



Security Council

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Original: English

Letter dated 15 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/797, submitted by the United States of America, in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”. In accordance with the voting procedure as agreed by the members and set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council dated 27 March 2020 (S/2020/253) — a procedure agreed in light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic — the draft resolution received two votes in favour (the Dominican Republic and the United States of America), two against (China and the Russian Federation) and eleven abstentions (Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Viet Nam). The draft resolution has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

Pursuant to that procedure, I enclose herewith copies of the related documents:

My letter dated 13 August 2020, addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council, putting to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/797 (annex 1 and enclosure);

Letters received in response from the members of the Security Council indicating their national positions on the draft resolution (annexes 2 to 16);

Statements subsequently submitted by members of the Security Council providing explanations of their votes (annexes 17 to 27);

A statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran (annex 28).

This letter and its enclosures will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dian Triansyah **Djani**
President of the Security Council



Annex 1

Letter dated 13 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

In accordance with the procedure agreed upon by the members of the Security Council in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, as set out in the letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to all members of the Council (S/2020/253), I would like to draw your attention to the following.

The members of the Council have discussed a draft resolution, submitted by the United States of America, in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”. That draft resolution, contained in document S/2020/797 and enclosed herewith, has been put in blue.

In my capacity as President of the Security Council, I hereby put the abovementioned draft resolution to a vote. The non-extendable 24-hour voting period for this draft resolution will begin at 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, 13 August 2020. The non-extendable 24-hour voting period will expire at 5.30 p.m. on Friday, 14 August 2020.

Please submit your vote (in favour, against or abstention) on the draft resolution, as well as any possible explanation of vote, by sending a letter signed by the Permanent Representative or Chargé d'affaires a.i. within the non-extendable 24-hour voting period set out above to the Officer-in-charge of the Security Council Affairs Division in the United Nations Secretariat (sutterlin@un.org).

It is my intention to circulate a letter listing the outcome of the vote within three hours of the conclusion of the 24-hour voting period. I also intend to convene a video-teleconference of the Security Council to announce the outcome of the vote shortly after the conclusion of the voting period, on the afternoon of Friday, 14 August 2020.

(Signed) Dian Triansyah Djani
President of the Security Council

Enclosure

United Nations

S/2020/797

**Security Council**Provisional
12 August 2020

Original: English

United States of America: draft resolution*The Security Council,*

Recalling the Statement of its President, S/PRST/2006/15, and its resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008), 1929 (2010), and 2231 (2015),

Recognizing that full implementation of the provisions of paragraph 5 and subparagraphs (b) and (c) of paragraph 6 of Annex B of resolution 2231 (2015) is essential to the maintenance of international peace and security,

1. *Decides*, acting under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, that paragraph 5 and subparagraphs (b) and (c) of paragraph 6 of Annex B of resolution 2231 (2015), notwithstanding the duration specified in each paragraph or subparagraph, shall continue to apply until the Security Council decides otherwise;

2. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

Annex 2

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I refer to the President of the Security Council's letter of 13 August relating to the draft resolution on "Non-proliferation" (S/2020/797).

In accordance with the procedure set forth for the adoption of resolutions under the current extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, I am pleased to indicate that Belgium abstains in the voting on this draft resolution. You will find the explanation of vote in the annex to this letter.

(Signed) Philippe **Kridelka**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

Annex 3**Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I thank you, Sir, and your team for the continued strong support in facilitating the voting procedure.

Please be kindly informed that China votes against the draft resolution contained in S/2020/797, submitted by the United States, in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”.

Attached please find my explanation of vote in both Chinese and English.

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations

Annex 4

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council

I refer to your letter dated 13 August regarding draft resolution S/2020/797, under the agenda item “Non-proliferation”.

Upon instructions from my Government, the delegation of the Dominican Republic votes in favour of the abovementioned draft resolution.

(Signed) José **Singer Weisinger**

Ambassador

Special Envoy to the Security Council of the Dominican Republic

Annex 5**Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires of Estonia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to inform you, Sir, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, that my delegation abstains in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797, in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”.

(Signed) Gert Auväärt
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires of Estonia to the United Nations

Annex 6

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

I refer to the letter dated 13 August 2020, calling on the members of the Council to vote on the draft resolution submitted by the United States in connection with the Iran arms embargo, put in blue under the symbol S/2020/797.

France abstains in the voting.

(Signed) Anne **Gueguen**
Ambassador

Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

Annex 7**Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

It is my honour to write in response to your letter dated 13 August 2020, initiating a written voting procedure, in line with the agreement reached among members of the Security Council.

The vote of the Federal Republic of Germany on the draft resolution submitted by the United States of America in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”, as contained in document S/2020/797, is as follows.

The Federal Republic of Germany abstains in the voting on the abovementioned draft resolution.

Please find enclosed our explanation of vote.

(Signed) Günter **Sautter**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires of Germany to the United Nations

Annex 8

Letter dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing in reference to the letter dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, in his capacity as the President of the Security Council, regarding the draft resolution submitted by the United States of America as contained in the document S/2020/797.

