

Observations of the Islamic Republic of Iran

On the “New Agenda for Peace”

30 December 2022

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful

The world is now facing serious challenges, particularly to international peace and security, and as the Secretary-General has rightly put it on previous occasions, the “world order is increasingly chaotic”; “the rule of law is being undermined”; “multilateralism is under fire precisely when we need it most”; the “risks to peace and security are growing”; and “the world is moving closer to the brink of instability”, and as the former Secretary-General has once stated, “massive military spending and new investments in modernizing nuclear weapons have left the world over-armed and peace under-funded”.

Certain major indicators of this situation are: the alarming trend of “regression from an “international-law-based multilateralism into a power-based unilateralism”; the unlawful use of force by certain States and their interference in domestic affairs of others including for regime change; the lack of any progress on nuclear disarmament and instead, the emergence of new nuclear arms race and new nuclear arms modernization race; attempts to prevent developing States from enjoying their inalienable rights to use nuclear science, technology and energy for peaceful purposes; widespread application of unilateral coercive measures including sanctions; applying severe controls for the transfer to developing countries of know-hows and high-techs; trust and confidence deficit of the Security Council and its credibility and legitimacy crisis; continued threats of international terrorism; and the emerging challenges posed by the use of information and telecommunication technologies in a manner inconsistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations.

Indeed, in the instances in which the international community of States has succeeded in maintaining international peace and security in the past 75 years, the achievements have mostly been the result of “genuine political will” and “compliance with the fundamental principles of international law, particularly those embedded in the UN Charter”. In contrast, its failures to effectively address certain conflicts, situations, or challenges have been and still are mainly due to the “lack of genuine political will” as well as “non-compliance of certain States with such principles and/or selective and partial or ineffective implementation of the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations”.

In light of the foregoing, The Islamic Republic of Iran would like to present the following observations and comments on the prospective "New Agenda for Peace," in its national capacity:

1. While taking note of the **SG’s initiative on the “New Agenda for Peace”**, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that further clarification on the subject and content is required. Indeed, all aspects of this initiative must be considered and negotiated in **an inter-governmental process and agreed-upon basis**.
2. Suggestions and recommendations will be contained in the “New Agenda for Peace” and will be **non-obligatory** as well as **non-legally binding**. The implementation of these recommendations will only be possible when the “**consensus**” of all member states is obtained through an inclusive intergovernmental process.
3. **States** are the main stakeholders with the primary role in decision and policy-making as well as legislation. Furthermore, their different realities, capacities and levels of national development with respect to national policies, priorities and cultures must be recognized.
4. The **main approach** in formulating the “New Agenda for Peace” must be how to strengthen our capacities to effectively preserve and further improve past achievements in the maintenance of international peace and security and, building

upon such achievements, how swiftly and efficiently address the old, existing, emerging and new challenges to international peace and security.

5. This must also be the **basic principle** that in the absence of “genuine political will” and “compliance with the basic principles of international law”, it is literally impossible to address fully and effectively any challenge, regardless of its type, nature or characteristics, to international peace and security.
6. Accordingly, given that “the faithful observance of the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States and the fulfillment in good faith of the obligations assumed by States, in accordance with the Charter, is of the greatest importance for the maintenance of international peace and security”¹, every effort must be made to **revive the Charter’s spirit** and to restore faith in Purposes and Principles of the United Nations through investing strong, genuine political will by all States to reinvigorate their commitments to true multilateralism founded on inclusion instead of exclusion, cooperation in place of confrontation, and the rule of law instead of the rule of power.
7. The full and strict compliance by all States under all circumstances with the principle of prohibition of any “**threat or use of force** against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations” must be ensured. Any use of force under such misleading notions as **preventive or preemptive self-defense** or **humanitarian intervention** or the so-called **responsibility to protect** is unlawful and illegitimate. No humanitarian crisis or emergency, regardless of its origin, must be used for any foreign intervention in any State. Similarly, all States must refrain from “military, political, economic or any other form of **coercion** aimed against the political independence or territorial integrity of any State”. Likewise, “no State shall organize, assist, foment, finance, incite or tolerate

¹ Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

subversive, terrorist or armed activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the regime of another State, or interfere in civil strife in another State”.

