



Security Council

Eighty-first year

10091st meeting

Thursday, 15 January 2026, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Mohamed Yusuf	(Somalia)
<i>Members:</i>	Bahrain	Ms. Abdulla
	China	Mr. Sun Lei
	Colombia	Mrs. Zalabata Torres
	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mr. Mfulu
	Denmark	Ms. Lassen
	France	Mr. Bonnafont
	Greece.....	Mrs. Balta
	Latvia.....	Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes
	Liberia	Mr. Brown II
	Pakistan.....	Mr. Ahmad
	Panama	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.....	Mr. Young
	United States of America.....	Mr. Waltz

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations; Ms. Masih Alinejad, journalist and political dissident; and Mr. Ahmad Batebi, human rights activist and journalist.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Ms. Pobee.

Ms. Pobee: For nearly three weeks, popular protests in the Islamic Republic of Iran have rapidly evolved into a nationwide upheaval, resulting in significant loss of life. Demonstrations started on 28 December 2025, as a group of shopkeepers in Tehran's Grand Bazaar gathered to protest the sharp collapse of the currency and soaring inflation, amid a wider economic downturn and worsening living conditions. In the following days, demonstrations quickly spread throughout the country and turned into mass anti-government protests, the largest since the Woman, Life, Freedom demonstrations of 2022. Protesters voiced grievances that went beyond long-standing economic and financial hardships. Marchers called for the downfall of the Government and demanded freedom, dignity and human rights, with some protesters chanting pro-monarchy slogans.

The protests were initially peaceful, with scattered clashes between protesters and security forces, according to reports by the media, observations of our United Nations colleagues in the country and accounts by the Government of Iran. However, on the evening of 8 January, protests spread throughout Tehran and major cities. In response, the Iranian authorities imposed a near-total communications blackout, which remains largely in place today. The authorities also ordered university dormitories to be evacuated, erected concrete barriers around city centres and reportedly used excessive force against protesters.

According to media and human rights groups, security forces reportedly killed hundreds or possibly thousands of protesters and bystanders between 8 and 10 January. The United Nations is unable to verify these figures. The Government of Iran has stated that it was compelled to act after what it deemed organized terrorists and rioters infiltrated the protests and opened fire on both security forces and demonstrators, aiming to provoke foreign military intervention. It has also blamed these elements for the killing of hundreds of civilians and members of the security forces.

The Secretary-General has expressed deep concern over the reported excessive use of force in Iran and stressed the urgent need to prevent further casualties. The Secretary-General underscored that all Iranians must be able to express their grievances peacefully and without fear. He stressed that the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, enshrined in international law, must be fully respected and protected. He further stressed that steps must be taken to restore access to information, including lifting the communications blackout.

Human rights monitors report mass arrests in Iran in connection with the current wave of protests, with estimates exceeding 18,000 detainees as of mid-January 2026, although the United Nations cannot verify these figures. We call on the authorities to respect due process and fair trial rights for all detainees. All must be treated humanely and allowed access and visits by their families. In particular, we call on Iran to halt any executions linked to protest-related cases. All deaths should be promptly, independently and transparently investigated. Those responsible for any violations must be held to account in line with international norms and standards.

The situation in Iran is fluid and deeply concerning. Protests continue, albeit reportedly at a smaller scale than last week. In this context, we note with alarm various public statements suggesting possible military strikes on Iran. This external dimension adds volatility to an already combustible situation. All efforts must be undertaken to prevent any further deterioration.

The Secretary-General remains convinced that all concerns regarding Iran, including those related to the nuclear issue and ongoing protests, are best addressed through diplomacy and dialogue. He emphasized that maximum restraint must be exercised at this sensitive moment and calls on all actors to refrain from any actions that could lead to further loss of life or ignite a wider regional escalation.

The Secretary-General reaffirms the principles of the Charter, including the obligation of Member States to settle disputes by peaceful means and the prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations. These principles are not abstract ideals; they are the bedrock of international peace and security. They remain as relevant today as they were when the United Nations was founded.

