

Iranian envoy says U.S. seeks to weaponize UN Security Council to step up economic warfare against Tehran

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Amir Saeid Iravani, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations

United Nations, March 13 (RHC)-- Iran's ambassador to the United Nations has condemned the United States' latest efforts to manipulate the UN Security Council (UNSC) as part of its ongoing campaign of economic and political pressure against the Islamic Republic.

Amir Saeid Iravani made the remarks on Thursday during a Security Council meeting called by the US and its allies, including the UK and France, to address, what the allied states have called, Iran's "insufficient" cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN's nuclear watchdog. The meeting came after the countries held a closed-door UNSC session a day earlier, during which they accused Iran of holding impermissible levels of enriched uranium.

"Washington has openly declared, in its own official documents, that it seeks to weaponize the Security Council as part of its strategy to intensify economic warfare against Iran," he lamented, urging the Council and its members to reject such manipulation and uphold the principles of the international law.

"This is not a legitimate discussion on non-proliferation—it is a blatant political maneuver and a misuse of the Security Council to advance narrow agendas," he added.

"Such actions set a dangerous precedent that undermines the Council's credibility."

The ambassador went on to further strongly reject the premise of the meeting, stressing that the issues raised by Washington and its allies were strictly within the purview of the IAEA, and had already been addressed at the IAEA Board of Governors session in Vienna the previous week.

The move to bring the matter before the Security Council, the envoy said, was a clear attempt to interfere in the ongoing constructive engagement between Iran and the watchdog and a continuation of the US's failed so-called "maximum pressure" campaign against the Islamic Republic.

The campaign was initiated under Donald Trump's former tenure as the US president, intensified under his predecessor Joe Biden, and followed up on during Trump's underway stay in the White House.

It has seen the U.S. leaving a UNSC-endorsed nuclear agreement between Iran and others, return the illegal sanctions that the deal had lifted, and pile up even more sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Simultaneously, Washington and its allies have been trying incessantly to paint Tehran's nuclear energy program in a bad light by alleging that the country was not providing due cooperation with the IAEA.

The Islamic Republic, however, is the most verified member of the nuclear agency, having been subject to the agency's most comprehensive and frequent verification processes over decades.

The allies have also been routinely alleging that the program had deviated towards "military purposes."

This is while, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has banned pursuance, acquisition, and storage of non-conventional weapons through a relevant fatwa (religious decree).

Iravani likewise noted that Iran remained one of the most heavily scrutinized members of the IAEA. "Despite these facts, certain Western countries, particularly the United States, the UK, France, and Germany, have persistently sought to create a false narrative about Iran's nuclear activities, alleging non-cooperation and military ambitions," the envoy added.

"Iran's nuclear program is peaceful, and it will remain so. We categorically reject Weapons of Mass Destruction, including nuclear weapons," he said, reemphasizing the nation's commitment to non-conventional disarmament.

The ambassador also highlighted part of the historical context of the Western allies' violations targeting Iran that the states would refuse to address. He reminded the United States' and its European allies' contravention of the deal, which is officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"It was the United States that unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018 in direct violation of Security Council Resolution 2231," the envoy stated, referring to the UNSC resolution that has endorsed the accord. "It was the United States that re-imposed illegal sanctions, punishing the Iranian people, while the UK, France, and Germany failed to uphold their commitments," he added.

After the US's pullout, the European trio caved in under Washington's pressure by returning their economic bans against Iran and taking every chance to ramp up the coercive measures under unfounded accusations.

The envoy condemned the U.S. for pressuring other states into violating Resolution 2231 too and denounced the UK for enshrining illegal European Union sanctions into its domestic law after the expiration of the JCPOA's restrictions in October 2023.

Iran's commitment to diplomacy

Despite these provocations, Iran exercised "strategic patience" for over a year after the US's withdrawal, Iravani noted in reference to Tehran's fully complying with its JCPOA commitments while engaging in diplomatic efforts.

Only after exhausting all diplomatic avenues did Iran begin a phased and reversible response in accordance with Paragraph 26 of the JCPOA, the envoy emphasized, pointing to the country's initiating a set of legal retaliatory nuclear steps after the year-long period.

"Iran has not violated the JCPOA. Those who abandoned their commitments—first and foremost the United States—bear full responsibility for the current situation," he declared.

No legal basis for UNSC discussion

Reiterating Iran's adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the IAEA's Safeguards Agreement, the Iranian representative further dismissed claims that Tehran's nuclear program had deviated from its peaceful nature.

"The NPT imposes no limits on Iran's level of uranium enrichment," he reminded. "Any restrictions that ever existed were within the JCPOA—an agreement that the United States deliberately sabotaged."

The envoy additionally pointed out that, even with the suspension of some JCPOA provisions, Iran's nuclear program remained under constant IAEA monitoring.

Iran's representative reiterated that the Security Council must not be exploited by those who violate its resolutions while demanding others abide by them. He emphasized that Resolution 2231 had to be implemented as agreed and also had to expire on schedule.

Iran stands firm against coercion; no talks under pressure

At the same time, the envoy reiterated Iranian officials' assertion that the country would not engage in negotiations, while the US retained its adversarial approach.

President Pezeshkian has sharply rebuked the Trump administration's maximalist approach toward Iran, declaring that the Islamic Republic is not Ukraine and it will not negotiate with the United States under threats or coercion.

“Iran will not negotiate under pressure. We will not surrender to threats. We will not accept dictates. Diplomacy must be conducted on the basis of mutual respect, not extortion,” he said.

“If there is to be a path forward, it must begin with accountability for those who abandoned their commitments, imposed illegal sanctions, and undermined diplomacy,” Iravani asserted.

“Iran will continue to defend its rights. We will continue to stand firm against coercion.”

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