**, recommendations, and strategies on decent work, green jobs, social protection and occupational safety, health and access policies of sanctioning states, and instances of overcompliance by businesses and the financial sector.



REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ms. Alena DOUHAN notes that all statements are a clear evidence of the negative humanitarian impact of unilateral coercive measures on different categories of human rights including economic rights, labour rights, and social rights. Beyond the facts which have been reflected in thematic report, this very interactive dialogue brings good examples of the impacts of UCMs which cannot be denied any longer.

Agreeing with the European Union that ‘not all unilateral means of pressure constitute unilateral coercive measures’, the SR points out that only measures which are allowed in accordance with international law, shall not violate any single international obligations of the sanctioning states (so-called **retortions**), or they can be taken in strict accordance with the rules governing **countermeasures** by a state directly affected by violation of international obligations and in strict observance of fundamental human rights.

The vast majority of measures taken unilaterally - approximately **98 per cent** - are unilateral coercive measures and are illegal from the perspective of international law, whatever are the good intentions of imposing them. In accordance with the principle of sovereign equality and the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs of states, **states are not free to decide** how to behave if the UN Security Council is ineffective. Doing something or doing nothing is the doctrine which sought to **justify the use of military force** in the course of humanitarian interventions of early 1990s, which has been unilaterally recognised to be illegal today.

The same justification cannot be used for unilateral coercive measures (UCMs). States are only entitled to take measures which are consistent with international law, which means measures authorised by the UN Security Council, fulfilling the criteria of retortions or countermeasures. Any other measure is prohibited under international law and cannot be justified by any higher values. The SR recalls that in accordance with the **principle of sovereign equality of states**, all states are equal. There is not a single state which can decide that another state is a bad one or does not deserve to take its own decision and impose sanctions or other means of pressure on these states. Imposing sanctions is a **prerogative of the UN Security Council** only in the case when it determines the existence of a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, or an act of aggression.

The SR further regrets that **access to justice** is a huge challenge. As outlined in her report on access to justice presented to the UN General Assembly in 2024, the SR explains that unilateral coercive measures are not protected by the right to have access to justice. On the impact of **UCMs on economic, social rights and labour rights**, contemporary developments reflect the fact that even access to court and, since very recently, **access to international commercial arbitration** is very limited, as lawyers are afraid of defending cases concerning businesses or economic, social and labour rights. For example, within the European Union, the national enforcement of international decisions in this field is significantly impacted by EU sanctions law and, since recently, it refers not only to judicial decisions, but also to international arbitration awards whenever they are relevant to the EU’s sanctions regime.

Tuning to **possible steps to be taken by the United Nations**, the first step would be the establishment and proper functioning of the monitoring tool as an initiative by the SR which enjoys the support of many delegations. In order to examine the consequences, we need to know



the facts and we need to be able to verify these facts from different perspectives. The **monitoring tool** established by the mandate holder includes a section dedicated to social rights, including the right to health, the right to food and many others. As the SR is not able to feed the platform alone, she invites all states and non-governmental actors to share their experience. This will help not only to collect and show figures, but also to **demonstrate the causality link** as well.

Another initiative deemed by the SR as important is the attention paid to the impact of unilateral sanctions in multiple UN agencies such as **ILO, WHO, FAO**, UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies, and many others. From her perspective, the SR believes that the only solution is to bring back to the table the rule of law when confronted with the settlement of international disputes or disagreements between states.

Lastly, the SR informs the Council that she has recently finalised the development of the Commentary to the **Guiding Principles on Sanctions, Business, and Human Rights**. The SR has worked on additional initiatives on humanitarian actions and responsibility, and calls for the support of UNHRC stakeholders for the furtherance of such initiatives.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Views Expressed by State Delegations

Algeria appreciates the SR's report and shares her views on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on economic, social and labour rights, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, children, older persons, and refugees. These measures do not come under the aegis of the United Nation's mandate. They run contrary to the UN Charter and breach the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of states. They further weaken economies, spread poverty, and undermine the attainment of the SDGs. Therefore, Algeria calls for all of these measures to be lifted, particularly those creating barriers to trade in goods and the provision of fundamental public services such as healthcare and education, as well as any other measures allowing individuals to enjoy an adequate standard of life. In this spirit, Algeria urges the SR to pursue her work to bring about change towards a fairer world marked by greater solidarity.

Armenia attaches great importance to the promotion of economic, social, and cultural rights as well as labour rights, and acknowledges that there are instances where UCMs may have complex impacts on the enjoyment. Armenia has consistently emphasised the importance of guaranteeing that any measures taken at the international level remain firmly grounded in international law, the United Nations Charter, and the principles of multilateralism. The UCMs can disproportionately impact the economic, social, and labour rights, with ripple effects extending to third countries. Small and landlocked economies such as Armenia are especially sensitive to disruptions in trade, financial transactions, and supply chains. These consequences often affect vulnerable groups most severely, including women, children, thereby widening inequalities and undermining sustainable development. In this context, Armenia stresses the importance of safeguarding humanitarian channels and ensuring that measures do not impede access to medicines, food, or medical equipment, and especially maintain all humanitarian exemptions. Equally important is preserving cooperation in areas such as health, sustainable development, and climate action.