The President: I thank Ms. Pobee for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Alinejad.

Ms. Alinejad: My name is Masih Alinejad. I am a woman from Iran. I am honoured to be invited by the United States to testify before the United Nations Security Council. I am here today to alert Council members, on behalf of millions of Iranians, to the fact that what is needed now to ensure justice for those who order massacres in Iran is real and concrete action against a regime that does not understand the language of diplomacy.

The United Nations has failed to respond with the urgency this moment demands. The Secretary-General himself has not spoken publicly against the massacre unfolding in Iran. He only issued a written statement through his spokesperson. Silence at this moment sends a signal. It sends a message to the killers of young protesters alongside their family members. I strongly believe that the regime in Iran heard the clear message from the Secretary-General.

I think the members of this body have forgotten the privilege and responsibility of sitting in this chamber. I know the Secretary-General can hear me, so I want to address this to him. Why is he afraid of the Islamic Republic? Millions of unarmed Iranians, innocent and unarmed protesters, have been silenced with bullets, mass arrest, prison and a total communications blackout — no Internet, no cell phones and no landlines. They put Iran into total darkness.

I am here to bring their voices to this Chamber. I am here to tell Council members that a brutal slaughter has taken place in my beloved homeland, Iran, and it will get much worse if the world does not take serious action.

Iran is facing a nationwide uprising that cuts across Iran, across its society, with a clear demand to end the Islamic Republic. At the same time, there is a nationwide campaign by the Islamic Republic to erase it, to silence people. The protests started

on 28 December, sparked by the collapse of the Iranian currency, but they immediately turned into what the Iranian people call it — a revolution, a total rejection of 47 years of tyranny and oppression.

Protests spread to more than 100 cities and involved every layer of society: shopkeepers, workers, teachers, nurses, those who wave the historic lion and sun flag and ethnic minorities, including Kurds, Baluchs and all other minorities — men and women, shoulder to shoulder in the streets. When it comes to freeing Iran, I have to say loud and clear that all Iranians are united. From Tehran to Tabriz, Rasht to Ahvaz, from major cities to small towns and villages of which we have barely even heard the names in the media, they are in the street. Millions of Iranians have flooded into the streets, demanding that their money stop being stolen and sent to Hamas, to Hizbullah, to the Houthis — the money of workers, the money of innocent people, who are now unable to buy bread. The entire nation is looking for freedom right now.

What followed was a regime using military weapons, AK-47s, against innocent people. According to Iran International media broadcasting, the death toll has passed more than 12,000. Just a day later, CBS reported that more than 20,000 people have been killed, and those are not the real numbers; they are not the real statistics. We do not even know the real numbers.

Citizen journalists from inside Iran have sent videos showing piles and piles of body bags on top of each other. Exiled Iranian, because of the Internet shutdown, zoom in to make sure whether their relatives and loved ones are in the body bags or not. I myself have received urgent phone calls and messages from Iranians, thanks to Starlink, inside the country asking the outside world for urgent help. They welcome when President Trump offered to rescue unarmed people being shot in their heart, in their chest, by the security forces inside Iran. One activist, who cannot be named for his safety, told me that the streets are full of dead bodies. They are finishing off the injured in the street. They told me that the security forces have stormed hospitals and are taking away the injured. I have also received multiple messages from families of victims, who say that the security forces forced them to pay money to take the dead body of their loved one to bury them. On 8 January, the Islamic Republic shut down the Internet and imposed a technical blackout, not to stop the protests, because people are fed up and are in the streets everywhere, but to hide its crimes, its brutality. This was not a technical mistake or failure; it was deliberate.

