High Council for Human Rights of
the Islamic Republic of Iran

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An Elucidating Report on:

National Sovereignty, the Right to Crisis Management, and the Principle of Non-Intervention

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In the Name of GOD

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Introduction: The Challenge of Sovereignty versus Intervention

The contemporary world is witnessing a structural tension between two seemingly conflicting pillars of the legal system governing interstate relations: on the one hand, the principle of **sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States**, which is the cornerstones of international order and stability after the world wars, and on the other, the expansion of the discourse of h**uman rights and international responsibility**, which sometimes becomes a means of justifying violations of those same fundamental principles. This report argues that this conflict is not intrinsic and real, but results from the selective and political interpretations and implementation of the rules of international law. International law has rightly foreseen, in the framework of treaties such as the human rights covenants, limitations on the exercise of national sovereignty in cases of gross violations of human rights, but the mechanisms for applying these limitations are exclusively within the competence of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter. What we are witnessing today is not the rule-based application of these mechanisms, but rather their replacement by a series of unilateral, selective, and propaganda measures by states or political coalitions, which is itself the greatest threat to the rule of law in the international arena. The aim of this report is to deeply examine the legal foundations of the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention, and then to assess the practical actions of states in light of these foundations.

Part One: Legal Basis of National Sovereignty and the Exclusive Jurisdiction of States

1. Sovereignty as a peremptory rule in International Law

National sovereignty is not merely a political concept, but a fundamental and **peremptory** rule in public international law. Article 2(1) of **the United Nations Charter** explicitly refers to the principle of **sovereign equality of all members** of the United Nations. This principle is also embodied in **Article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States** as the main condition for being recognized as a state (effective governance of the population and possession of a specific territory). The International Court of Justice has repeatedly emphasized the centrality of the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of states in the international legal system in its advisory opinion in the Namibia case (1971) and in the judgment on the merits in **the Case Concerning Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America), 1986**. Sovereignty has two aspects: internal (the exclusive right to exercise authority within a territory) and external (freedom of action in the international arena, provided that international law is observed), and its internal aspect is of key importance in the discussion of crisis management.

2. The inherent right to crisis management: From public order to national emergency

One of the principal manifestations of internal sovereignty is the right, and indeed the duty, of the state to preserve public order, national security, and territorial integrity. This right constitutes a prerequisite for the provision of any public services and for the guarantee of citizens' fundamental rights. When confronted with large-scale crises that threaten public order or national security, whether armed uprisings, widespread natural disasters, or nationwide public health emergencies, the state, as the only entity possessing both legitimacy and nationwide capacity, is entitled to adopt the necessary measures. The Human Rights Committee, in General Comment No. 34 concerning Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, likewise affirms that states may impose restrictions on freedom of expression in order to protect national security or public order, provided that such restrictions are prescribed by law and are necessary.

3. Temporary restriction of rights in emergency situations: The legal framework of Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

International law realistically recognizes this sovereign right. Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights allows states, in times of a "public emergency which threatens the life of the nation and has been officially proclaimed," to take measures that deviate from their obligations under the

Covenant. These formal and substantive conditions precisely reflect the balance that international law strikes between state sovereignty and human rights obligations.

The initial assessment of the existence of a “state of emergency” and the “proportionality of measures” primarily lies with the government concerned. International bodies can only intervene if the government has grossly and flagrantly violated the above principles, and even then the review mechanisms must work based on fair cooperation.

Part Two: The principle of non-intervention: From the text of the Charter to international jurisprudence

1. Analysis of Article 2(7) of the UN Charter: The scope of "inherently domestic affairs"

The principle of non-intervention serves as the practical guardian of state sovereignty in international relations. Article 2(7) of the Charter provides: *"Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state…"* The key phrase, *"**essentially within the domestic jurisdiction**,"* is a dynamic and evolving concept, moderated by developments in international law (for example, the international prohibition of genocide or apartheid). Nevertheless, the **methods of managing public order, dealing with riots, and determining domestic security policy** clearly fall at the core of "inherently internal affairs." The only explicit exception to this principle is the enforcement of **coercive measures under Chapter VII of the Charter** by the Security Council in the event of a "threat to peace, breach of peace, or the act of aggression." Unilateral actions by states do not fall under this exception in any way.

2. The customary manifestation of the principle of non-intervention: From resolution 2131 to the Nicaragua Case

The principle of non-intervention has also taken root in customary international law. **United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2131 (1965), entitled "Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty"** and especially the **resolution 2625 (1970),** containing the **"Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations,"** address this principle in detail. According to the 1970 Declaration, "Every State is prohibited from intervening, directly or indirectly, in the internal or external affairs of another State." In the **Nicaragua case (1986)**, the International Court of Justice recognized this principle as a customary norm binding on all states, including non-members of the Charter. The Court emphasized that intervention constitutes a violation of international law when it concerns "matters over which every State, by virtue of the principle of sovereignty, is free to decide" (such as the choice of political, economic, social, or cultural systems) and simultaneously involves the "use of coercive or imposing methods".