I hereby indicate that Indonesia abstains in the voting on the said draft resolution.

(Signed) Dian Triansyah **Djani**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations

Annex 9**Letter dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I am writing in response to the letter of the President of the Security Council dated 13 August 2020, calling on the members of the Council to express their votes on the draft resolution contained in document S/2020/797, submitted by the United States of America under the agenda item “Non-proliferation”.

In accordance with the agreed temporary procedures for the adoption of resolutions during the coronavirus disease pandemic restrictions, I have the honour to indicate that the Republic of the Niger decides to abstain in the voting on the said draft resolution.

(Signed) Abdou **Abarry**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations

Annex 10

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 13 August 2020 initiating the voting procedure for the draft resolution in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation” (S/2020/797).

In accordance with the procedure for the adoption of resolutions of the Security Council in place during the restrictions on movement in New York due to the coronavirus disease pandemic, outlined in the letter dated 27 March from the President of the Security Council (S/2020/253), I inform you that the Russian Federation votes against draft resolution S/2020/797.

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

Annex 11**Letter dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to refer to the draft resolution S/2020/797 submitted by the United States of America in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”.

In that respect, I wish to inform you that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines abstains in the voting on the abovementioned draft resolution.

(Signed) Inga Rhonda **King**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations

Annex 12

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I refer to your letter dated 13 August 2020, regarding the draft resolution concerning annex B of resolution 2231 (2015), as contained in document S/2020/797.

The delegation of the Republic of South Africa abstains in the voting on the abovementioned draft resolution.

An explanation of vote on this draft resolution is also attached.

(Signed) Jerry Matthews **Matjila**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations

Annex 13**Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

With reference to the letter dated 13 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, regarding draft resolution S/2020/797, submitted by the United States of America in connection with the agenda item “Non-proliferation”, I have the honour to inform you, Sir, that Tunisia abstains in the voting on this draft resolution.

(Signed) Tarek **Ladeb**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires of Tunisia to the United Nations

Annex 14

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Chargé d'affaires of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

With reference to the letter from the President of the Security Council of 13 August 2020, the United Kingdom abstains in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797, in connection with the agenda item "Non-proliferation". Please find our explanation of vote attached.

(Signed) Jonathan **Allen**

Ambassador

Chargé d'affaires of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland to the United Nations

Annex 15**Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

On the draft resolution submitted by the United States of America under the agenda item “Non-proliferation” (S/2020/797), the United States of America votes in favour.

(Signed) **Kelly Craft**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the United States of America
to the United Nations

Annex 16

Letter dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In reference to the letter of the President of the Security Council of 13 August 2020 relating to the draft resolution under the agenda item entitled “Non-proliferation”, as contained in document S/2020/797, I would like hereby to inform you that Viet Nam abstains in the voting on the said draft resolution.

(Signed) **Dang Dinh Quy**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations

Annex 17**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations**

Belgium abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797, on non-proliferation, alongside our European partners who are members of the Security Council — France, Germany and the United Kingdom (E-3) — and Estonia.

Belgium is concerned about the potentially negative impact that the expiration of the conventional arms embargo against Iran might have on the security situation in the region. These concerns must be addressed.

Belgium remains committed to the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Programme of Action (JCPOA). It is our main priority to preserve that agreement, including through the tools and procedures it provides. We support the efforts of the E-3 and the European Union to address concerns regarding Iran's nuclear programme within the framework of the dispute resolution mechanism.

Belgium is of the view that the text proposed could have jeopardized broader ongoing efforts to preserve the JCPOA and entailed even greater security risks while undermining the credibility of the Security Council. These are not the terms on which Belgium would like to engage and discuss security challenges in the region. We look forward to engaging on an initiative that accommodates the preservation of the JCPOA and its achievements.

Belgium regrets the deterioration of the current context, which negatively affects compliance with resolution 2231 (2015) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Now more than ever, diplomacy needs to prevail. We call on all actors involved to refrain from any actions that could further exacerbate tensions.

As facilitator of the 2231 process, I would also like to recall paragraph 2 of resolution 2231 (2015), which

“[c]alls upon all Member States, regional organizations and international organizations to take such actions as may be appropriate to support the implementation of the JCPOA, including by [...] refraining from actions that undermine implementation of commitments under the JCPOA”.

Annex 18**Statement by the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Zhang Jun**

[Original: English and Chinese]

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was concluded in Vienna in July 2015 after long and arduous efforts by all relevant parties. As an outcome of collective wisdom and multilateral diplomacy, the JCPOA was endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 2231 (2015) and has the force of international law. Over the past five years, the JCPOA has become a key element of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, a positive factor in maintaining regional and global peace and stability, and a good practice for resolving regional issues through multilateralism .

It is regrettable that the United States of America unilaterally announced its withdrawal from the JCPOA in May 2018 and gradually reimposed illegal unilateral sanctions on Iran. The United States has been advancing the so-called maximum-pressure policy, trying by all means to obstruct the implementation of the JCPOA by other parties, even asking the Security Council to extend a conventional arms embargo on Iran. These acts violate resolution 2231 (2015), further escalate tensions and are widely opposed by the international community.