When a regime turns off the Internet during mass killings and at the same time the leaders of the same regime use the privilege of freedom of speech on social media to mislead the rest of the world, it is not about restoring order — it is about destroying the evidence. If it was not for Starlink inside Iran, we would not have been able to have even this information. The Islamic Republic does not limit its crimes to within its own borders. It kills its opponents at home and targets those who expose its brutality abroad, even here on United States soil and in every corner of the world — in Europe, in Canada, in Australia, everywhere — and it is not alone. This is called transnational repression, and the Chinese Government is helping it, Venezuelan dictators are helping it, and Russian mobsters are being hired by the Islamic Republic to target its dissidents and opponents beyond its own borders.

I now address the representative of the Islamic Republic directly. He has tried to kill me three times. I have seen my would-be assassin with my own eyes out front of my garden at my home in Brooklyn, in the United States of America. In the courthouse, I have seen my would-be assassin confessing that they have been hired by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to end my life. What is my crime? It is simply echoing the voice of innocent people killed by the regime. Its leader, Ali Khamenei, ordered my killing. He said that that American agent, who compared the compulsory hijab to the Berlin Wall, must be killed. I am that woman, and I am not

the agent of America. I have agency, but I am thankful to the American Government and law enforcement for protecting my life. And if it were not for the protection of the law enforcement, I would not be here to testify for the millions of people who are facing the same killers and the same terrorist regime in my country. Yes, protection matters.

Unfortunately, I live with survivor's guilt, because many Iranians do not have the same protection. The same IRGC with the same AK-47s killed them before the eyes of their family members. Two would-be assassins received 25-year prison sentences here in New York, and I am going to face two other killers hired by the Islamic Republic in March, and they are the ones who were assigned by the same IRGC member to assassinate President Trump.

The Islamic Republic rules through fear. It makes people disappear from public life, from memory, from history. So, today, I want to record the names of those who refuse to be afraid and erased.

Setayesh Shafiei was 20 years old. Before the Internet was cut, she wrote on her social media: "they are cutting off my Internet, but I love you all". She was killed by the Islamic Republic IRGC. Rebin Moradi, 17 years old, a young football player, was shot in the back. He was killed by the same IRGC. Mehdi Zatparvar, a popular athlete, wrote on his Instagram before going to the street: "I know I may be killed, but I have no fear — I want my rights". He was killed by the same IRGC. Siavash Shirzad was 30 years old. His family begged him not to go to the streets for his safety. He said to his family: "I go to the street to celebrate the victory of our revolution because President Trump promised to rescue our lives". He was killed by the same Revolutionary Guards. Negin Ghadimi, 20 years old, died in her father's arms after being shot by a Revolutionary Guard member.

I feel guilty for not naming the rest. The list of names goes on and on. They knew that they would face guns and bullets, but they wanted justice. So, now let me name their killers: Ali Khamenei, who declared that protesters would be put in their place; Chief Justice Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i and the IRGC commanders, who publicly vowed that the punishment would be the maximum; Ali Larijani, who promised no mercy for those who questioned the regime, while his own daughter and his own family live here in the United States of America. They do not deserve to enjoy the privilege of freedom in America. Like the other children and relatives of the Ayatollah, saying death to America, their relatives live here in America.

Three years ago, another Iranian human rights defender stood here in this Chamber to warn members about another nationwide protest — Women, Life, Freedom — after the murder of Mahsa Jina Amini for the crime of simply showing a bit of her hair. How many women are sitting here? They could easily get killed simply for showing their hair. Mahsa got killed. That sparked a revolution. And women and men took to the street shoulder to shoulder, and more than 700 people were killed.

We have seen this before. We have more names to remember. In 2009, there is Neda Agha-Soltan, a symbol of the more than 100 people who were killed and had called on President Obama to protect them. President Obama was looking to open the doors of diplomacy to a regime whose language of negotiating with its own people is guns and bullets.

We saw this in 2019 with Pouya Bakhtiari, who was killed in front of his mother, Nahid Shirpisheh. At the same time, President Biden was trying to keep the doors of diplomacy open, handing out billions of dollars to the regime that forced the family members to pay the regime to take back the dead body of their loved one.