3. New forms of intervention: Unilateral sanctions, psychological warfare, and support for civil disobedience

In the 21st century, intervention appears less in the form of military campaigns and more in complex formats:

- **Unilateral or multilateral economic sanctions (secondary sanctions):** These sanctions, imposed without Security Council authorization, are a clear example of the "economic coercion method" used to force a change in a government's domestic policies. They affect not only the economy of the targeted state, but also the economic and social rights of millions of citizens of that country.
- **Psychological and media warfare:** Launching extensive media and network campaigns aimed at "demonizing" a government, conducting psychological destabilization, and generating international hatered can constitute a form of "coercion," as seen in the Nicaragua case.
- **Financial, technical, and media support for opposition groups and encouragement of civil disobedience:** Funding foreign opposition media, training and equipping activists to create insecurity or issuing statements that encourage continued violence can all cross the line into illegal intervention

Part three: Critique of the competence of foreign institutions and states: Alternative judgment and political selectivity

1. International supervisory mechanisms and their inherent limitations:

International supervisory bodies do not have inherent competence to "try" states. Their mechanisms are voluntary based on treaties:

- **Treaty bodies:** Like the Human Rights Committee, their competence depends on the state's membership in the treaty and often on the submission of periodic reports. The opinions of these bodies are of a **recommendatory** nature.
- **Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council:** Similar to Special Rapporteurs, these procedures must operate in accordance with Human Rights Council Resolution 1/5 (Code of Conduct), which emphasizes the principles of 'objectivity, impartiality, non-selectivity, and a cooperative approach.' Actions such as adopting selectively condemnatory resolutions without the consent of the concerned state and outside the framework of dialogue are contrary to these principles.
- **Universal Periodic Review (UPR):** This mechanism is based on **cooperation, inclusiveness, and equality**, and all states are subject to review. Turning the UPR into a forum for unilateral political messaging undermines the spirit of this process.

2. **Performative and political actions: From show trials to parliamentary sanctions**

Actions such as establishing “public tribunal” in a foreign capital, adopting a sanctions list targeting individuals by another country’s parliament, or issuing “symbolic judgments” by foreign municipalities, have **no legal value or validity under international law**. These measures are purely **political performances** aimed not at achieving justice but at exerting **psychological pressure**, **undermining legitimacy**, and **generating negative propaganda**. They severely insult the credibility of the independent judiciary of the targeted country and constitute a disrespect toward the judicial system of a United Nations member state.

Part four: Actions of the United States, the European Union, and the Zionist Regime regarding the 2026 events

This part of the report applies the aforementioned legal principles in a concrete case study to demonstrate how the actions of certain international actors in response to domestic events in the Islamic Republic of Iran violate the boundaries of international law.

1. **Analysis of statements and resolutions from the perspective of the principle of non-intervention:**

Official statements by foreign ministries, parliaments (such as the resolutions of the U.S. House of Representatives or the European Parliament), and resolutions by certain member states of the Human Rights Council regarding domestic events in the Islamic Republic of Iran often contain the following interventionist elements:

- **One-sided and biased portrayal of events:** The use of language such as "brutal repression" or "systematic human rights violations" as definitive judgments, prior to any impartial review and while disregarding the statements by the government of Iran regarding its measures to counter unrest and terrorist acts.
- **Calls or demands for specific actions:** Demands such as "unconditional release of detainees," "unrestricted access to the internet," or "changes to domestic laws" by foreign entities directly interfere with **Iran's sovereignty to implement legal measures aimed at maintaining public order**. These demands target the government's "free choice" in managing the crisis.
- **Explicit support for specific actors:** Expressing solidarity with or support for particular groups or individuals inside the country who are acting in violation of the country's laws, can be considered as encouraging violent civil disobedience.

2. **Unilateral sanctions as a tool of political coercion:** Violation of the right to development and permanent sovereignty over natural resources:

Targeted and sectoral sanctions (such as those on Iran's Ministry of Interior, the Law Enforcement Force, or the Judiciary), which are imposed with direct justification based on domestic events, constitute a clear example of "coercive measures" in the sense of the judgment in the case of Nicaragua.

- **Violation of the Charter:** These sanctions lack Security Council authorization and are therefore contrary to **Article 41 and Chapter VII of the UN Charter**.
- **Violation of the right to self-determination and permanent sovereignty over natural resources:** UN General Assembly **Resolution 1803 (1962)**, titled "Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources," as well as **Article 1 common to the 1966 Covenants**, recognize the right of every nation to freely determine its political status and economic development. Sanctions imposed with the aim of changing a government's internal policies directly violate this right.
- **Violation of the economic, social, and cultural rights of citizens:** By creating barriers to access international financial systems, technology, and services, these sanctions indirectly affect rights such as the **right to health** (Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), the **right to work**, and the **right to an adequate standard of living**. The **UN Special Rapporteur on the**

Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights has repeatedly emphasized these inhumane effects.

