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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Letter dated 30 September 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the comments and observations on the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran as contained in document [A/74/188](#) (see annex).

It would be appreciated if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 70 (c).

(Signed) Majid Takht Ravanchi
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 30 September 2019 from the
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the
United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

**Comments and observations by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the
report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights
in the Islamic Republic of Iran as contained in document [A/74/188](#)**

1. The latest report of the Special Rapporteur ([A/74/188](#)) echoes an ill-conceived mandate which was not established to promote and protect human rights in the first place. As a matter of fact, a prejudiced mandate could not yield a better outcome. The report places excessive trust in unsubstantiated and unverifiable sources. Basically, many of them are part of a “demonize and divide” campaign that is orchestrated by the United States Administration in order to execute its so-called “maximum pressure” policy against Iranians.
2. Utilizing unofficial, vague and adversary sources as well as the selective application of information while exhibiting disregard for the human rights achievements in the Islamic Republic of Iran put serious question marks on the validity and reliability of the report. Furthermore, it is not permissible for the author(s) to imbue the report with their arbitrary judgments. While they are entitled to their personal biases or preferences, the Code of Conduct for Special Procedures Mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council (Human Rights Council resolution 5/2) prohibits them from marring the report with such prejudices. The authors should be reminded that, based on the Code of Conduct, they are strictly expected to “exercise their functions in accordance with their mandate, through a professional, impartial assessment of facts based on internationally recognized human rights standards, and free from any kind of extraneous influence, incitement, pressure, threat or interference”.
3. Unfortunately, disregard for the principles contained in the Code of Conduct, in particular “impartiality”, is vividly noticeable throughout the text. For instance, in the view of the author(s), the legal measures undertaken by the Government are simply “arbitrary” and “false”, the legal proceedings are a “sham”, the information provided in response to the draft report are “vague and unsubstantiated assertions” and the term “regime” is conveniently used instead of the official name of a United Nations Member State. These are only a few among several fundamental flaws in the report. Meanwhile, propagation of fake news and recurrent biased interpretation of the laws – in particular the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran – are also striking in the consideration of the report.
4. The report, at the same time, contains serious and instructive omissions. While repeatedly disparaging the Government’s efforts to safeguard people’s security, including combating terrorism and separatism, it persistently disregards the measures undertaken by the Government towards the promotion and protection of human rights. The author(s) cannot be unaware of the relevant progress and achievements; however, due to the reasons mentioned earlier, they had to be left unnoticed. In another instance, while the report extensively and in a non-impartial manner addresses the situation of a few individuals with dual nationality who are detained on national security grounds, it chooses to avoid uttering even a single word on the destiny of dozens of innocent Iranians around the world who are apprehended, imprisoned and prosecuted for allegedly violating the illegal sanctions imposed by the United States, among them a pregnant woman, a university professor, elderly individuals as well as individuals in need of urgent medical care. Perhaps their human rights were not worthy enough to be mentioned in the report. Such a selective approach to the issue of human rights

that is traceable throughout the text has proved to be detrimental to its promotion and protection.

5. The substantive and methodological shortcomings embodied in the report can only further erode the legitimacy, integrity and relevance of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and render them even less credible. Unfortunately, the report brings to light, once again, the fact that these mechanisms continue to be manipulated and politicized by applying selectivity and double standards. As a matter of fact, beyond the political agenda of a few countries with the worst human rights records that are behind the original mandate, there is no credible ground for producing annually – within the United Nations system – four almost similar reports on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. After traversing the same erroneous path for many years, it should have now become evident that the repetition of false and biased allegations neither substantiates them nor affords them credibility. Actually, the politicized and harmful nature of the mandate behind this specific report makes it objectionable in its entirety.

6. Such principle position notwithstanding, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has demonstrated its seriousness and honesty to engage in respectful dialogue with the mandate holder on different occasions, and several meetings have been held in Geneva and New York to that end. The Government has also endeavoured to accelerate the process of responding to the communications it receives from the special procedures mandate holders and provide them with accurate, technical and documented replies. Besides, substantive comments were made to the draft report under consideration. It is noted that in the final report, references were made on several occasions to the comments that were provided by Iranian authorities. It is also noteworthy that, for the first time, more than one paragraph of the report is dedicated to the impact of the economic terrorism waged by the United States, which through the imposition of indiscriminate economic sanctions mounts to the gross and genocidal mass violation of the human rights of a whole nation.