Faced with a regime that uses military weapons against civilians, the Iranian people are asking the world to help through actions, not through back-to-back meetings and empty condemnation. We do not need empty words. The people of Iran are telling the Council that the Islamic Republic can no longer be reformed and are asking the Council to no longer treat the Islamic Republic as a legitimate Government.

The number of people killed today is much higher than what I told the Council. I repeat that this regime cannot be reformed. Let me be very clear: the Islamic Republic behaves like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham (ISIS), and the Islamic Republic must be treated like ISIS. That is how the Council can save lives.

The President: I thank Ms. Alinejad for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Batebi.

Mr. Batebi: I have a note here, but I do not want to read from it. I want to speak from the heart and share my experience with the Council of being in the prison of the Islamic Republic.

My name is Ahmad Batebi, an Iranian-American journalist and human rights activist. A few years ago, when I was a student, the Iranian regime arrested me and sent me to jail for attending a demonstration, exactly the kind of thing we see in the streets right now in Iran. I was told that demonstrating against the Government, the Islamic regime in Iran, is fighting the Government, and that the regime is a representative of God, of Allah, on Earth. Therefore, fighting the regime is fighting God. And based on the Islamic rule, sharia, my punishment is death.

The regime gave me capital punishment and sent me to jail. The regime kept me in solitary confinement for two years. It tortured me many times, including with fake executions. It killed other people and, to torture me, kept me there to watch them die, three times. The regime cut me and put salt on my wounds. If Council members do not believe me, I can show them my body right now, so that they can see the marks.

The regime tortured me mentally and physically for many reasons. One of the reasons — one of its demands — was to bring me in front of a State television camera for me to tell people that I was a spy for the United States. The regime tortured me. I said that I had received money from the United States, the Mossad, Israel and the Central Intelligence Agency to lead demonstrations against the Government. I never did that, but the regime tortured me to force me to say that.

We see the exact same situation in Iran right now. On State television, one can see many innocent people on the streets chanting for their rights, and the Iranian regime then puts them in front of the camera to affirm that they are Mossad agents.

I am here now. After one decade in prison, I had a chance to escape from prison, and this country, the United States of America, opened its doors to me. I came here, and I am safe here. I am here in front of the representative of the demonic regime in Iran, the Ayatollah regime. When we talk about the Iranian regime, we are not talking about a normal regime. We are talking about a demonic cult. It has its own ideology, it has guns, it has money, and its mission is to export its ideology to other countries. I do not want to talk about the details, but this is its mission.

The regime has a technique. It has some chief apologists, whose job is to come here, clean the face of the regime and wash its bloody hands. But it does not work anymore, because I am here. I am here in front of the representative of the regime. It tried to kill me but could not. The regime cannot kill all the people. I tell the representative of the regime not to laugh at me — the day will come when we stand over him, and he will have to go to court and answer for all of the things he is doing here today. Do not laugh at me.

Two days ago, I was talking to someone who worked for the Government. He said that the media reported that 12,000 people died during these days of demonstration. That is correct. But the actual number is much higher than that, because the Iranian regime is burying the dead without any identification. It is not even giving their families a chance to retrieve their bodies. It is burying them in unknown cemeteries. The number of dead is much higher than that.

I was talking to an activist in Iran. He said that many of those now killing people in the street are Iranian regime's proxy forces: al-Hashd al-Sha'bi from Iraq; Hizbullah from Lebanon; and the Fatemiyoun Division — or is it the Zainabiyoun Division — from Afghanistan. He said that many of the people who are shooting at us do not even speak Farsi. They speak Arabic with an Iraqi accent.

Masih has already given details about everything I said. The only thing the Council has to know is this: the Iranian people have shown a lot of bravery during these days, but it is not enough. One cannot go fight a demonic regime like the Islamic Republic, which has guns, ammunition, money, power and more. We need the Council's help — not just condemnation or telling the regime, "this it is bad. Do not do that." We need actual action. We need physical action.