3. Linking foreign actions to intensifying domestic instability: A proven pattern

These external pressures create a vicious cycle:

- **Reinforcing the narrative of confrontation:** Foreign actions send the message to extremist groups inside the country that they have international support, thus deterring them from negotiating or showing restraint.
- **Limiting the government's room to act:** Under external pressure, the Iranian government may feel less space to grant amnesty or leniency, as such measures are interpreted as a sign of weakness in the face of "foreign coercion."
- **Creating a justification for further tightening:** These pressures are framed as external "national security threat" and can be invoked to justify stricter domestic security measures.
- **Diversion from the roots of the crisis:** The focus will be diverted towards "countering foreign conspiracy", leaving national dialogue to solve fundamental social issues.

Part five: Legal consequences of interventionist actions; from weakening the international system to violating human rights

1. Deterioration of the rule of law in the international arena

International law is effective only when it is applied uniformly and without selectivity. When major powers claim the unilateral "right to judge and punish" for themselves, they effectively replace the **rule of law** with the **rule of force**. This undermines states' trust in multilateral institutions and pushes them toward forming hostile blocs or increasing their military capabilities for self-defense. The ultimate result is a return to the **law of the jungle in international relations.**

2. The Paradox of violating human rights in the name of protecting human rights: The impact of sanctions on ordinary citizen

This paradox has been repeatedly highlighted in United Nations documents. Broad sanctions (such as those targeting the banking and oil sectors) that affect an entire country's economy inevitably lead to:

- **Reduced government revenues**, which in turn decrease budgets for public services such as health and education
- **Devaluation of the national currency** and runaway inflation, which expand poverty
- **Difficulties in importing medicine, medical equipment, and food production inputs**, directly affecting the population's rights to health and food

The **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, in its General Comment No. 8 (1997) on international sanctions emphasized that states are under an obligation to respect and ensure at least a minimum level of rights enshrined in the Covenant (such as rights related to food, basic health, and primary education) under all circumstances, and that sanctions should not prevent the fulfillment of this obligation.

3. Threat to international peace and security: internationalization of domestic crises

Intervention in the internal affairs of a state transforms a crisis from a domestic challenge into an interstate conflict. When a state (such as the Islamic Republic of Iran) perceives that its sovereignty and national security are being threatened through hybrid warfare (sanctions, psychological operations, support for opposition groups), it considers its inherent right to **self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter** as preserved. This can lead to regional tensions, proxy conflicts, and a vicious cycle of escalating violence. International peace and security, the primary goal of the Charter, depend on mutual respect for sovereign borders.

Conclusion:

The analysis presented clearly demonstrates that the principles of **national sovereignty, the right to crisis management**, and non-intervention are not redundant or obsolete rules; rather, they remain the **foundation of the international legal system and the primary guarantee of order and justice in the international community**. Violating these principles under the pretext of human rights not only fails to solve problems but also deepens, complicates, and internationalizes the crisis. Accordingly, it is essential that institutions and the international community adhere to the following principles in this regard:

1. **Unconditional return to the principles of the Charter:** The Human Rights Council must, in all its actions, recognize the primacy and centrality of the p**rinciples of equality of state sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs**, and structure its work accordingly
2. **Explicit condemnation of unilateral coercive measures:** The United Nations Human Rights Council should, through resolutions or presidential statements, condemn unilateral economic sanctions that lack Security Council authorization and harm the human rights of ordinary citizens, **as actions contrary to international law and the UN Charter**
3. **Effective implementation of objectivity, neutrality, and non-selectivity:** The Human Rights Council should establish stronger internal mechanisms to prevent the adoption of politicized and

selective resolutions against specific countries. Human rights assessments should be conducted through **constructive dialogue, technical cooperation, and with the full consent and participation of the member state concerned**.

4. **Emphasis on positive international obligations:** Instead of condemnation, the international community should focus on its **positive obligations** under the Charter (international cooperation to address economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian issues). Offering assistance for judicial, educational, or social reforms, when requested by the relevant government, is far more effective than issuing judgments.
5. **Strengthening the role of the Universal Periodic Review:** This should be reinforced as the **Council's primary and most credible oversight mechanism**, as it is based on cooperation, inclusivity, and direct dialogue with the state under review.

Only through renewed respect for the fundamental rules governing the peaceful coexistence of states can the Human Rights Council become an institution that genuinely serves the **promotion of global human rights through cooperation, rather than through condemnation and confrontation**.