China believes that all provisions of resolution 2231 (2015), including the arrangements on conventional arms transfers to and from Iran, should be faithfully implemented. China has made clear many times that draft resolution S/2020/797, submitted by the United States, is about reimposing sanctions on Iran; it is a continuation of the maximum-pressure policy, which is inconsistent with the spirit of the JCPOA and the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015). The United States draft resolution has no legal grounds and does not make sense. The overwhelming majority of Security Council members have expressed reservations about the draft resolution. However, the United States has ignored those concerns and insisted on asking the Security Council to take action. Under such circumstances, China has voted against the draft resolution with a view to safeguarding the authority of the Security Council, the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and regional peace and stability.

Recently, the United States has repeatedly claimed that it would invoke the snapback mechanism. Having withdrawn from the JCPOA, the United States is no longer a JCPOA participant and therefore ineligible to invoke a snapback. The overwhelming majority of the Security Council members believe that the United States attempt has no legal basis. Should the United States insist regardless of international opinion, it is doomed to fail like it did today.

The voting result once again shows that unilateralism receives no support and bullying will fail. Any attempt to place one's own interest above the common interest of the international community is a dead end. In its pursuit of unilateralism and "America first" in recent years, the United States has abandoned its international obligations and withdrawn from multilateral agreements and international organizations, destroying its own credibility. As the coronavirus disease sweeps the world, the United States is turning a blind eye to the impact of the pandemic on Iran and the appeal by the Secretary-General and many countries, and refuses to lift its unilateral sanctions on Iran, making things worse for the Iranian people. We urge the United States to abandon unilateralism and stop unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction. It should adopt a reasonable and realistic attitude, return to the right track of observing the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015), and work together with

relevant parties to maintain the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East.

China has repeatedly emphasized that diplomatic dialogue and consultation are the only right way forward. Maintaining and implementing the JCPOA is of vital importance. We should facilitate dialogue and consultation among relevant parties through established channels, including the Joint Commission and a new regional cooperation mechanism, to properly address differences among regional countries. China will continue to work with the international community to jointly uphold the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015). China will always be on the side of international fairness and justice, world peace and stability and multilateralism, and will work hard for the political settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue.

Annex 19**Statement by the Chargé d'affaires of Estonia, Gert Auväärt**

Iran's destabilizing and malicious activities in the Middle East have been reckless, irresponsible and warrant the full attention of the Security Council. The United States has shone a light on an important issue to be resolved.

The Secretary-General's ninth report on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2020/531) provides an assessment that points to several violations by Iran of the provisions on arms transfers. We strongly condemn the attacks against Aramco oil facilities and Abha International Airport, which were conducted with Iranian origin weaponry.

Estonia therefore fully shares the concerns regarding the planned lifting of the conventional arms embargo in October 2020, as set out in resolution 2231 (2015). Iran's actions do not support this. We agree with the United States and with our European partners that the expiry of the arms embargo would have potentially serious consequences for the region and its security. These concerns need to be taken seriously, and we support the United States' efforts to address them.

However, there is another threat at play that emanates from Iran — a threat that was considerably reduced by the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the adoption of resolution 2231 (2015), endorsing the agreement. It has been Estonia's consistent position that the JCPOA plays a key role in upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime and is an important pillar of regional and international security. At the moment, the agreement remains the best tool available to provide the international community with the necessary assurances on Iran's nuclear programme. We do not want to see it collapse and are wary of attempts that might be incompatible with the aim of preserving the JCPOA.

This is the reason Estonia decided to abstain in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797, proposed by the United States.

We call on all key stakeholders to explore, together with the United States, constructive options to address the implications of the lifting of the arms restrictions to regional security and stability.

Annex 20**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Anne Gueguen**

[Original: French]

France reaffirms its commitment to upholding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and resolution 2231 (2015) of the Council, which endorsed it. Given our continued commitment to the JCPOA, we are extremely concerned by Iran's violations of its nuclear commitments under the agreement. We urge Iran to immediately reverse all measures that run counter to the JCPOA, and will continue our ongoing efforts under the JCPOA dispute resolution mechanism to bring Iran back to full compliance with its JCPOA commitments.

We are also deeply concerned about Iran's destabilizing actions in the region, including its repeated violations of the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) on conventional arms, with transfers to Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, as well as non-State actors. In this context, the lifting of the United Nations embargo on conventional arms established by resolution 2231 (2015), scheduled for October this year, could have serious consequences for regional security and stability. We share the concerns expressed by several members of the Security Council and countries of the region on this issue. The Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and the United Kingdom have said this on several occasions and reaffirmed it in their statement of 19 June.

However, France abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797 because it is not an appropriate response to the challenges posed by the expiration of the embargo and is not likely to advance security and stability in the region, owing to the lack of agreement among Council members, nor is it a suitable basis for working towards a consensus.

