

# *U.S. economic terrorism prevents Iran from paying for food, let alone UN dues*

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Tehran, June 4 (RHC)--Iran's foreign minister has criticized the United Nations' decision to deprive Tehran of its voting rights in the 193-member General Assembly due to arrears, saying the UN ignores the fact that US sanctions prevent Iran from paying even for food.

"In 'black is white' world, UN deprived Iran of its voting rights in the #UNGA as we're in arrears," Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote in a tweet on Thursday evening, a day after UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres wrote a letter to General Assembly President Volkan Bozkir, saying Iran would need to pay at least 16.251 million dollars to have its voting rights restored.

"Not considered: U.S. economic terrorism prevents Iran paying for FOOD, let alone UN dues," Zarif said, adding that the UN can also collect from the \$110 million the U.S. stole from Iran in its recent act of

piracy.

According to a statement by the UN General Assembly, as of January 13, 2021, ten member states were subject to the provisions of Article 19 of the Charter, namely Iran, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Libya, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe.

Under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations, members whose arrears equal or exceed the amount of their contributions due for two preceding full years lose their voting rights.

The Charter also gives the General Assembly the authority to decide “that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the member,” and in that case a country can continue to vote. The United Nations secretary general says Iran will lose its voting rights in the 193-member General Assembly due to the failure to pay its dues to the UN operating body.

The top Iranian diplomat also published his previous letter to Guterres, in which he conveyed Iran’s “strong dismay” over his announcement, saying the decision is “fundamentally flawed, entirely unacceptable and completely unjustified” due to Washington’s illegal sanctions on Iran.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully committed to fulfill[ing] its financial obligations to the United Nations and will continue to make every effort to settle the arrears in the payment of its financial contribution to the UN and other international organizations as soon as the underlying imposed conditions, i.e. the U.S. unlawful unilateral coercive measures, is removed,” Zarif’s letter read.

Zarif’s tweet came after earlier in the day, Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the country’s payment of its UN membership dues has been made possible through a South Korean bank and the debt will be paid soon.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran has always promptly acted to pay its membership dues to the United Nations, and the problem that arose last year was due to the blocking of the payment route by the United States,” Khatibzadeh told IRNA. He said the United Nations Secretariat is completely aware of the details of the issue, which he said was not Iran’s fault whatsoever.

Iran says it has regularly paid its UN membership contributions during past years despite Washington’s unilateral sanctions. According to Khatibzadeh, in negotiations with the UN Treasury, Iran had proposed to transfer the money from its financial resources in South Korea, and it was decided that the Treasury try to remove barriers to the money transfer and pursue acquiring a permit from OFAC (the US Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control) for the transfer.

“The permit was recently issued and the process of withdrawing the membership dues from Iran’s account in the [South] Korean bank and transferring it to the UN account in Seoul has been paved, and this payment will be made soon,” he added.

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