

Statement made by H.E. Mr. Manouchehr Mottaki

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Before the United Nations Security Council

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,

This is the fourth time in the last 12 months that in an unwarranted move, orchestrated by a few of its permanent members, the Security Council is being abused to take an unlawful, unnecessary and unjustifiable action against the peaceful nuclear program of the Islamic Republic of Iran which presents no threat to international peace and security and falls therefore outside the Council's Charter-based mandate.

As we have stressed time and again, Iran's nuclear program is completely peaceful. We have expressed our readiness, taken unprecedented steps and offered several serious proposals to address and allay any possible concern in this regard. Indeed, there has been no doubt for us from the very beginning, nor should there be any for the Council, that all these schemes of the co-sponsors of the Resolution are for narrow national considerations, and aimed at depriving the Iranian people of their inalienable rights, rather than emanating from any so-called proliferation concerns.

In order to give this scheme a semblance of international legitimacy, its initiators first manipulated the IAEA Board of Governor and- as they acknowledged themselves- "coerced" some of its members to vote against Iran in the Board, and then have taken advantage of their substantial economic and political power to pressure and manipulate the Security Council to adopt three unwarranted resolutions within 8 months.

Undoubtedly, those resolutions cannot indicate universal acceptance, particularly when the heads of state of nearly two thirds of UN members, who belong to the Non-Aligned Movement and the OIC, supported Iran's positions as recently as September 2006 and expressed concern about policies pursued inside the Security Council. These resolutions do not even reflect the views of the Council's own 15 members, since most of them were not thoroughly informed about, let alone engaged in, the discussions held in secret meetings where only a few, among them non-members of the Council, decide for the whole Security Council.

Mr. President,

This is not the first time the Security Council is asking Iran to abandon its rights. When Saddam Hussein invaded Iran 27 years ago, this Council waited 7 days so that Iraq could occupy 30000 sq kilometers of Iranian territory. Then it unanimously adopted Security Council Resolution 479. That unanimously adopted resolution asked the two sides to stop the hostilities, without asking the aggressor to withdraw. That is, the Council -- then too -- effectively asked Iran to suspend the implementation of parts of its rights; at that time is its right to 30000 sq kilometers of its territory.

As expected, the aggressor dutifully COMPLIED. But imagine what would have happened if Iran had COMPLIED. We would still be begging the Council's then sweetheart, President Saddam Hussein, to return our territory.

We did not accept to suspend our right to our territory. We resisted 8 years of carnage and use of chemical weapons coupled with pressure from this Council, and sanctions from its permanent members.

In the course of the war, the United States joined the United Kingdom, Germany, France and the Soviet Union along with other Western countries in providing Saddam with military hardware and intelligence and even the material for chemical and biological weapons. The Security Council was prevented for several years and in spite of mounting evidence and UN reports, to deal with the use of chemical weapons by Iraq against Iranian civilians and military personnel.

I am confident that today, most of the permanent members of this Council, do not even want to remember that travesty of justice, the Charter and international law, let alone blame Iran for non-compliance with SCR 479.

I am also confident that they do not want to remember that when the Iranian people nationalized their oil industry, they attempted to impose a resolution on this Council condemning Iran for threatening peace and security. But they cannot coerce the international public opinion to forget that and certainly the Iranian people will never forget it.

Who among you does not know – and rest assured that the international public opinion does know – that two permanent members of this Council, with full and prior knowledge of Zionist regime intention to commit aggression against Lebanon, prevented for over a month any decision in this Council, the Rome Conference and other initiatives to put an end to that regime's atrocities? You in the Council could not even adopt an appropriate position vis-à-vis the bombardment of UN facilities in Lebanon which caused the death of your own representatives. The Security Council should be accountable not only for its unlawful actions and decisions, but indeed for its repeated failures to act against threats to international peace and security.

Mr. President,

As an organ of an international organization created by States, the Security Council is bound by law, and Member States have every right to insist that the Council keeps within the powers they have accorded to it under the Charter. The Security Council must exercise those powers consistently with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Equally, the measures it takes must be consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the UN and with other international law. Members of the Security Council do not have the right to undermine Council's credibility.

There is every reason to assert that consideration by the Security Council of the Iranian peaceful nuclear program has no legal basis as the referral of the case to the Security Council and then adoption of Resolutions fail to meet the minimum standards of legality. Iran's peaceful nuclear activities cannot be characterized as a threat to peace by any stretch of law, fact or logic. Rather, certain members of the Security Council decided to hijack the case from IAEA, as the principal specialized technical organ in charge of the issue, and politicize it. How can Iran's peaceful nuclear program be considered in the Security Council while Iran has carried out its obligations, and cooperated to the fullest extent possible, far more than it is obliged to in accordance with its treaty obligations, namely the NPT and the Safeguard Agreement? Isn't it simply because the IAEA could not find any diversion from lawful and peaceful purposes? How could one expect the IAEA to prove a negative fact?