I want to say to the President of the United States, Mr. Donald Trump, that I appreciate him. Everything he does is awesome. During these days, he encouraged people to go into the street. That was a good thing. But I ask him to not leave them alone. They need his help. He encouraged them, and they are in the street. I ask him to please listen to them. They are chanting, they are saying what they want, and they need his help. And I am talking here to all the official leaders of the world. We need their help. If they leave the people on their own, we cannot change the regime in Iran, and this mass killing and genocide in Iran will continue.

The President: I thank Mr. Batebi for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Waltz (United States of America): I thank the President for presiding over today's important meeting. And I thank our briefers, both of whom have been personally targeted for assassination and both of whom have been tortured at the hands of this brutal regime. I thank them for their courage, for their strength and for coming today to speak on behalf of the Iranian people.

Let me be clear: the level of violence and repression that the Iranian regime has unleashed on its own citizens, its own people, has repercussions for international peace and security. The Council is going to hear today that it does not, that it is an internal matter. That is absolutely wrong and false. This demands the Council's attention.

The people of Iran are demanding their freedom like never before in the Islamic Republic's brutal history. Unarmed, peaceful people, who love their country, are taking to the streets in pursuit of their legitimate aspirations for a better future. This is our message: President Donald J. Trump and the United States of America stand by the brave people of Iran.

Regardless of its excuses — and the Council will hear many today from the Iranian regime and its friends — the regime is solely responsible for the economic misery of the Iranian people and the repression of their freedom, and it will be held accountable.

The estimates of the number of protesters killed by the regime so far range from the thousands to the tens of thousands, although visibility into the totality of the

violence has been deliberately obscured by the regime's nationwide Internet blackout. Why has the internet been shut down for weeks? Why have the phone lines been cut? Why are commercial satellite communications being jammed in a very sophisticated manner? We have had a complete blackout: no Internet, no phones, nothing. Only thanks to the Starlink system do we even have some window — a limited window — into the ongoing atrocities.

President Trump has been clear: he will not — nor should the international community — tolerate innocents being slaughtered in the streets.

Since 1979, for decades, the regime has posed a threat to peace and security. In the name of a religious ideology, the regime calls for death to America and the annihilation of Israel. Even as its own citizens cannot afford the very basics — food, drinking water and very basic medicines — it spends billions to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes to threaten its neighbours and the world in its support of terrorism.

From its inception, the regime has been the world's number one State sponsor of terrorism, so declared year after year, bringing uncountable death and suffering to innocents from Beirut all the way to Buenos Aires, while its rulers have grown rich from oppression and misery meted out to the Iranian people. The Iranian regime has also been a serial human rights abuser from its very first day in power.

As the Council heard today, young women like Mahsa Amini have been murdered for daring to uncover their hair in public, while religious minorities have been subjected to the most severe persecution. These abuses have been documented right here by this body. They have been documented at length by the United Nations and by the Secretary-General's own regular reports on the situation of human rights in Iran, the most recent of which was released just last year, in 2025 (A/HRC/59/22).

In addition to the gross human rights abuses, in addition to its illegal march towards a nuclear weapon, we now know that in 1979 the regime, led by Ayatollah Khomeini, gave support to radical students, who attacked the United States Embassy in Tehran, took more than 50 Americans hostage and held them in captivity for over 400 days. That was followed by the bombing attack on the United States Embassy in Beirut, killing 17 Americans and scores of Lebanese civilians. That was followed by the support and direction of terrorists who drove two trucks filled with explosives into United States and French barracks in Beirut, killing 241 American soldiers and 58 French military personnel, all part of a multinational force invited by the Lebanese Government. It is responsible for the deaths of over 600 American service members and countless others in Iraq.

The bottom line is that Iran's partners and proxies, with Iranian weaponry, documented by the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), concerning Yemen, have repeatedly attacked our partners in the Gulf and attempted to damage global energy infrastructure.

Finally, the Iranian regime's State television amplifies calls for a "one-bomb solution" to wipe Israel off the map, which, ironically, would be a massacre of not only all Israelis but also all Palestinian people, whom the regime claims to support.