7. It needs to be highlighted that the Iranians' enthusiasm for human rights and democracy is genuine and home-grown. Extraneous pressures, though incapable of making Iranians relinquish their dream for a more prosperous society, have only proved to be harmful to the process. Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic of Iran is proud to rely on its people as the sole source of its security and development. Essentially, the legitimacy and security of the Islamic Republic of Iran stem from the voice and vote of its people. The Government also fully recognizes that promoting the human rights of its citizens is not simply a legal and moral responsibility but a paramount requirement of national security. In view of the aforesaid, the people's voice, regularly expressed through ballots, meaningfully decides the country's destination. It is worth reminding that within a few months, Iranians will once again exercise their right to democratically decide their future by referring to the ballot box and casting votes in the eleventh national parliamentary election. Unfortunately, the report was unable to reflect these crucial realities. The fact that the report almost completely disregards the democratic and dynamic environment which exists inside Iran is instructive.

8. The author(s) have rather chosen to focus on a theme that is indeed a point of strength for Iran and Iranians as a nation. At its core, Iran is a country formed and sustained by ethnic and religious minorities. The appreciation for and recognition of minorities is an intrinsic characteristic of the country's past, present and future. Iranians have coexisted for millenniums in peace and harmony inattentive to their ethnic or racial differences and backgrounds. What brings Iranians together is not their distinct colourful languages, beliefs or ethnicities but their common history, dreams, joys and griefs under the name of a land called Iran. It is Iran that binds them together, not their different cultures, faiths or ethnicities. However, such a reality is

difficult to comprehend for the people who have lived their whole lives in communities awash with hate and hateful attitudes as well as racial and ethnic discrimination.

9. It is not a secret that provoking and stirring ethnic and religious conflicts are integral parts of the United States Administration's ongoing maximum pressure campaign against Iranians, a campaign which sinisterly seeks "obliteration" of Iran as a country. Millions of dollars are spent by the United States and Co to provoke such non-existent conflicts, and even if no ethnic or racial conflict exists, it should be somehow manufactured. Unsurprisingly, the directors of this evil campaign conveniently and brazenly label those who play a role in that charade as human rights activists.

10. The tragedy, however, lies in the complacency of the United Nations mechanisms in becoming part of such a foul scheme. Glorification of separatists and terrorists, whose hands are stained with the blood of innocent citizens and law enforcement officers, as the victims of ethnic or religious discrimination is abhorrent. Besides, the insistence of the report in implying the existence of division and intolerance in the society is incomprehensible. Abetting the fabrication of non-existent situations can only imply an unconstructive approach. As a matter of fact, submission of the United Nations to the will of those who run a "demonize and divide" campaign against Iranians can only fade what remaining hopes are left for cooperation and understanding. Of course, since everyone, regardless of religion or ethnicity, is expected to be treated equally before the law, belonging to a minority cannot and should not afford impunity to any violator. Actually, as anyone in the country belongs in one way or another to a minority, should such a scenario be adopted, almost all Iranians must be exempt from the enforcement of law!

11. Specific cases have been raised in the report that were responded to separately in detail by the authorities. However, the gravity of such cases is not greater than that of similar ones in most countries to warrant country-specific reports or resolutions. Certainly, like all other countries, deficiencies and excesses exist. However, Iranians, including the Government, are the most vocal in the face of existing shortcomings, and Iranians themselves are the only true stakeholders in addressing them.

12. At the same time, there is always room and possibility for improving laws to the extent that they do not contradict social norms acceptable to the citizens. In that vein, substantive reform of the national law on narcotic drugs and the modifications to the law on citizenship and nationality as well as the ongoing steps to introduce the law on prevention of violence against women are only a few recent steps that are worth mentioning. Obviously, no country could and should be expected to abandon its principles and values just to curry favour with a few who wish to impose their way of living on others.

13. Should there be any genuine concern about human rights, mutual respect and dialogue is the correct path. It has been persistently showcased that the Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to the universal periodic review and cooperation with all treaty bodies to which it is a party, as well as to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Iran has expressed its willingness time and again for a meaningful dialogue on human rights with all interested parties. Regretfully, these honest proposals have largely fallen on deaf ears while intimidation and coercion continue to predominate. To enhance the credibility of human rights discourse, respectful dialogue without recrimination or the blame game is essential. This report is simply another step in the wrong path.