Belarus states that the report on the impact of UCMs on economic, labour and social rights once again shows a range of human rights that are destroyed by sanctions. Belarus notes the convincing arguments, underpinned by facts, regarding the unlawful nature of the sanctions which involve confiscation of citizens' property, overcompliance by banks, the negative impact on economic indicators, a high level of unemployment, inflation, pay levels, the right to labour and the broad, adverse impacts of UCMs affecting the economies of countries which have sanctions adapted against them, beyond side effects on third countries and the initiators themselves. UCMs destroy economic, labour and social rights of huge numbers of people, including the most vulnerable. Belarus shares the SR's concern over the understanding of documents issued by certain international organisations as legitimising or justifying UCMs. Commending the SR's professionalism, Belarus expresses its support for the recommendations.

Brazil appreciates the SR's thematic report on the impact of unilateral coercive measures on economic, labour and social rights. Brazil is deeply concerned over the adverse effects of unilateral coercive measures on vulnerable groups including older persons and refugees. Individuals are being deprived of numerous rights including the rights to food, health, education, work and adequate housing among others. Brazil has consistently condemned unilateral coercive measures as they violate international law and have a detrimental impact on the enjoyment of human rights. Today, the world is witnessing new forms of unilateral coercive measures which target human rights, the independence of the judiciary, the very international legal order and the multilateral human rights system. Such measures are not only unlawful, but also inconsistent with international obligations governing sanctions, as UCMs disregard the principle of sovereign equality, non-interference in internal affairs, and respect for human rights. Unilateral coercive measures have long-term consequences for the enjoyment of human rights across an entire country. Lastly, Brazil asks the SR how she envisages incorporating this perspective into her work.

Cambodia commends the SR's continued efforts to shed light on the adverse impacts of unilateral coercive measures and to advocate for the rights of those affected, particularly vulnerable groups. Cambodia acknowledges the enormous impact of unilateral coercive measures. Beyond directly affecting the economies of the targeted states, such measures also have direct and indirect negative impacts on the enjoyment of all economic, labour, and social rights, with spillover effects for third states, sanctioning states, and the world population. Cambodia welcomes the SR's official launch in 2024 of a tool to monitor and assess the impact of unilateral coercive measures and overcompliance on human rights, as well as on economic and social development of the targeted countries. This is a significant milestone towards a more comprehensive understanding of the impacts, including adverse humanitarian effects. Cambodia further emphasises the importance of dialogue and international cooperation, and urges states to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial, or trade coercive measures inconsistent with international law and the UN Charter, as this will impede the full achievement of economic and social development in the states concerned.

Chad notes with concern legislation recently adopted in a number of countries to legitimise the confiscation of frozen assets. This legitimisation violates international law, in particular standards against the immunity of states and the principle of equality between states. Chad shares the SR's assessment according to which states bear the primary responsibility for



upholding economic, social and labour rights within the limits of available resources. As a result, they are responsible for taking measures to prevent or mitigate the effects of UCMs on the humanitarian front. To conclude, Chad expresses support for the SR's mandate and calls on all states to promote the values of dialogue, mutual respect, understanding, tolerance, and multilateralism, as the cornerstones of international relations.

China believes that unilateral coercive measures undermine international cooperation in economics, trade, and science and technology, and threaten food and energy security. These seriously jeopardise the right to life and development of all peoples. In her report, the SR has illustrated the serious impacts of UCMs on economic and social rights and labour rights, whose findings deserve great attention. China would appreciate more efforts made by the international community in this field, and thus urges concerned countries to respond to human rights violations which result from these measures. Calling for accountability and an end of UCMs, China further notes with concern that the world is suffering from serious turbulence as a result of the challenges posed to the multilateral system. Reaffirming its attachment to multilateralism, the principle of sovereign equality and respect for international law, China stands ready to work jointly with all to defend these values and advocates for a humane approach towards building an international system which is more appropriate for the destiny of the humanity as a whole.

Cuba is grateful to the SR for his report and agrees on the fact that the nature of UCMs does not only impact directly targeted states. They also have profound ramifications on third countries, as well as those countries meeting them out. Any economic, commercial or financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba has a disproportionate impact on the national economy and a direct impact on public services such as health and education. Restrictions on trade and financial transactions create significant obstacles to entrepreneurship, the creation of jobs and access to alternative finance. Once more, Cuba has been placed on a US list of countries supposedly sponsoring terrorism. Cuba also denounces the campaign which is being undertaken by the US government to discredit the international medical cooperation programmes offered by Cuba, including restrictions on visas to civil servants to third countries connected with the implementation of that programme. Manipulation of human rights to justify the imposition of unilateral coercive measures constitutes a form of discrimination and an interference in the internal affairs of states, as well as a threat to free determination. Cuba would be grateful if the SR could elaborate on actions to be undertaken by the UNHRC to lobby for and raise visibility around the end of these measures.