8. “The practice of any form of **intervention** not only violates the spirit and letter of the Charter, but also leads to the creation of situations which threaten international peace and security”, and accordingly, all States are under absolute legal obligation not “to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State”.
9. **Nuclear weapons** have been, and still continue to be, an existential threat to humanity and any use of such weapons, by intention or by accident, could have had and would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences, and accordingly, the **only absolute guarantee** against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination in a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable manner and the legally binding assurance that they will never be produced again.
10. The **persistent non-compliance** of the nuclear-weapon States with their legal obligations under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and their unequivocal undertakings under the Final Documents of the Treaty’s 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament represents the most severe challenge to the viability as well as the object and purpose of that Treaty and seriously undermines international peace and security. The misleading notion of “**nuclear weapon risk reduction**” or initiatives of similar nature must not be used to further delay or to purportedly substitute the implementation of the foregoing absolute legal obligations. This situation cannot continue indefinitely, and relevant obligations must be fulfilled urgently.
11. Accordingly, **nuclear disarmament** must be accorded the highest priority, and nuclear-weapon States must be compelled, inter alia, to cease completely and immediately all plans and programs aimed at modernizing their existing nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, developing new types of nuclear weapons systems and their means of delivery, and constructing any new facilities for the development, deployment and production of nuclear weapons and their means of

delivery at home and abroad; to end the deployment of nuclear weapons outside of their territories; to urgently and verifiably eliminate all their non-strategic nuclear weapons as partial fulfilment of their obligations under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty; to commence, in the Conference on Disarmament, urgent negotiations and early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention as a matter of the highest priority; to grant, pending the total elimination of their nuclear weapons, to all non-nuclear-weapon States, effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances; and, as the Secretary-General has stated, to establish “stronger commitments for the non-use of nuclear weapons”.

12. The **nuclear weapons of the Israeli** regime continue to pose a serious threat to regional and international peace and security and impede the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Accordingly, the Israeli regime must be compelled to renounce the possession of nuclear weapons, to join, as a non-nuclear-weapon party, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty without any precondition or further delay, to promptly place all its nuclear facilities and activities under the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and to conduct all its nuclear-related activities in full conformity with the non-proliferation regime.

13. We share the view of the Secretary-General that “longstanding agreements on nuclear weapons and other **weapons of mass destruction** are increasingly fragile”. In fact, international legally-binding instruments on weapons of mass destruction are viable only inasmuch as it is ensured that they continue to serve the common interest of the international community of States as a whole. Accordingly, and to ensure their relevance and validity, all divisive attempts or measures to disregard the well-established longstanding procedures, particularly the rule of **consensus** for decision-making on all substantive and procedural matters within the context of their relevant forums, must be ceased.

14. We also share the view of the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty on the inviolability of peaceful nuclear activities and that any

attack or threat of attack against peaceful **nuclear facilities**, operational or under construction, constitutes a grave violation of international law, the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations and the regulations of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which must therefore be refrained by all States. We also support the Group's call for the commencement of multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive legally-binding international instrument prohibiting attacks, or the threat of attacks, on nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

15. Certain States continue to use the so-called "proliferation concerns" as a pretext to purportedly justify their unlawful actions in restricting the export to developing countries of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. This is a material breach of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, under which the State Parties have an **inalienable right** to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, which includes the right to develop a full national nuclear fuel cycle as well as the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Such restrictive measures are also in contradiction with the express obligation of the imposing States, according to which they have undertaken "to facilitate" the "fullest possible" exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. These restrictions must immediately be removed, and the full and unimpeded enjoyment of developing States of their relevant inalienable rights must be fully protected and ensured.

16. The so-called "proliferation concerns" are also used to purportedly justify the widespread application of unilateral coercive measures, including **sanctions** against developing States. Such measures, by weaponizing food and medicine and other most needed humanitarian goods, target the most vulnerable segment of societies the most, and by applying severe restrictions on the transfer of know-how and high-tech equipment in wide-ranging areas, adversely affect the socio-economic development to developing countries, their stability and the

international peace and security at large. All such measures violate the basic principles of international human rights law, including the right to development, international economic and trade laws, as well as the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations, and must therefore be removed unconditionally, immediately and entirely.

17. While the Security Council has the authority to enforce “measures not involving the use of armed force”, its functions and choices are not absolute and unlimited. According to unambiguous terms of the Charter’s Article 24 (2), in discharging its duties, the Council “shall act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations”. Nevertheless, on numerous occasions in the past, the Council’s sanctions violated a number of Purposes and Principles of the United Nations, caused irreparable damage to the targeted nations, hindered their socio-economic development, impeded their progress in other areas, and above all, massively violated the human rights of an entire nation, and in practice, collectively punished a nation in its entirety, and ultimately, instead of promoting the foundations of international peace and security, have severely undermined it. It has also become evident by now that efforts, including those made under the so-called notion of “smart sanctions”, have not yielded any acceptable result in addressing these problems. Therefore, to bring this unlawful, regressive and alarming trend to an end, first and foremost, the Council must seriously avoid applying sanctions, and when it is necessary as a last resort, it must seriously observe the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations, and apply them very rarely with the minimum possible scope and duration.