We remain guided by the objective of respecting the authority and integrity of the Security Council and preserving regional stability and security and the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The period before the expiration of restrictions should be used to consider, in good faith, all diplomatic options.

Annex 21**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations**

Germany remains committed to fully implementing resolution 2231 (2015), which endorses the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Together with France and the United Kingdom, we have been working hard to preserve the JCPOA, despite the challenges caused by the United States withdrawal from the JCPOA in May 2018 and Iran's systematic non-compliance with key JCPOA commitments since July 2019, and we will continue our efforts. We remain committed to preserving the JCPOA and urge Iran to reverse all measures inconsistent with the agreement and resume full compliance without delay.

At the same time, we are deeply concerned about Iran's conduct in the region. Since resolution 2231 (2015) was adopted, Iran has repeatedly violated the provisions of the Security Council's conventional arms restrictions, including through the transfer of weapons to Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, including to non-State actors. We therefore share the concerns expressed by a number of Council members about the scheduled expiry of the Security Council's conventional arms restrictions on Iran this October. The Foreign Ministers of France, the United Kingdom and Germany have been clear that the expiry of these restrictions would have implications for regional security and stability.

However, Germany abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797 because it does not enable us to effectively address the risks identified above and to improve security and stability in the region. It was clear that the draft resolution would fall short of attracting the support of the Security Council. We rather believe that more time and more consultations are needed to seek a path forward that could provide adequate answers to the challenges arising from the arms embargo expiry and that would be acceptable to all States members of the Council.

We have been engaging with Council members in this sense and have discussed a number of possible ways forward. We are ready to continue these discussions in order to find a pragmatic way forward that addresses our collective concerns. In this regard, we are guided by the objectives of upholding the authority and integrity of the Security Council, working towards regional security and stability and preserving the JCPOA as a cornerstone of regional security and the global non-proliferation regime.

Annex 22**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani**

Indonesia reaffirms its support and commitment to upholding resolution 2231 (2015), the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and regional security and stability. We take note of some issues relating to the specific concerns that draft resolution S/2020/797 attempted to address. However, we are not in a position to support the draft resolution.

Indonesia is of the view that the current draft resolution is not in line with the JCPOA. Therefore, it is difficult to see its effectiveness in contributing positively to non-proliferation or regional security issues.

The good-faith implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA in their entirety is the only way to ensure that the Iranian nuclear programme remains peaceful.

Indonesia abstained in the voting on draft resolution S/2020/797 because it believes that, in moving forward to create regional peace and stability, the previously agreed multilateral commitments, particularly the JCPOA, should be affirmed and actualized. All parties must refrain from actions that can exacerbate instability and deteriorate the environment for the JCPOA's implementation, as well as fully live up to their commitments.

We call on Iran to resume its compliance with its JCPOA commitments in full, as well as other JCPOA participants to fulfil their obligations completely and effectively. We continue to regret the United States withdrawal from the JCPOA and sincerely hope that the United States will consider rejoining. We also call on all parties to resolve their differences peacefully through dialogue and, where appropriate, in the designated venues, such as the JCPOA dispute resolution mechanism.

While all parties to the JCPOA have a special responsibility to ensure that the JCPOA is implemented comprehensively and smoothly, resolution 2231 (2015) demands that all members of the international community play a supporting role to that end.

Indonesia stands ready to work together constructively in resolving this matter.

Let us all be mindful of our common goal of maintaining peace and security and, therefore, let us work without hesitation to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons, uphold the rule of law and enable sustainable peace and development everywhere.

Annex 23**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations**

The Russian delegation voted against draft resolution S/2020/797, submitted by the United State of America on the arms embargo against Iran.

We consistently oppose attempts to impose through the Security Council an arms embargo on Iran. A case-by-case approval procedure for arms transfers to and from Iran in resolution 2231 (2015) has neither been linked to Iran's right to develop its peaceful nuclear programme nor subjected to any other conditions. Since the very start, it has been temporary; it was introduced for exactly a five-year term and was never meant to be extended. We continue to proceed from the assumption that there are neither legal nor any other reasons to review such an approach.

Moreover, the United States proposal is a clear violation of annex B of resolution 2231 (2015), which clearly stipulates that the only legitimate way to revise the timeline for the abovementioned arms transfer regime is a decision by consensus of the JCPOA Joint Commission. However, the United States forfeited the right to make use of this instrument since it deliberately and openly withdrew from the plan in 2018.

Russia remains totally committed to the JCPOA. Its adoption in 2015 was a landmark political and diplomatic achievement that helped avert the threat of an armed conflict and reinforced nuclear non-proliferation.

We strongly believe that there is an alternative to threats and blackmail, confrontation and coercion. The mutually acceptable solution lies in the field of multilateral actions that take into account the legitimate security concerns of all regional players. It is high time to launch a broad regional dialogue embracing all interested parties to de-escalate tensions and look for pragmatic compromise-based decisions. All of the concerns could be addressed if we treated each other's positions with due consideration and responsibility, while acting respectfully and in a collective spirit.