Mr. President,

In order to achieve the politically motivated and unlawful goal of depriving Iran from its inalienable right to nuclear technology, attempts have been made to manufacture evidence. According to a recent report in an American newspaper, "most U.S. intelligence shared with the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency has proved inaccurate and none has led to significant discoveries inside Iran." The same news article also quotes a senior IAEA official as saying "since 2002, pretty much all the intelligence that's come to us has proved to be wrong."

However, in order to enable the IAEA to reach this conclusion, Iran had to implement transparency measures outside all IAEA safeguards and protocols and allow the IAEA inspectors over 20 visit to its sensitive military sites which had no connection whatsoever to its nuclear program. Can any member of this Council accept to do likewise? Are permanent members of this Council even prepared to simply inform the international public of the number of centrifuges they own?

In fact, over the last four years, the IAEA has conducted more than 2100 person-days of scrutiny of all Iranian nuclear facilities. All reports by the IAEA since November 2003 have been indicative of the peaceful nature of Iranian nuclear program. The Agency confirmed in 2003, and maintained since then that "to date, there is no evidence that the previously undeclared nuclear material and activities ... were related to a nuclear weapons program."

On several occasions, the Agency concluded that "all the declared nuclear material in Iran has been accounted for, and therefore such material is not diverted to prohibited activities." As recently as February 2007, the IAEA Director General stated in his report that "pursuant to its NPT Safeguards Agreement, Iran has been providing the Agency with access to declared nuclear material and facilities, and has provided the required nuclear material accountancy reports in connection with such material and facilities." The same report also indicates "the Agency is able to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran." He also indicated to the Board of Governors on March 5, 2007 that the Agency has seen no "industrial capacity to produce weapons-useable nuclear material, which is an important consideration in assessing the risk."

Mr. President,

It is very unfortunate that the Security Council, under the manifest pressure by a few of its permanent members, persists in trying to deprive a nation of its "inalienable right" to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, while that nation has met, and continues to honor, its international obligations. The Security Council's decision to try to coerce Iran into suspension of its peaceful nuclear program is a gross violation of Article 25 of the Charter, and contradicts Iranian people's right to development and the right to education. While Member States have agreed, in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter, to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter, the Security Council could not pressurize countries into submitting either to its decisions taken in bad faith or to its demands negating the *Fundamental purposes and principles of the UN Charter*. Likewise, as the International Court of Justice held in its 1971 advisory opinion, the Member States are required to comply with its decisions only if they are in accordance with the UN Charter. Does the UN Charter authorize the Security Council to require Member States of the UN to give up their basic rights emanating from treaties? To do that would violate established principles of international treaty law and that of the purposes of the UN Charter to establish conditions under which justice and respect for treaty obligations is to be maintained.

Who could deny that preventing a whole nation from higher education in specific fields as well as from benefiting from nuclear technology for humanitarian and civil uses is contrary to the basic rights of all people to education and the right to development? Isn't it an alarming discriminatory approach vis-à-vis knowledge and development? How could an organ of the United Nations, established to maintain peace and security, be manipulated by certain States not only to act contrary to fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter, but also to aggravate an easily-resolvable issue into an international crisis? However, it is evident that such an approach will strengthen the resolve of developing countries to expedite their independence-seeking efforts and attain even greater scientific and technological achievements.

Mr. President,

The Resolution which was just adopted about Iran's peaceful nuclear program, while those who voted in favor of it did not even bother to listen to my country's positions and

explanations, has a number of characteristics which I wish to underline for the record and for the awakened global public opinion:

