



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations

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In the name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful

No. 109565

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the latter's letter UNW/2019/011 dated 20 May 2019, has the honour to submit its contribution to the implementation of General Assembly Resolution A/RES/72/234 on "Women in Development".

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations New York

cc: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the
Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)
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In the Name of God

The Islamic Republic of Iran would like to submit its experiences and points of view on the implementation of the General Assembly resolution A/RES/72/234 entitled “Women in Development.” The submission is a summary of the related achievements and challenges.

I. Achievements

1. Education and science

The percentage of women with an academic degree has increased from 6% in 1979 to 44% in 2017. Women account for 27% of the population of professors in universities, and 20% of the knowledge-based foundations are established or administered by women.

2. Health

The life expectancy of women rose from 54 years old in 1977 to 78 years old in 2016. Maternal mortality rate has been reduced from 91 cases in 1988 to 18.1 cases in 2016 (per 100,000 live births). The number of female general physicians has increased from 3,500 in 1977 to 60,000 in 2016, with the number of female specialist doctors increasing from 597 to 30,000.

3. Sport

Utilizing the year 1979 as the baseline, the number of female sports coaches has increased from 9 to 35,000. The number of female referees has risen from 7 to 16,000. Their participation in foreign competitions, which was only at 6 cases, has increased to 12,000. The total number of women's global sports medals was 5 in 7 fields; currently they have recorded 160 medals in 38 fields.

4. Culture

The number of female authors, which was less than 50 in 1979, has risen to 8,000. Today there are 712 women publishers countrywide while there was not one female publisher before 1979.

5. IT/ICT

Today, there is no gender gap in access to IT/ICT in the urban and the rural area. Of the population of internet users, 48% are women and more than 23% of application developers are women as well. The National Plan to Empowerment of Women through IT/ICT, which targeted 50 villages in 2018, will be developed for implementation in 270 villages in 2019.

6. Rural women

The National Plan of Selecting and Training Women Facilitators among Rural Women, with 16,000 women facilitators, is going to have national coverage in the near future. The target is defined as “one village, one woman facilitator” wherein the female facilitator is responsible to represent the women of her village in governmental organization and empower them to build their



own businesses. The economic empowerment of women in rural areas is being conducted through the provision of small credits, the organization of agricultural exhibitions and entrepreneurship courses for rural women as well as the allocation of the annual budget for the development of rural women.

7. Legislation

One hundred and fifty-nine laws are passed in legislative bodies that aim at promoting and enforcing equal access to opportunities as well as improving the situation of women in different domains (two of the most recent examples are the Presidential decree on the allocation of 30% of management positions to women until 2022 and the amendment of the nationality law in 2019).

II. Challenges

The unilateral coercive measures and illegal sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran flagrantly violates women's right to development and undermines national policies to that end.

These inhumane sanctions contradict with the provisions of article 1, paragraph 2 of the "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" and the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" that clearly states: "In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence". This phrase was emphasized and also referred to by the ICJ and ILC.

Articles 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 18 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have recognized and reaffirmed the right to fair and proper working conditions, the right to adequate standard living such as food, clothing and housing, health, education, the right to the development of science and technology, and the right to benefit from scientific progress. Imposing the unilateral sanctions violates explicitly these rights.

The Vienna Declaration and Program of Action (June 25, 1993) defined the right to development as a universal and inalienable right as well as an integral part of fundamental human rights. Furthermore, it emphasizes that the human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. This Declaration also emphasized the importance of international cooperation in realizing these rights.

In his video message to the International Conference on "Unilateralism and International Law in the Contemporary World" (Tehran, 5 May 2019), Mr. Idris Jazayeri, the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council, expressed his deep concern at the recent imposition of unilateral coercive measures on Iran by the United States. He stated that "the use of economic sanctions for political purposes violates human rights and the norms of international behavior." He added that "the resort by a major power of its dominant position in the international financial arena against its own allies to cause economic hardship to the economy of sovereign States is contrary to international law, and inevitably undermines the human rights of their citizens".



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Certainly, women are among the most vulnerable citizens to such illegal and inhumane measures. Sanctions barricaded investment in the development of agricultural economics in which women are active. They also disrupted the export process of non-oil products, such as hand-made carpets, in production of which women have a remarkable role.

The sanctions have limited or intend to deny the access of women to IT/ICT sectors as well as to the flow of information and data. Many online economic, educational and service activities by women have been negatively affected. Restrictions due to sanctions have challenged startup businesses managed or owned by women. Their access to knowledge is limited, and their right to free access to information is violated due to these illegal sanctions. Iranian software developers, including women, cannot sell their products on certain platforms such as the App Store or Google Play or use many other required software or platforms.