Egypt takes note of the SR's thematic report, which addresses the impact of unilateral coercive measures and overcompliance on the enjoyment of human rights, particularly in the context of the enjoyment of economic and rights, and the direct and indirect impact of such measures on the right to work and the related negative impact on the economic and social rights of individuals in the countries targeted by such measures. On this matter, Egypt reiterates its well-established position that any punitive measures shall comply with international law, international human rights law, and the Charter of the United Nations. Egypt categorically rejects the use of such measures as a tool for political or economic coercion or pressure on States. It further shares the SR's recommendation that these measures must not obstruct the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions or efforts to deliver humanitarian aid to affected areas. Egypt stresses the importance of holding to account any policies and practices that undermine the efforts or



mandate of UN humanitarian organizations, particularly in Gaza, where the civilian population is suffering from an unprecedented and unconscionable humanitarian crisis. Lastly, Egypt emphasizes the need for the international community to assume its responsibilities and punish those involved in such practices.

Eritrea appreciates the SR's thorough report and her work for the development of tools and measures that respond to the humanitarian and human rights impacts of UCMs. Sanctions, secondary measures and overcompliance provides an essential basis for the Council's work. The report shows these measures do not operate in isolation. Multiple regimes, secondary sanctions and over-compliance create long-running effects that weaken states' capacity to fulfil economic, labour and social rights, spilling over to third and even sanctioning states. For Eritrea, this is a lived reality. Banking restrictions, block transfers, procurement obstacles and other services. Overcompliance by financial actors, account closures and high costs further cut citizens off from basics. The report's data on poverty and wages show the concrete cost of these illegal measures. For instance, Eritrea's minimum wage levels illustrate the constraints on wage policy under sanctions. The country welcomes the monetary assessment tool and urges support from the High Commissioner, UN agencies and countries to ensure it is inclusive, transparent and funded. Lastly, Eritrea urges the lifting of measures that undermine human dignity.

Ethiopia thanks the SR for her comprehensive and timely thematic report. By directly affecting the economies of targeted states, these measures significantly undermine economic, labour and social rights, with wide-ranging spillover effects on certain countries, sanctioning states, and global populations. UCMs reduce the ability of sanctioned states to mobilise resources for the realisation of basic rights. While states bear the primary responsibility for upholding human rights within their jurisdiction, UCMs severely constrain their ability to do so, fostering conditions for underdevelopment and humanitarian needs. UCMs also weaken national institutions, obstruct the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and erode public trust in multilateral systems. They disrupt regional cooperation and undermine the principles of solidarity and sovereign equality that are fundamental to the UN Charter. Ethiopia stresses that humanitarian assistance must never be criminalised or obstructed; emphasises the responsibility of sanctioning states to prevent over compliance by private actors under their jurisdiction; and calls for enhanced international cooperation, inclusive dialogue, and reform of the global financial architecture to promote equity, accountability, and respect for human rights.

Ghana on behalf of the African group believes that the imposition of unilateral coercive measures is contrary to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, the promotion and protection of human rights and the spirit of international cooperation. These measures have never been concerned with human rights. They have never been claimed to target specific individuals or entities. In reality, they obstruct the full enjoyment of human rights and have far-reaching and devastating impacts on the wider population, particularly the poor and most vulnerable. Africa's development benefits from multilateralism and international cooperation. UCMs undermine the global trading system and restrict access to markets, financing and investment opportunities. The widespread resort to zero-risk approaches and overcompliance policies by banks and private sector actors further disrupts access to goods and services that are essential for any economy to function. Moreover, the extraterritorial application of UCMs to third countries undermines international solidarity, regional integration and trade and investment



cooperation. These measures disproportionately harm women and children who are most affected by economic instability, inflation and reduce access to essential services, including healthcare and education. The African group categorically rejects the use of unilateral coercive measures and calls upon all states to demonstrate solidarity and strengthen cooperation to ensure that no country and no people are left behind in our collective pursuit of sustainable development.

Iran takes the floor through H.E. Mr. Naser Seraji, Secretary of the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who extends his appreciation to the SR for her work. The Secretary of the High Council for Human Rights states that Israel resorts to sanctions, open aggressions, and military interventions. Israeli sanctions at their core constitute instruments of collective punishment that silently claim lives, fracture societies and erode fundamental rights to health, food and dignity. They deny entire populations access to medicine, vaccines and life-saving medical equipment, while public health systems are crippling and economic development is stifling. In reality, what an armed conflict destroyed within days, sanctions accomplished through years of slow, relentless and silent devastation. All of these crimes stem from what is promoted as a rules-based international order, an order that replaces universal principles.