18. The inviolability of the **jurisdictional immunities of States** and their property is a generally accepted and well-established principle of customary international law and must therefore be strictly respected and observed by all States, and accordingly, any measure that could undermine this principle must seriously be avoided.

19. To prevent further erosion of the **credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations**, all attempts to polarize and politicize the United Nations bodies and

abuse them for the advancement of exclusive national political objectives must come to an end.

20. Given the crucial importance of the **Security Council** in the maintenance of international peace and security, and also taking into account the existing trust and confidence deficit as well as the credibility and legitimacy crisis of the Council, its **reform** to make it democratic, accountable and rule-based is completely essential. The ongoing discussions on the subject must continue in an informal format, and any possible decision on the Council's reform must cover all five core issues. Additionally, any feasible decision, procedural or substantive, within the Intergovernmental Negotiation at any point must be made only by consensus.

21. Addressing the root causes of global threats to international peace and security, including foreign occupation and military intervention, is essential. The total failure of the United Nations to end the chronic conflict in **Palestine** after nearly 80 years has seriously caused many nations to severely lose their hope and trust in the United Nations. The inaction of the Security Council on this subject, as a result of nearly 50 shameful vetoes by the United States, cannot continue indefinitely. It is also alarming and a source of deep concern that "Our Common Agenda" did not refer to the Palestinian issue even once. The world cannot succeed in maintaining international peace and security without helping the Palestinians to fully realize their inalienable rights, including establishing their independent State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. Iran's proposal to hold a national **referendum** in the territory of Palestine (S/2019/862) remains valid and can provide grounds for the people of Palestine to exercise their right to self-determination.

22. We also share the Secretary-General's view on the need to "reduce excessive **military budgets**". This is imperative globally and also in certain regions, particularly the Middle East. This must be complemented first) by preventing the unbridled flow of highly **sophisticated weaponry** from certain Western States to the **Persian Gulf** littoral States, and second) **withdrawal** of all uninvited **foreign**

forces from this volatile region. These are essential for regional and international peace and security.

23. Along with continued efforts to combat threats of international **terrorism**, the international community of States must make focused and intense efforts to address new and emerging challenges, including those posed by the use of information and **telecommunication** technologies in a manner inconsistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. The ongoing efforts in this regard must take into account the views of all States, and any possible conclusion must be adopted by Consensus.
24. Given the horrible role of disinformation campaigns in breeding intensified violence within and among nations and their adverse impacts on regional and international peace and security, taking appropriate measures to prevent the **dissemination of misinformation, disinformation, inaccurate reporting and distorted information** and to put an end to **monopoly in mass media and communication technologies as well as in digital cooperation** is vital for the sake of establishing an internationally fair, ethical, transparent and multilateral framework.
25. In addition to the eradication of poverty, the New Agenda should focus on initiatives that fill **the digital and technological divides** as an indispensable requisite to achieve sustainable development of present and future generations.
26. Producing **linkages between peace and security with development, human rights, climate and other factors** should be solely guided by the inter-governmentally agreed instruments. Multilateralism and the crucial role of the United Nations must be upheld at the center of development efforts hereof in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.
27. As the majority of future generations will be born in the global South, the Agenda must incorporate the needs, priorities and aspirations of **developing countries**. In this regard, the provision of predictable and sustainable means of

implementation, including access to concessional finance, technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries and emphasizing the critical role of developing countries in the process of policy and decision-making in International and Regional organizations as well as UN agencies and entities, must be ensured.

28. **The Principle of Equity**, as well as **the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC)**, must be respected. These principles are the key to the protection of the Earth and the global environment. The Agenda should also emphasize the responsibilities of the developed countries to abide by their commitments to supporting developing countries through the delivery of adequate, reliable and sustainable means of implementation, i.e., technology transfer, access to finance and knowledge-sharing.

29. All countries must benefit from a universal, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral **trading system under WTO** since peace and development are complementary and must reinforce one another. Thereby, the process of states' annexation to the WTO as an indispensable part of the effective integration into global trading, value chain and international sustainable development systems should be supported and facilitated.

30. While condemning any acts of **violence against women and girls** and underscoring the critical importance of their empowerment to prevent and respond to any forms of violence, Iran believes that interlinking the New Agenda for Peace with any forms of violence against women and girls, as well as interpersonal violence, requires further consideration and discussion. In addition, any strengthened international efforts to address violence effectively should be focused on the implementation of existing intergovernmentally agreed documents while taking into account national laws, regulations and values.