Therefore, on 14 August, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin suggested convening an online meeting of the Heads of State of the permanent members of the Security Council, with the participation of the heads of Germany and Iran, as soon as possible, in order to outline steps that could prevent confrontation or a spike in tensions in the Security Council. We circulated the text of his statement today as a document of the Security Council. At this leaders' meeting, the Russian Federation proposes agreeing on parameters for joint efforts to facilitate the establishment of reliable mechanisms in the Persian Gulf region for ensuring security and confidence-building.

We call on our partners to carefully consider this proposal. Otherwise, we could see a further escalation of tension and an increased risk of conflict. This must be avoided. Russia is ready to work constructively with all parties interested in taking the situation back from the dangerous brink.

Annex 24**Statement by the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations**

South Africa views the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as one of most important diplomatic achievements in the area of nuclear non-proliferation since the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. We believe it is an exemplar of collective action to consolidate peace through cooperation and collaboration on the basis of a binding agreement, and, therefore, its preservation and implementation should be foremost. We are also of the view that the JCPOA has contributed significantly to the reduction of tensions over Iran's nuclear programme and remains vital to promoting peace, stability and the normalization of relations.

South Africa's abstention in the voting on the draft resolution (S/2020/797) before us today is informed by the fact that we believe that the JCPOA participants and all Council members should remain true to their commitment to uphold and implement resolution 2231 (2015). It is therefore crucial that there be full implementation of the JCPOA by all parties in order to re-establish trust in the agreement and avoid any action that would further undermine the integrity of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA.

South Africa is of the view that the draft text presented by the United States is unfortunately not in keeping with this commitment and would undermine resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. Any non-compliance with the Council's resolutions only undermines the credibility of the Council in fulfilling its central mandate.

Furthermore, South Africa believes that any initiative that falls outside the ambit of the delicate balance established by the JCPOA risks upending the balance further and thus adds to the already dire threat to the continuation of this hard-won agreement. Therefore, we encourage the parties to exhaust all options within the JCPOA dispute resolution mechanism before the consideration of options outside it, which could result in the dismantling of the terms of the agreement.

We are concerned that any undermining of the JCPOA will lead only to an exacerbation of tensions, and we therefore believe that this issue would be best addressed through consultative dialogue among all members of the JCPOA, outside the Security Council. This will minimize the potential for creating further tensions in an already divided Council. In an effort to avoid any measures that would challenge the integrity of the processes of the Council, South Africa will continue to encourage all parties involved in the JCPOA to act responsibly and in a manner that promotes peace and builds confidence and trust among nations.

South Africa will remain resolute in supporting efforts to resolve tensions among all stakeholders and will always promote dialogue rather than antagonism in order to safeguard the gains already made in terms of disarmament and non-proliferation, as these are essential for the maintenance of broader international peace and security.

Annex 25

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations

We have repeatedly set out our concerns about Iran's destabilizing behaviour in the region, including through the transfer of weapons to Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, in violation of resolution 2231 (2015).

We therefore share the concerns expressed by a number of Council members about the scheduled expiry of the existing arms restrictions on Iran this October. The E-3 Foreign Ministers have been clear that the expiry of these restrictions would have major implications for regional security and stability.

The United Kingdom abstained in the voting on this draft resolution (S/2020/797) because it was clear that it would not attract the support of the Council and would not represent a basis for achieving consensus. It would therefore not contribute to improving security and stability in the region. Nevertheless, we stand ready to work with Council members and the participants of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to seek a path forward that could secure the support of the Council.

The United Kingdom remains resolutely committed to the JCPOA and to preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. With our French and German colleagues, we are committed to taking forward the JCPOA's dispute resolution mechanism negotiations, with the desire to bring Iran back into compliance with the agreement.

We do not support a move to snapback at this time, which would be incompatible with our current efforts to preserve the JCPOA.

Annex 26**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

One of the enduring truths of the last 75 years is that the United Nations rarely lives up to its own ideals and far too often falls victim to the narrowest political interests of its membership. Today was one of those days, when the worst tendency of the United Nations was on display in the Security Council.

When I assumed this position, almost exactly a year ago, I made a point to underscore to all Security Council members that this body's credibility was in tatters. There was too much at stake, I said, to let the Security Council fade from relevance by getting lost in its own disfunction.

This body was formed to advance global peace and security, and none of us should struggle to understand what that requires of us. And yet today the United States stands sickened — but not surprised — as the clear majority of Council members gave the green light to Iran to buy and sell all manner of conventional weapons. The Council's failure today will serve neither peace nor security. Rather, it will fuel greater conflict and drive even more insecurity.

Failing to step up to this moral challenge validates the world's number one state sponsor of terror, just to save face and protect a failed political deal made outside the Council. A flawed deal, it is worth noting, under which Iran remains in significant non-performance of its commitments.

I have spoken in the Council about Iran's malign behaviour. I have spoken of the risks in allowing the Iranian regime to import and export new and more powerful weapons. I have spoken to each member about American determination to contain the Iranian threat. Today I would prefer that those Security Council members who opposed or stood silently by on this draft resolution (S/2020/797) do the speaking.