Iraq appreciates the SR's thematic report which confirms that unilateral coercive measures have profound negative repercussions on human rights, particularly economic and social rights. Iraq notes concern the report's reference to the direct and indirect effects of unilateral coercive measures, as they undermine the right to development, limit employment opportunities and social security, hinder trade and investment, exacerbate inflation and unemployment rates, and infringe on fundamental rights such as health, education and food security. Their repercussions are not limited to the targeted countries alone, but extend to third countries that deal with them. Iraq is not subject to these measures, but nevertheless shares the SR's concern over their negative effects. Iraq calls on States to resolve their differences by peaceful means and in accordance with international law. It also stresses the importance of obtaining information from official sources in order to ensure the accuracy of assessments and the objectivity of conclusions.

Libya shares the SR's view that these measures have cumulative impacts on the economies of targeted states as well as on economic, labour and social rights of individuals. They undermine their fight against poverty, access to health, and the right to a dignified life. UCMs prevent targeted states from dedicating necessary attention and resources for the furtherance of human rights and the SDGs within their jurisdiction as a result of the economic challenges that such measures pose. In closing, Libya reiterates the importance of ensuring that all unilateral coercive measures must be compatible with international law, and they must not be used as an instrument of political pressure.

Malawi converges with the SR's observation that multiple sanction regimes alongside secondary sanctions and overcompliance produce cumulative effects and widespread implications on the economic rights of individuals as well as on the economy of targeted countries, third countries and even sanctioning states themselves. The impact of targeted unilateral sanctions on economic rights of sanctioned states is enormous and takes the forms of sectorial sanctions which mostly affect sectors of the state's economy such as the gold mining sector in the case of Zimbabwe. This negatively affects the economy and social rights in different ways. Reiterating the



well-established position taken by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union on unilateral coercive measures, Malawi calls for the lifting of sanctions against Zimbabwe, as such sanctions continue to have far-reaching effects on the country and the entire SADC region.

Malaysia remains concerned over the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on economic, labour and social rights. As highlighted in the report, such measures disrupt economies, undermine labour protections and weaken social safety nets. Ordinary people, especially women, children and vulnerable groups, bear the heaviest burden. As a trading nation, Malaysia views with concern how unilateral measures distort supply chains and restrict access to essential goods, medicines and technologies. This erodes fair trade and creates long-term inequalities. Malaysia further echoes the SR's call to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian assistance to countries under sanctions. Unilateral measures should never affect the functioning of critical infrastructure, including healthcare, food, agriculture, electricity, water, and sanitation, all of which are indispensable for human survival and well-being. Malaysia believes that economic resilience, decent work and social protection are central to inclusive development. Unilateral measures that obstruct these priorities run contrary to the principles of the UN Charter and the right to development. In closing, the country reiterates that disputes must be resolved through dialogue and multilateral cooperation. Malaysia reaffirms that unilateral coercive measures only deepen poverty, widen inequalities and hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mozambique is deeply concerned by the findings of the SR's report which reveal how such measures severely restrict the ability of sanctioned states to fulfil economic, labour and social rights and create barriers that undermine development and humanitarian efforts. Mozambique is particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact of crisis on vulnerable groups including women, children, persons with disabilities, old and young, and refugees who suffer most when states are unable to deliver essential services and humanitarian assistance. Mozambique reaffirms its position that UCMs not authorised by the US Security Council violate international law, threaten state sovereignty and undermine the enjoyment of human rights. Therefore, Mozambique calls on all states to refrain from imposing or enforcing such measures and support efforts aimed at lifting sanctions that inflict harm on innocent populations.

The **Russian Federation** highly appreciates the report of the SR consisting of a comprehensive analysis of the adverse impacts of UCMs, means of enforcement, overcompliance and their impact on various aspects of economic, labour and social rights. Despite the fact that UCMs are not in line with the goals and principles of the UN and the Charter and are not in line with international law and have been condemned by many GA resolutions, the collective Western satellite states continue to use this instrument as a lever for political pressure and reprisals against inconvenient countries following their own sovereign way. These unlawful acts are essentially a collective punishment of the populations of countries affected by UCMs. These negative impacts are worst felt in the economic, labour and social spheres. In particular, they affect people within vulnerable population groups. Russia commends the detailed conclusions and recommendations in the report, which seek to break out a vicious circle of UCMs. In conclusion, Russia reaffirms its comprehensive support for the mandate and essential work carried out by the SR.