In 2011, the regime attempted to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador to the United States in Washington, D.C. Luckily, the attempt was thwarted. Furthermore, the regime has continued to plot assassination attempts against the President of the United States, President Trump, and other senior United States Government officials, in addition to those living here in the United States who dare to speak out.

Iran has destabilized the Middle East for decades. It has supported and enabled Hamas' brutality, its hostage-taking and its heinous 7 October 2023 attacks. It has

funded Hizbullah, and it has funded the Houthis and Iranian-aligned militia groups in Iraq, including Kata'ib Hizbullah. It has attacked the United States in the region again and again. It backed the brutal Al- Assad regime. At every turn, the regime has put terrorist proxies in other nations ahead of the welfare of its own citizens.

As a result of the regime's actions — putting money in the pockets of terrorists and funding its nuclear and missile programmes instead of the basic needs of the people of Iran — Iranians have had enough. The regime's dereliction of duty to its own citizens is what has put the ayatollahs in the position they are in today, with hundreds of thousands, if not millions, protesting in the streets after decades of neglect and abuse.

Everyone sitting here today should ask themselves: how many people are dead, wounded, maimed or abused in the Middle East — in Israel, Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq — and even in Venezuela because of the regime's support for terrorism as the largest State sponsor?

I would like to address the allegation put forward by the regime that these inspired protests are somehow a foreign plot to serve as a precursor to military action. Everyone in the world needs to know that the regime is weaker than ever before and, therefore, is putting forward this lie because of the power of the Iranian people in the streets. The regime is afraid; it is afraid of its own people.

Iran says that it is ready for dialogue, but its actions say otherwise. This is a regime that rules through oppression, violence and intimidation, and it has destabilized the Middle East for decades. Enough is enough. We all have a responsibility to support the Iranian people and to put an end to the regime's neglect and oppression of the Iranian nation.

Let me be clear: President Trump is a man of action, not endless talk, like we see at the United Nations. He has made it clear that all options are on the table to stop the slaughter, and no one should know that better than the leadership of the Iranian regime.

Mr. Brown II (Liberia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and my own country, Liberia.

The A3 thanks Assistant Secretary-General Pobee for her comprehensive briefing. We listened carefully to the remarks offered by civil society representatives. We welcome the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to this meeting.

We underscore the importance of respecting human rights, fundamental freedoms and the legitimate aspirations of peaceful demonstrators and call upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint and protect civilians. The A3 notes reports of ongoing protests and demonstrations across numerous cities and provinces, involving a broad cross-section of the Iranian population, including youth, women, workers and members of minority communities. The A3 is concerned by reports that reactions to these protests and demonstrations have led to a significant number of deaths, arrests and destruction of property. Reports of the use of excessive force, including live ammunition and raids on hospitals, are alarming and unacceptable.

We note the letter of the Iranian Government circulated as a document of the Council (S/2026/29), as well as the underlying socioeconomic drivers of these protests, which include deteriorating economic and social conditions. The A3 recognizes that each country bears the primary responsibility for addressing its internal issues through its own constitutional processes, other legal frameworks and national institutions. However, we underscore the primacy of the Charter of the

United Nations and relevant international obligations and emphasize that the protection of civilians must remain paramount under all circumstances.

The A3 believes that dialogue, inclusivity and genuine engagement are essential tools for addressing tensions and grievances in a peaceful and sustainable manner in every society. Therefore, we encourage all actors in Iran to exercise maximum restraint and to seek peaceful, constructive and inclusive dialogue, with full respect for the rule of law, the rights of citizens and the protection of civilians.

The A3 emphasizes the necessity of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran and feels compelled to remind leaders of their obligations to their citizens, including the right to live in peace and security and to express themselves within the boundaries of the law. Separately but connected, the A3 takes note of the broader regional and international context in which these events are unfolding, including their intersection with long-standing issues related to the nuclear file and regional security dynamics, which underscores the risk of broader repercussions. That point was made by the Assistant Secretary-General.