Speak to the mothers in Yemen watching their children wither and die as a direct result of Iran's support for the Houthi rebels. Tell them how the Security Council works in their interests.

Speak to the families in Syria that have been shattered as a direct result of Iran's support for the Al-Assad regime. Tell them that the Security Council hears their pleas.

Speak to the people of Lebanon, who are still reeling from the disaster in the Port of Beirut and know all too well the poisonous influence of Iran and Hizbullah on their nation.

Speak to the countries in the region — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Israel — that have pleaded with the Council to do the right thing, the obvious thing, the moral thing, and extend the arms embargo on Iran. Tell them that the Security Council acknowledged the urgent threat posed by Iran and recalls that they have been the targets of Iranian missiles and other aggression, as confirmed by the Secretary-General in his recent report on resolution 2231 (2015) (S/2020/531). Tell them that the last thing the Security Council would ever do is to trigger a regional arms race by unlocking Iran's ability to purchase sophisticated missile batteries, fighter jets, tanks and other modern weapons.

And finally, speak to the people of Iran, who have been living under this regime's violent and unrelenting repression for more than 40 years. Tell them that the Security Council understands their plight and supports their desperate cries for freedom.

I have yet to hear a single member of the Council make the national security argument that Iran should be able to freely buy and sell weapons — and do not think for one minute I have grown weary of trying to coax the Council to return to its original purpose, to focus on the human implications of its actions.

The defeat of this draft resolution outlines perfectly the Council's current condition of paralysis and inaction in the face of growing threats. The questions before us were simple today. Has Iran done anything to warrant reconsideration of its status as the world's number one State sponsor of terrorism? Should United Nations arms restrictions that have been in place for 13 years be lifted?

Rather than acknowledge these questions, members of this body sought refuge in the remnants of the failed Iran nuclear deal. Preserving the last threads of that deal became the objective, not the interests of humankind or the pursuit of peace.

And even in this context, I remind my colleagues from France, Germany and the United Kingdom that their Governments made clear just this June that

“... we believe that the planned lifting of the United Nations conventional arms embargo established by resolution 2231 (2015) next October would have major implications for regional security and stability.”

That belief appears to have been short-lived.

The United States has acted in good faith throughout this process and made clear to all parties that failure was simply not an option. Under resolution 2231 (2015), the United States has every right to initiate the snapback of provisions of previous Security Council resolutions. In the coming days, the United States will follow through on that promise to stop at nothing to extend the arms embargo.

The Trump Administration's vision for peace in the Middle East will endure the abject failures of the Security Council. Just yesterday that vision was again validated in the historic agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates.

The United States is a force for good in the world. And when multilateralism fails, we will not. History will easily trace the path of leadership in this era, and unfortunately it will not go through the Security Council.

Annex 27**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear issue and resolution 2231 (2015) are crucial to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, peace and stability in the Middle East and international security. I would like to emphasize the following points related to these important matters.

First, Viet Nam has relentlessly pursued a policy of respecting and upholding the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, international law, Security Council resolutions and international commitments and agreements.

Secondly, we reiterate our support for resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. We call on the parties concerned to promote dialogue and negotiation in order to resolve differences and continue to fully implement resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. It is also necessary for the parties to exercise self-restraint and refrain from conducting any acts that may escalate tension and erode trust.

Thirdly, we are closely following developments in the Middle East. Maintaining peace and stability in the region plays an important role in international peace and security. The parties to the JCPOA and the States in the region have the primary responsibility for regional peace and stability, as well as the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. We reject all illegal means of supplying weapons to parties in conflicts and wars, which could lead to complicity, further tensions or conflicts in the Middle East.

Last but not least, peace and security in the Middle East will reverberate far beyond the region. It is very important for the Security Council to carefully consider the issues related to resolution 2231 (2015). Given the results of the voting today and other related recent developments, it is critical that the parties concerned strive for continued dialogue, with a view to achieving a comprehensive solution acceptable to all related parties, in the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA for the sake of common peace and stability in the region. Viet Nam is willing to make a positive contribution to this process.

Annex 28**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Majid Takht Ravanchi**

Today the Security Council is considering a draft resolution (S/2020/797) presented by a country that has a long and dark record of fabrications and disinformation throughout the world, and the Council is no stranger to such dissemination of falsehood. It seems that, in order to promote its short-sighted political interests, the United States is addicted to spreading lies. A lie has no legs.

For many years, the United States, misusing its permanent membership of the Council, has attempted to portray Iran as a threat to international peace and security and to propose sanctions against Iran. One example is its current proposal for imposing an indefinite comprehensive arms embargo on my country. Is there any sound legal and objective security justification for such action? Can the import and export of arms by Iran be considered a threat to international peace and security? What is the ultimate goal of the United States in this whole exercise?

From a legal perspective, under resolution 2231 (2015), following the termination of the current restrictions, no arms embargo can be imposed on Iran for the following reasons.

