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Letter dated 17 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to you with reference to the letter dated 7 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/588). In that letter, the United States, in yet another cynical attempt, has levelled false accusations against my country by spreading disinformation and misleading narratives and accusing the Islamic Republic of Iran of endangering maritime security and the freedom of navigation. These allegations not only rest on a foundation of lies and factual distortion, but also highlight the United States' deliberate exploitation of the United Nations platform to propel its political agendas, as was evidently witnessed in its recent political move within the International Maritime Organization, where the United States employed coercive tactics, fabrications and disinformation to obstruct Iran from hosting a shipping event scheduled for October 2023.

The Islamic Republic of Iran categorically rejects all the baseless claims in the above-mentioned letter. It is, in fact, the United States that has consistently eroded and endangered navigational rights and freedoms in the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman and the wider domain of maritime security and international commerce. The United States' persistent engagement in reckless and provocative actions, combined with its illegal military presence in the Persian Gulf region, ostensibly under the guise of "safeguarding navigation freedom" and "upholding maritime security", conceals a disruptive agenda that genuinely jeopardizes both navigational freedom and maritime security. Furthermore, the United States' continuous illicit activities are compounded by recent unlawful actions, such as the seizure of Iranian oil tankers and oil shipments in international waters and on the high seas. These actions blatantly defy established international law and contravene the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, thus posing a grave threat to freedom of navigation, maritime security and international commerce. This reality starkly contradicts the United States' misleading narrative and false accusations that Iran is impeding and endangering freedom of navigation and maritime security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. Nonetheless, the United States persists in distorting reality and propagating a deceitful accusation against Iran. This is underscored by an incident involving the Bahamian-flagged vessel, the MT *Richmond Voyager*, which is managed by the United States-based corporation Chevron. Contrary to the United States' claim in the above-mentioned letter, the truth is different. The vessel *Richmond Voyager* was reported to have been involved in a collision with an Iranian ship, resulting in substantial damage to crew living quarters and causing serious injuries to five individuals. This collision also led to flooding of the Iranian vessel. Following the



collision, the oil tanker disregarded warnings from a naval vessel and altered its course, ultimately entering the territorial waters of Oman. The incident was duly reported to the competent authorities of the Omani Sultanate via the Chabahar International Maritime Security Center.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its commitment to the safety and security of innocent passage through the Strait of Hormuz and its territorial waters. This resolute commitment is deeply ingrained in Iran's maritime long-standing policy, driven by a robust dedication to fulfilling international obligations and exemplified by the daily regular, safe and uneventful passage of countless commercial vessels and oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz. In addition, for well over a decade, Iran's naval forces have operated in the Indian Ocean and adjacent areas, actively contributing to international endeavours aimed at countering piracy. The efficacy and dedication of these efforts have already been publicly recognized in numerous reports by the Secretary-General and lauded through multiple resolutions by the Security Council.

The Islamic Republic of Iran calls on the Security Council to strongly condemn the United States' illegal, irresponsible and provocative actions in the Persian Gulf region that violate international law and the Charter.

I would be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Amir Saeid **Iravani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
