

# *Iran slams Arab countries for blocking NAM statement on U.S. sanctions*

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Tehran, March 20 (RHC)-- Iran has censured certain Arab countries for preventing the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) from issuing a joint statement in condemnation of the illegal U.S. sanctions against the Islamic Republic, amid the country's fight on the coronavirus outbreak.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said that Iran had, via a request submitted to Azerbaijan, the rotating chair of the NAM, called on the body of 120 developing countries to issue a statement and oppose the unilateral U.S. sanctions on Iran.

"The NAM was requested to demand that the United States terminate its illegal and unilateral sanctions against Iran in a bid to fight the coronavirus as a global scourge," Mousavi said. "Unfortunately," the Iranian official added, "some members of the movement, including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Morocco, the regime of [former president Abd Rabbuh Mansour] Hadi in Yemen and formally opposed the issuance of that statement and broke the NAM's consensus."

Iran has said that the U.S. sanctions are hampering its access to medical supplies needed to fight the outbreak, now a global pandemic.

Mousavi stressed that the coronavirus outbreak was “a global challenge” that required all countries to be able to fight it unimpeded, warning that if the fight was interrupted, it would become “a global catastrophe” and leave no country immune. He expressed Tehran’s gratitude to the countries that have voiced their solidarity with Iran in its fight against the highly contagious virus.

“It is regrettable that some Arab and Islamic governments, most of whom are our neighbors, too, have taken such a measure against the Iranian people at such a critical situation,” he added, referring to the countries that blocked a NAM statement. These countries, he noted, have failed to honor the principles of good neighborliness and violated longstanding Islamic traditions.

The new coronavirus initially emerged in China late last year and has now spread to the entire world. In Iran, it has so far killed 1,135 people and infected 17,361 others. A total of 5,710 people have also recovered in the country.

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