First, according to the JCPOA, which is annexed to resolution 2231 (2015) and, through its endorsement by the Council, has become legally binding on all Member States, there will be no new Security Council sanctions.

Second, it would be against the Council's policy of "fundamental shift", as well as its "desire to build a new relationship with Iran", as affirmed and expressed in resolution 2231 (2015).

Third, it would also be against the Council's intent, as expressed in resolution 2231 (2015), on "promoting and facilitating the development of normal economic and trade contacts and cooperation with Iran", which naturally includes arms trade too.

Fourth, any change in the already agreed measures or timelines, by changing the well-crafted balance embedded in resolution 2231 (2015), will affect several other parts thereof. The resolution, as it itself defines, is based on "a step-by-step approach", "includes the reciprocal commitments", the implementation and termination of which are subject to identified timelines, and requires States to comply with its provisions "for their respective durations".

Fifth, it is against the call by the Security Council on all Member States "to support the implementation of the JCPOA" and to refrain "from actions that undermine implementation of commitments under the JCPOA", as well as for the JCPOA's "full implementation on the timetable established" therein.

According to annex B to resolution 2231 (2015), the "duration" of arrangements, including on arms, "may be reviewed". However, annex B is inherently designed to ensure that the provisions be terminated in line with the agreed timelines, as such a decision must be made by the Council based on a consensual recommendation of the Joint Commission, of which the United States is not a member, to propose such an extension, and Iran, as a member, will not accept such a proposal.

Sixth, it is crystal clear that any arms embargo against Iran would be against all promises made to Iran in different parts of resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA and endorsed by the Council. This can set a dangerous precedent, weakening the Council's authority and eroding the trust and confidence in the Council, in its

decisions and, by extension, in the United Nations itself. The main victims, however, would be the principles of justice, the rule of law, dialogue, diplomacy and trust.

Seventh, even beyond the JCPOA and resolution 2231 (2015), which, due to their direct substantive relevance, can in no way be disregarded or overlooked, the Security Council may impose sanctions only when it determines “the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression” and, more importantly, exhausts employing all possible solutions other than sanctions, which must be the last choice if need be. Now the question is whether such conditions exist regarding Iran, thus allowing the Council to act. This assessment, of course, cannot be made in a vacuum or on the basis of the political motivations, fabrications, lies and phony charges of a certain member, or members, of the Council; rather, it must be based on objective and irrefutable facts, namely, the security realities in the region.

Let us take a quick look at the situation in the region, starting with the policies and practices of the United States, a country that is not located in our region but has for decades been meddling in our affairs some 6,000 miles away from its shores. Just in Iran’s six neighbouring countries in the Persian Gulf, the United States has deployed nearly 50,000 troops, with more than 300 combat aircraft, an aircraft carrier as well as tens of destroyers and ships with four Central Command headquarters for its army, air, marine and special forces. Out of over 40 Western military installations in the Middle East, 29 belong to America. Such a massive build-up has turned the region into the highest concentration of foreign military installations in the world.

Let us now turn to the unquenchable appetite of the United States to export arms to this region and the inordinate craving of regional allies of the United States to import them. By importing over 12 per cent of all arms exported globally, 73 per cent of which came from the United States, Saudi Arabia was by far the largest arms importer in the world from 2015 to 2019. Members should just remember the \$110 billion United States-Saudi arms deal in 2017, described by President Trump as “the largest order ever made”. Saudi Arabia was the third largest military spender in 2018 and the fifth largest in 2019 and devoted 8 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) to military expenditure in 2019 — the highest worldwide. Being by far the largest military spender in the Middle East, it also continues to modernize and expand its military forces. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), currently it “has the largest inventory of advanced weapons” among the Persian Gulf States.

Where does Iran stand? The level of Iran’s arms imports decreased significantly between 1994 and 2018. According to SIPRI, the volume of Iran’s arms imports in this period was relatively small compared with the volumes imported by many other States in the Middle East. From 2009 to 2019, Iran was ranked the fifty-seventh arms importer globally. In 2019 Iran’s military expenditure was five times less than that of Saudi Arabia, and Iran devoted only 2.3 per cent of its GDP to military expenditure, which is 3.5 times less than that of Saudi Arabia.

What do these facts and figures reveal? Do they imply even an iota of threat to, or breach of, peace by Iran? If anything, they clearly imply that there is an alarming trend in the region — an extremely furious flood of advanced weaponry, mostly arms made by the United States, to certain regional States, as well as the massive build-up of foreign forces, armed to the teeth with all types of the most sophisticated armaments, which are the real sources of instability in our region. The arms exported to this volatile region have been used not only to extensively prolong the death and destruction in Yemen, but also to fan and fuel other conflicts, from Iraq and Syria to Libya.

Likewise, foreign forces, which always mask their real missions under such euphemistic popular terms as “to ensure freedom of navigation” and “promote maritime stability”, are involved in a range of invasive, intrusive, disruptive and subversive activities in our region. The invasions, false flag operations and espionage activities perpetrated by foreign forces, coupled with the well-known policy of divide and rule of their respective Governments, have not only targeted trust and confidence among the regional nations, which have coexisted peacefully over centuries, but also resulted in more insecurity and instability in our neighbourhood.