South Africa thanks the SR for continued efforts to shed light on the human rights impact of the UCMs. South Africa remains deeply concerned by the persistence and proliferation of UCMs which undermine the principle of international law, multilateralism and the sovereign equality of states. These measures imposed without UN authorization disproportionately affect the most vulnerable including women, children and older person. Such measures also erode the economic and social rights of entire populations and are weaponised to achieve political ends. South Africa calls for greater transparency, accountability and dialogue in addressing the unintended humanitarian consequences of such measures. The right to development must not be held hostage to international agendas. In closing, South Africa urges states to engage constructively with the SR's mandate and to lift all measures that contravene the international law and hinder the realisation of the SDGs. In solidarity with the affected states, South Africa reaffirms its commitment to a rule-based international order, grounded in respect, dignity and justice.

The **State of Palestine** stresses that sanctions are recognised obligations when a state commits great breaches of international law. Yet sanctions are too often applied and recognised by certain states becoming tools of domination rather than justice. Instead of deterring violations they frequently punish vulnerable populations, silence civil society and even target UN experts while shielding those responsible for atrocity crimes. Nowhere is this hypocrisy more blatant than in the case of Israel. Since its inception, Israel has pursued the erasure of the Palestinian people. Instead of sanctioning the perpetrator, the opposite is happening. The United States as the main sponsor of Israel's genocide in Gaza imposes sanctions on Palestinian civil society organisations, on judges of international courts, and even on UNHRC Special Rapporteurs who tell the truth. This is not simply a distortion of justice. It is complicity in genocide. The State of Palestine calls on member states to fulfil their obligations under international law - the very law so many claim to impose sanctions on Israel, to end complicity in genocide, and to demonstrate that this legal system is more than empty rhetoric. The State of Palestine urges the SR to raise all Council's voices on this double standard and to address states' obligations in this regard.

Sudan appreciates the SR's thematic report on the impact of UCMs and the recommendations contained therein, which enjoy the support of Sudan. The latter stresses that these UCMs have had a negative impact on social, economic and cultural rights in Sudan. In particular, they restrict the right to education, health and mobility; led to an increase in poverty; and hamper foreign investments. In addition, the war by the rebel group that is supported regionally has also exacerbated the situation. Despite all these obstacles, Sudan is pursuing its efforts for fostering the country's development through social welfare programmes; improvements to infrastructure, health, and education; foreign and local investment encouragement; and measures to limit the consequences of the war. UCMs are purportedly in line with the UN Charter, but this is untrue. Sudan recalls that the UN Security Council is the only organ bestowed with the power to impose UCMs. What the world is witnessing, is that UCMs are used selectively and do not respect individual and collective human rights. Reaffirming the importance of the recommendations and the findings outlined in the thematic report, Sudan calls upon the international community to take every action to limit the negative impact of UCMs and further urges to enhance international cooperation to support the people of Sudan in their quest for peace and security.

Togo is grateful to the SR for addressing the humanitarian consequences of unilateral coercive measures and reaffirms its commitment to security, peace and development. Togo expresses



concern over the findings that these measures - beyond their political goals - put a brake on the fundamental rights of civilian populations; hamper sustainable development and growth; and undermine vulnerable groups. Togo expresses its solidarity with targeted countries, whose population suffer devastating effects particularly in terms of reduced access to food, medicines, healthcare and education. Togo reaffirms its commitment to the United Nations Charter and its founding principles such as sovereign equality of states, the prohibition of use to force in international relations, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Unilateral coercive measures undermine multilateralism and the international order. They also constitute a major obstacle to the attainment of the SDGs, as they disrupt supply chains, threaten food security, and compromise decades of progress. Togo will continue to promote dialogue, diplomacy and an inclusive approach which places human dignity at its heart.

Venezuela is grateful for the SR's thematic report and reiterate its support for her very valuable mandate. Venezuela has reported extensively on the attacks by the United States Government against the Bolivarian Republic, which have been escalating through the illegal application of unilateral coercive measures, smear campaigns and disregard for Venezuela's legitimate institutions, reaching an unprecedented level of threats today, especially following the deployment of US military forces in the Caribbean. The unilateral coercive measures imposed on Venezuela have had a devastating impact on the economy, causing a drastic reduction in foreign exchange earnings and restricting international trade, limiting the State's ability to access the investment and resources necessary for development. To date, 1,042 unilateral coercive measures have been imposed on Venezuela. Despite this, the Venezuelan government has developed an efficient policy to counter these UCMs and guarantee the full enjoyment of the human rights of its people. Just as Venezuela is experiencing consecutive economic growth, the US is deploying military forces to threaten the sovereignty of Venezuela and the Latin American and Caribbean region. In this regard, it is clear that the United States is pursuing an interventionist policy with two approaches that have the same goal, namely, the use of UCMs as a form of unconventional warfare, and a direct military threat in the face of the ineffectiveness of promoting regime change. Therefore, Venezuela urges the UNHRC to condemn the application of UCM.

