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

Written statement* submitted by Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[02 February 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to food: The right to food violated by economic war

The right to food is the right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to sufficient food. This right extends beyond productivism, the paradigm in which Goal 2 of sustainable development goals, zero hunger, is rooted. Realizing this right requires tackling the structural inequalities that undermine availability, adequacy, accessibility and sustainability of food systems.

The right to food does not imply that governments have an obligation to hand out free food to everyone who wants it, or a right to be fed. However, if people are deprived of access to food for reasons beyond their control, for example, because they are in detention, in times of war or after natural disasters, the right requires the government to provide food directly.

Unfortunately, in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Iran), not only is there lack of agricultural equipment and infrastructure, but also inadequate access to sufficient food due to the costs of food as a result of comprehensive economic sanctions. The sanctions have affected all Iranian business activities and importing medicine and food is no exception.

This economic situation negatively affected the livelihoods of both rural and urban households accompanied by severe cash shortages, while at the same time the price of cereals increased as much as 100 percent.

Due to the harsh climate conditions in Iran, drought and natural disasters, Iran is dependent on imports of food items and in spite of the United States of America's claims, comprehensive sanctions have caused problems in the country's food sector. Problems such as financial and international exchanges and severe reduction in imports, have caused difficulties in provision of raw materials and technology, reduction in production and GDP for manufacturing units. Ordinary people suffer the most in all of this.

In fear of sanctions or punishments from the United States of America (the US), many countries have even stopped cooperating with Iranian food and drugs companies. In spite of this, we do not see the creation of new mechanism to ease the import of food and drugs and humanitarian goods; and the maximum pressure policy against Iran, in practice has resulted in economic terrorism to be committed against Iranians, and has inflicted terrible damages to the livelihood of the people.

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence believes that comprehensive unilateral coercive measures (UCM) are discriminatory, illegal and as the Special Rapporteur on UCM has stated, they amount to economic warfare. The economic warfare is based on geo-economic and geo-political intentions. They violate international law and have long term, devastating effects on people.

The impact of economic war on the economic situation of targeted countries is devastating and sets them back by generations. Ordinary citizens especially in marginalized and rural areas are the first ones to lose jobs, leave higher education, get malnourished and face food insecurity.

With regards to the aforementioned:

ODVV requests the Special Rapporteur on the right to food and the Human Rights Council to urge the US government to completely lift repeal the comprehensive unilateral coercive measures on basic vital goods such as medicine and food.

We urge the HRC and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food to evaluate the adverse human rights impact of UCMs on ordinary citizen's daily life.
