

Comments by Tehmina Janjua, Deputy Permanent Representative, on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on the Report on "Human rights and unilateral coercive measures" - 17 September 2007

Mr. President,

I am making these comments on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The OIC has always supported NAM's principled position regarding unilateral coercive measures and their impact on the enjoyment of all human rights. NAM's position opposing unilateral coercive measures has been repeatedly adopted by NAM as well as OIC summits. We thank NAM for helping keep this important issue on the UN human rights agenda. The issue of the impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights has broad and consistent support within the Human Rights Council.

Unilateral coercive measures and related legislation contravene international law, norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States and the Charter of the United Nations. Such measures also flout human rights standards and international humanitarian law. They put at risk the enjoyment of the fundamental rights of populations affected by such measures. From a human rights perspective, there can be no justification for unilateral coercive measures.

Even from a supposed 'realist' political perspective, these measures do not achieve the goals for which they are ostensibly put in place. There is empirical evidence substantiating that these measures are counter-productive and they hurt vulnerable populations.

Mr. President,

The OIC joins NAM in supporting an end to unilateral coercive measures, especially against any developing country. The OIC reiterates the call made in UNGA resolution 52/181 to States to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries that were not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or were inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, and that contravene the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

We appreciate the inputs received and compiled by the OHCHR from the Governments of Columbia, Costa Rica, Lebanon, Georgia, Romania and the Syrian Arab Republic. In this context, we call for rolling back unilateral sanctions and coercive measures imposed particularly against OIC Member States.

We hope that responses by all member States will give a fuller picture of measures to be taken to discourage and end unilateral coercive measures.

Thank you Mr. President.