Venezuela on behalf of a Group of Friends in Defence of the UN Charter denounces that UCMs, including those applied as instruments of political, economic or financial coercion against any country are illegal. They represent a blatant violation of the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the basic standards of international law. In addition to establishing and broadening conditions of poverty and inequality, UCMs amount to crimes against humanity and massive violations of human rights, seeking to deprive entire populations of their own means of subsistence. Those affected nations see a negative impact on the full enjoyment of human rights in their territories, including the right to development, financial and technical assistance, technology transfer and capacity-building, as well as the right of all to an adequate standard of living, including the provision of health, food, education and basic social services. The Group of Friends emphasises that 4 December was declared by the UNGA as International Day Against UCMs. This would be an appropriate opportunity to denounce the illegality of UCMs, to disseminate its negative impact concerning the economy and human rights of millions of peoples, as well as continuing to call for the elimination of all of them. The Group of Friends urges states to abstain from to refrain from enacting and applying UCMs, and to lift any unilateral coercive economic, financial or trade measures that impede the full achievement of economic



and social development, considering the negative impact these have on the full enjoyment and realisation of all human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Zimbabwe appreciates the comprehensive thematic report and the SR's insights on the impact of sanctions on unemployment rates, salaries and job opportunities. UCMs cause broad economic disruptions as they target all strategic economic sectors. Due to sanctions-induced economic hardships, Zimbabwe has experienced brain drain, which has heavily impacted on key sectors and critical services. Loss of foreign direct investment has led to closure of businesses and huge job losses. Not only have sanctions negatively affected the government's ability to provide basic economic and social rights, but also its capacity to adequately finance social protection programmes and to develop and maintain infrastructure necessary for the performance and delivery of critical services. Zimbabwe's development agenda and the achievement of SDGs have been severely undermined by the UCMs. Therefore, Zimbabwe continues to call for the lifting of all UCMs and reiterates the need for UN agencies to monitor and report on the impact of UCMs, secondary sanctions and compliance on the enjoyment of human rights in targeted countries.

Views Expressed by Inter-Governmental Organizations

The **European Union**, despite admitting that states should refrain from adopting and implementing illegal unilateral measures, rejects the fundamental misconception that all of them are contrary to international law and negatively impact the enjoyment of human rights. EU sanctions are a response to serious violations of international law and are not an end in themselves. When diplomatic efforts alone have failed, sanctions are a measure of last resort. They are decided on a case-by-case basis based on specific criteria and legally robust evidence and are regularly reviewed. Designated persons and entities may challenge their listing before the Court of Justice of the European Union. UN sanctions always come first, but when the UN Security Council is unable or unwilling to act due to the veto of a permanent member, the EU takes responsibility to uphold the UN Charter. Clearly, it is not EU sanctions that create impediments to the enjoyment of economic, labour and social rights or sustainable development. It is the wrongful conduct which the sanctions intend to address. In that respect, EU sanctions which are implemented in full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law never target the civilian population. The EU is committed to avoiding unmitigated, unintended humanitarian impacts and overcompliance. Humanitarian carve-outs allow relevant actors to take actions with listed individuals and entities without any prior authorisation, for the purpose to deliver humanitarian assistance or support basic needs of people in need. Together with its member states, the EU is the world's largest donor of humanitarian and development assistance, including to countries under sanctions.

Views Expressed by National Human Rights Institutions

The **Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission** acknowledges the work of the SR and applauds the government of Zimbabwe for taking significant steps to address the challenges posed by unilateral coercive measures. Notably, it has actively engaged the international community to promote a nuanced understanding of the impact of sanctions on the enjoyment of human rights. The Commission commends the government's efforts in advocating for the lifting of sanctions because they hinder the country's development and exacerbate the suffering of its citizens. The



Commission further lauds the government for its efforts in raising awareness on the impact of UCMs, particularly with 25 October now being the Southern African Development Community's Anti-Sanctions Day. Concerned by the negative impact of UCMs, the Commission stresses that such unilateral measures, including targeted ones, are a blunt instrument that has a devastating impact on the enjoyment of human rights in Zimbabwe, particularly with respect to the most vulnerable groups, such as the older persons, children, women, the homeless, and persons with disabilities. Sanctions have limited access to essential goods and services, including medicines, food, humanitarian assistance, exacerbated poverty, and inequality, undermining the country's ability to achieve the SDGs. The Commission therefore recommends the lifting of UCMs, targeting Zimbabwean people, the development of an international cooperation strategy to mitigate the adverse effects, especially on vulnerable populations.

Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

The **Association for Protection of Refugees and International Displaced Women and Children** explains that economic sanctions have wide-ranging humanitarian impacts. They restrict access to financial and technical resources, undermine sustainable development, and weaken the ability of states to provide essential services such as education, health care, and social protection. Iran presents a clear example of these compounded challenges. Sanctions have created a fragile economic environment and reduced national resilience, placing heavy burdens on citizens. At the same time, Iran hosts more than six million Afghans who, due to insecurity, political instability, and economic collapse in their country, have sought refuge in Iran. While hosting them reflects Iran's humanitarian commitment, it imposes enormous costs, mainly on health and education sectors, where billions of dollars are spent annually to meet refugee needs. Limited access to international resources has further strained Iran's capacity, meanwhile conditions in Afghanistan - including restrictions on women and girls, absence of infrastructure, and lack of services - make large-scale return unsafe and unsustainable, increasing the risk of renewed forced migration. The Association calls for urgent review of sanction regimes, ensure effective humanitarian exemptions, and strengthen support for host states as well as for conditions that enable safe, dignified return.

The **Iranian Thalassemia Society** extends its gratitude to the SR for her six-year relentless work to document the human costs of sanctions and to bring the voices of victims to the UNHRC. The Society is particularly grateful for her country visits, including to Iran, and her engagement with civil society, and fully endorses her recommendations, in particular the call for lifting all unlawful unilateral sanctions and guaranteeing safe access to essential goods. Once more, the Society rings the alarm bell on the impact of sanctions on thalassemia patients in Iran. In 2025, sanctions led to loss of lives for 167 patients and about 14 thousand others have been seriously affected by limitation of access to essential medicine and their lives are in danger. Demo Company in Greece, Rocket in France, Novartis in Switzerland and Bristol Mayers in the US are among the pharmaceutical companies who complied with US sanctions and denied access to medicine for Iranian thalassemia patients. The Society calls for the lifting of sanctions as political weapons and ensure accountability for sanctioning States. Citizens who carry the burden of medicine shortages are not collateral damage. They are victims. States imposing such measures are the first violators of human rights.



The **Medical Support Association for Underprivileged Iranian Patients** praises the SR for her relentless efforts to reduce and eliminate the negative impacts of UCMs on human lives. The Association takes the floor to further illustrate the acute harms highlighted in her latest thematic report. In Iran, shortages of life-saving medicines endanger cancer patients. In Zimbabwe, infant mortality has risen due to the loss of external health funding. In Cuba, blocked payments prevent the import of essential medicines. In Syria, persons with disabilities and trauma are left without vital services. Such outcomes are plainly inconsistent with the state's human rights obligations. These sanctions have not only persisted for many years, but have also intensified, worsening humanitarian consequences, prolonged shortages of medicine, rising poverty, and the denial of basic services. They amount to clear breaches of international human rights and humanitarian law. The Association urges the UNHRC to call for the termination of unilateral sanctions and the UN mandate holders to monitor the adverse impact of UCMs on human rights within the scope of their mandate, in collaboration with the SR on UCMs. Lastly, it calls on all stakeholders to actively support the SR's mandate and implement her recommendations, including through effective use of the monitoring tool for documentation and redress.

The **Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims** has worked for many years in the field of protection of at-risk populations and expresses its deep concerns over the human consequences of UCMs. In practise, these measures contrary to UN Charter and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights have restricted ordinary citizens' access to medicine, healthcare, education, and social support services, exposing thousands of women, children, and patients to serious risks. The Institute's field experience demonstrates that so-called humanitarian exemptions have largely remained unpaid and failed to meet the real needs of people. In particular, the phenomenon of overcompliance by companies and the fear of US sanctions have become major obstacles to implementing humanitarian exemptions. While appreciating the valuable efforts of the current SR, especially the establishment of the Sanctions Research Platform and the development of the Sanctions Monitoring and Impact Assessment Tool, the Institute calls for a more explicit reflection in future reports on the gap between legal commitments and field realities. The Institute further stresses the need for the effective implementation of humanitarian exemptions and to considerably amplify the voices of civil society organisations and those directly affected before the international community.

The **Cuban United Nations Association**, on behalf of civil society and those who live and work in Cuba, and on behalf of hundreds of organisations, movements, networks, projects and social actors, condemns the reincorporation of Cuba in this so-called list of terrorist-sponsoring states drawn up annually by the US government. This list is immoral, unjust, intimidating, arbitrary and illegal. It is a tool used by the US government to continue to justify and increase to extreme levels the genocidal blockade against Cuba. The Association is grateful for the importance that the SR and OHCHR are paying to the impact of UCMs on human rights. The blockade constitutes a flagrant violation of the human rights of all Cubans, including their right to life. The Association rejects this political act, which has a significant humanitarian impact. It undermines access to food, energy sources, medication, medical teams, and has a disproportionate impact on children, older people and persons with disabilities. It substantially affects the actions of Cuban civil society and their international partners. Cuban society calls for the lifting of the blockade, which also enjoy the support of international civil society, wide swathes of American society, political personalities, and social workers and academics from the world over.