Consequently, we, the regional nations, are paying a very high price for such ill-intentioned policies of Western countries and the presence of their forces in our region. Above all, I am specifically referring to the human toll.

One example is the 2003 illegal invasion of Iraq by the United States, whose then politicians introduced it as no more real than a video game, and whose current politicians mourn not for the loss of lives but only for the misspending of America’s money. The United States invasion of Iraq left millions of dead, wounded and displaced persons. Of course, no one forgets the crimes that American forces brutally committed in different parts of Iraq, including in Abu Ghraib prison.

Iran is also a principal victim of the presence of foreign forces. For instance, in 1987 and 1988 the United States Navy destroyed three Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf. The International Court of Justice rejected any “legal justification for the destruction of the platforms” and even called it “the violation of freedom of commerce”.

In 1988 the United States forces targeted an Iranian civil aircraft over the Persian Gulf, killing all 290 people on board, including 66 children — the deadliest aviation disaster in 1988.

In 2011, an American unmanned spy plane invaded Iran’s airspace and flew 250 kilometres deep into Iranian territory, where it was captured by Iran. Later the United States President requested its return, which was rejected.

In 2019, a United States unmanned aircraft system, having taken off from one of the United States bases in the Persian Gulf States, violated Iranian airspace and engaged in a clear spying operation. Repeated radio warnings unattended to, it was downed.

In early 2020, in a terrorist attack at the direct order of the United States President, the American forces horrifically assassinated Major General Qasem Soleimani and his companions at Baghdad International Airport — a real gift to Da’esh. The overwhelming majority of international lawyers, including a number of United Nations mandate holders, have rejected the United States legal justifications for such a criminal act and called it a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

These are only a few examples of numerous unlawful, subversive and provocative measures taken by the United States forces against Iran. It is ironic that, with such a dark record of aggression, intrusion and disruptive actions in our region, the United States is now accusing Iran of destabilizing behaviour in the region. Like its deep addiction to imposing sanctions on others, deception is also an inseparable part of United States foreign policy.

For many years, the United States had created a manufactured crisis over Iran’s nuclear programme. However, the JCPOA’s conclusion rendered that ploy useless. The United States is now manufacturing a new crisis under the so-called label of arms proliferation. There is no arms proliferation by Iran, as falsely

claimed by United States officials. We have already categorically rejected all such uncorroborated self-serving allegations.

After testing the waters in the Council for a few months, last week the United States, in clear violation of resolution 2231 (2015), proposed a draft resolution on an arms embargo against Iran, which was met with a cold shoulder from members of the Council. In order to advance its goal by whatever means, the United States also resorted to deceptive methods, such as shortening its 13-page draft resolution to four short paragraphs without any changes in its nature and intended goal, to illustrate its apparent flexibility. Likewise, to create a legal mess and confusion, it has also recalled, in its second draft resolution, six resolutions of the Council, all of which were terminated almost five years ago.

This week, the United States urged the Council to vote on the second version of the draft resolution, even knowing in advance that it would not enjoy support within the Council. The question is: Why is it resorting to such an exercise? Because, based on its miscalculations, the United States wants to use it as a pretext to realize its ultimate goal of killing the JCPOA forever through the snapback mechanism, while, as a non-participant of the JCPOA, the United States is not eligible to trigger that mechanism.

Here, the Council, as the guarantor of its own decisions, must act responsibly and decisively and prove that it is able and willing to support the JCPOA it endorsed, protect resolution 2231 (2015), which it adopted unanimously, and ensure its own authority and credibility.

As we have made clear, the timetable for the removal of arms restrictions in resolution 2231 (2015) is an inseparable part of the hard-won compromise enabling a final agreement on the overall package of the JCPOA and that resolution. The resolution explicitly urges its “full implementation on the timetable”. Any attempt to change or amend the agreed timetable is therefore tantamount to undermining resolution 2231 (2015) in its entirety.

The Council must not allow the abuse and manipulation of its work, as it did in the past when the Council was ineffective in preventing Saddam’s aggression against Iran and the use of chemical weapons against Iranians and Iraqis.

As we have already stated, the imposition of any sanctions or restrictions on Iran by the Security Council will be met severely by Iran, and our options are not limited. The United States and any entity that assists it or acquiesces to its illegal behaviour will bear the full responsibility.

Allow me to conclude by underlining that no one can deny the ongoing alarming trend of regression from a rules-based multilateralism to a power-based unilateralism. The international community should not allow the knee-on-neck policy to be tolerated in our time anymore.

Let us be fair and square. Historically, appeasement has never served humanity’s common interests. Conversely, it has only further emboldened the bullying Powers. In this turbulent time, all States, particularly the members of the Council, have a moral and ethical responsibility to do whatever is in their power to restore faith in the values, purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations, who will have to live with the consequences of our action and inaction.