1. This Resolution, by establishing sanctions, is punishing a country, which according to the IAEA has never diverted its nuclear program. This Resolution punishes a country, which has been a committed member of the NPT, with all its nuclear facilities under the monitoring of the IAEA inspectors and their camera. This Resolution imposes sanctions on a country that has fulfilled all its commitments to the NPT and IAEA safeguards, and demands nothing more than its inalienable rights under the NPT. Is there any better way to undermine an important multilateral instrument which deals directly with international peace and security? Isn't this action by the Security Council not, in and of itself, a grave threat to international peace and security?
2. The current Resolution has clearly departed from the stated claims of its sponsors and through targeting my country's defense, economic and educational institutions, is pursuing objectives far beyond Iran's peaceful nuclear program. The sanctions in this Resolution are clearly targeting an independent, proud and tireless nation with thousands of years of culture and civilization. What can harming of hundreds of thousands of depositors in Bank Sepah, with 80 year history in Iran, mean other than confronting ordinary Iranians?
3. This Resolution is adopted at a time when not only all rational proposals and initiatives to return to a negotiated solution have been neglected, but also certain countries have not even allowed the presentation of such proposals. Iran has always been ready for time-bound and unconditional negotiations aimed at finding a mutually acceptable solution. Iran has done its best to achieve this objective and has presented numerous proposals to provide necessary assurances about the peaceful nature of its nuclear program. In the last several weeks, other proposals were advanced, each of which could have provided an opportunity to break the current stalemate and lead to a rational and just resolution. The only interpretation that can be drawn from the rush to adopt this resolution and prevent negotiations is that ulterior motives of the sponsors and the lack of political will to find solutions.
4. Finally, the current Resolution is adopted against Iran's peaceful nuclear program at a time when major nuclear powers continue to flout the persistent demand of the international community for nuclear disarmament and instead jeopardize international peace and security by developing new generations of these weapons and by threatening to use them.

Mr. President,

I ask you: Does the adoption of the present Resolution strengthen international peace and security? Does it augment the credibility of important international mechanisms such as the NPT, the IAEA and even this very Council? Does it enhance the confidence of countries and developing nations that they can attain their rights through these mechanisms and instruments? Does it increase trust in multilateral mechanisms? Does it decrease unilateralist tendencies? Certainly, the answer to all these questions is NO. The

only outcome of this Resolution is that freedom-loving people and governments in the world would gain confidence that they cannot rely on multilateral institutions to attain their legitimate rights.

Because of the unlawful and unjust approach of the Security Council, its Resolutions have until now failed to lead to a resolution of the issue. These Resolutions -- and the certainty of some permanent members that they can get them one way or another -- are, and have always been, a part of the problem and an impediment to finding a real and mutually acceptable solution. That is why Iran continues to insist on the imperative of stopping this practice which will only exacerbate the situation and will erode the authority and undermine the credibility of the Council.

Mr. President,

It was clear from the outset that there are only two alternatives in dealing with Iranian peaceful nuclear program: cooperation and interaction or confrontation and conflict. The Islamic Republic of Iran, confident of the peaceful nature of its nuclear program always insisted on the first alternative. Iran does not seek confrontation, nor does it want anything beyond its inalienable rights. I can assure you that pressure and intimidation will not change Iranian policy. If certain countries have pinned their hopes that repeated Resolutions would dent the resolve of the great Iranian nation, they should not doubt that they have once again faced a catastrophic intelligence and analytical failure vis-à-vis the Iranian people's Islamic Revolution. Probably in the history of Iran there can be no time that the entire people have been so solidly behind a national demand. As the Iranian nation paid a heavy price for its nationalization of its oil industry and its 8 years of sacred defense, we realize now that we must be prepared to pay the price for our dignity and our independence. But the world must know – and it does – that even the harshest political and economic sanctions or other threats are far too weak to coerce the Iranian nation to retreat from their legal and legitimate demands.

If you are seeking to sanction and block the wealth and capabilities of the Iranian nation, particularly our national heroes, who are mentioned in the Resolution, then I will tell you what the main assets are: Faith in God, Seeking justice, and resisting against threats and intimidations.

Can this resolution block these valuable assets? Could 8 years of imposed war confiscate this great asset? A war that was designed by certain permanent members and implemented with the endless support of weapons and petro-dollars, missiles, Mirage and Super Etandard aircrafts, intelligence support and promises from the former US defense secretary.

The Iranian nation, following its esteemed leader, advises you not to undermine the dignity of the United nations and the IAEA . We invite you to come back to the path of negotiation based on justice and truth. The only way is to abandon the unwise pre-conditions and come back to negotiation with good faith. Suspension is neither an option nor a solution.

Mr. President,

The Iranian people, guided by Islamic teachings and values, are peace loving and civilized nation. In fact, our people have never had any role in crimes against humanity such as the crimes committed during the last two World Wars, genocides taken place in different parts of the world, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki tragedy, Vietnam war and the crimes perpetrated during the war in Balkan and the atrocious crimes that are being systematically committed against the Palestinian people. Iran has not started any war in the past two hundred years. We have been even the victim of terrorism and WMD during the 8 year imposed war. We call for peace, stability and well-being of all people throughout the world especially in our own region. We have always endeavored to play a constructive and effective role as a responsible member of the international community.

Thank you Mr. President.