The **Organisation for Defending Victims of Violence** extends its gratitude to the SR for her six-year tireless efforts to document the humanitarian impact of UCMs. The recent US-Israeli aggression against Iran should not be seen as an isolated incident, but as the culmination of a long-term strategy supported by a systematic campaign of sanctions led by the US. These measures went far beyond mere economic pressure, creating a web of restrictions that deliberately blocked Iran's access to essential defensive arms and technology, aiming to disarm the country and set the stage for planned aggression. The state's right to self-defence, as affirmed by Article 51 of the UN Charter, is more than a prerogative. It is a fundamental obligation to protect citizens' lives, security, and territorial integrity. Accordingly, the right to self-defence is not merely a matter of state discretion, but a human right owed by the government to its people. This deliberate deprivation of advanced defensive systems directly contributed to the death of at least 1,100 Iranians, many of them women and children, in clear violation of their fundamental right to life. The Organization calls upon the international community to address this serious concern under the category of sanctions, recognising UCMs as a catalyst for aggression.

The **Iran Autism Association** thanks the SR for her valuable work during her mandate. Unilateral sanctions, along with widespread overcompliance by banks and companies, severely impact the lives of vulnerable people, especially children with autism. In Iran, families face growing shortages of rehabilitation services, assistive equipment, and related medicines. Many mothers are forced to leave their jobs to provide full-time care. This deepens poverty, isolation, and erodes their sense of dignity. As the SR's report confirms, such measures violate basic economic and social rights, and persons with disabilities are often hit the hardest. In practise, so-called humanitarian exemptions are ineffective. Banking and transport restrictions continue to block access to vital goods and services. The Association urges the UNHRC to ensure that sanctions never restrict access to essential care for persons with disabilities. It further calls on governments and private actors to prevent overcompliance and to keep humanitarian channels open. Behind every statistic, there is a child whose right to deep dignity is being denied by barriers they did not create. The Association asks to listen to their voices.

The **Family Health Association** states that numerous studies and official reports, including recent reports by the SR, demonstrate that UCMs have severely restricted access to healthcare, increased the cost of medicines, and reduced nutritional quality for vulnerable populations. These impacts have resulted in higher mortality and the emergence of preventable diseases caused by malnutrition and lack of treatment. Recent data indicate that malnutrition in Iran, particularly among children, has reached a critical level. This crisis has worsened following the reposition of US sanctions in 2018. For example, in 2024, the average price of food in Iran rose by over 42 percent compared to 2023, placing additional strain on low-income households. Reports further estimate that sanctions contributed to over 800,000 deaths globally in 2021, many of which occurred in sanctioned countries, including Iran. The Association urges the UNHRC to establish robust mechanisms to prevent overcompliance by banks and companies, ensuring that sanctions do not unduly threaten citizens' right to life. It further urges the UNHRC to conduct a true assessment of the humanitarian impact of sanctions and create a mechanism for reparations to victims of unilateral, unjust, and humane sanctions.

The **Bachehaye Asemame Kamran Rehabilitation Institute** expresses its deep concern over the severe impact of unjust sanctions on children with disabilities in Iran. Despite theoretical claims

regarding humanitarian exemptions, banking restrictions and overcompliance have blocked the entry of rehabilitation equipment, advanced wheelchairs, and specialized medicines, as many international suppliers are unwilling to engage with Iran. Meanwhile, charities and NGOs working in the field of disability face blocked financial resources and a disrupted aid supply chain, preventing them from providing sustainable services. The Institute believes that economic sanctions exceeding international legal frameworks clearly violate the fundamental rights of children with disabilities - including the right to life, the right to health, and the right to live with dignity - and have created a human crisis. Accordingly, the Institute calls on the mandate of the SR to ensure secure financial mechanisms for the entry of medicines and medical equipment; to support the effective implementation of humanitarian exemptions by financial institutions and international bodies; and to encourage UNHRC member states to adopt meaningful accountability measures toward children and their families affected by sanctions.

Aide Citoyenne Et Développement Concerté reminds all countries of the bitter reality that UCMs violate people's right to development and the right to self-determination, among other rights. Western countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and the European Union use UCMs against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and its extensive impact on the genocide of Eelam Tamils by Sri Lankan successive governments, which violates the democratic international order and multilateralism in the world, they violate all human rights in Tamil homeland. A number of persons in the world have been put on sanctions by them simply for having been part of political organisations seeking independence or political change in another country. It is well known that Canada put members of the ANC on sanction list long after Apartheid went down. These sanctions affect family life of individuals as they have relatives in that country. The association hopes that the SR will include these unilateral sanctions taken by some countries against Tamil civil society movements and requests to UNHRC members to appoint a country-specific mandate holder for Sri Lanka; and refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court for accountability for war crimes and genocide.

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

26 State Delegations

1 Inter-Governmental Organizations

1 National Human Rights Institution

10 Non-Governmental Organizations