In this regard, the A3 reaffirms the central role of the global non-proliferation regime, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Transparency and sustained diplomatic engagement remain essential to building trust and reducing the risk of miscalculation. We encourage all concerned parties to refrain from rhetoric or actions that could escalate tensions and, instead, to prioritize dialogue and confidence-building measures that support regional and international stability.

In conclusion, the A3 reiterates that all parties should exercise restraint and responsibility, uphold international law and avoid any action that could escalate tensions and threaten regional stability. The A3 stands ready to support all efforts geared towards accountability, including within the Council, and, in cooperation with regional partners, intends to facilitate a peaceful, inclusive and lasting resolution in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Since the end of December, the entire world has been watching as the United States continues to escalate tensions and fuel hysteria around Iran, declaring that help is already on the way. Moreover, in its official statements, Washington has not even tried to cover up the genuine reasons for its alleged concern over the country's internal political situation, while threatening new strikes against Iran.

Today's meeting, convened by our American colleagues, is nothing more than yet another attempt to justify blatant aggression and interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign State. As Washington put it, if Iran's authorities do not come to their senses, then Washington will solve the Iranian problem in its favourite way, through strikes aimed at overthrowing an undesirable regime. To lend credibility to their actions and to justify them, they have invited today's briefers — individuals who have been living in the United States for approximately 20 years and who have been promoting an anti-Iranian agenda in Washington's interests. These so-called briefers cannot speak on behalf of the Iranian people.

We firmly reject all attempts by the United States to waste Council members' valuable time on briefings that serve only the interests and positions of those who convened this meeting and that are in no way related to issues of international peace and security. What just took place was nothing more than a circus, an embarrassment, a cheap show that is unbecoming of members of the Council.

We have carefully studied the letters circulated in the Security Council in recent days from the Iranian mission. We express our solidarity with the people of Iran and

mourn all innocent victims. We note that hostile external forces are seeking to exploit the current situation in an attempt to overthrow a Government they find objectionable and to destroy the Islamic Republic of Iran as a sovereign and independent State.

At the same time, we note that the authorities in Tehran have declared and reaffirmed their commitment to their international obligations, including respect for human rights and ensuring conditions for the peaceful expression of public opinion, while fulfilling their inherent duty to protect the lives of citizens and preserve public order and the territorial integrity of the country. As far as we can tell, the protest momentum has begun to subside, and the situation is gradually normalizing. The Government of Iran has taken the necessary measures to stabilize the economic situation and has established a constructive dialogue with the public in order to address emerging issues. Mass rallies have taken place in Iran, in which Iranian citizens expressed their support for Iran's Supreme Leader and its independent course.

The Russian Federation is convinced that today's Council meeting should be approached through the lens of its mandate to maintain international peace and security and uphold international law, rather than through the lens of Iran's internal political affairs.

Violations of these norms and principles in the current situation are obvious. They include the extremely dangerous and irresponsible rhetoric employed recent days by United States leadership, which has gone as far as openly calling for the takeover of State institutions in Iran and threatening to provide assistance to protesters. Such statements are nothing less than an incitement to violently overthrow the constitutional order of a sovereign State. They constitute a gross violation of Article 2, paragraphs 4 and 7, of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibit the threat or use of force and enshrine the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of States.

What is happening on the streets of Iranian cities in recent days has gone far beyond peaceful protests. There have been documented cases of the use of firearms, the killing of law enforcement officers and civilians, arson attacks on medical facilities and public institutions, as well as attacks on emergency services facilities. These actions cannot be covered up by the smokescreen of freedom of expression or the protection of human rights.

What is happening in Iran is yet another example of the use of tried and tested methods of "colour revolutions," in which specially trained armed provocateurs turn peaceful protests into senseless violence, riots, destruction of public property and brutal murders of police officers, State security personnel and peaceful protesters, including children.

As we have seen time and again in a number of countries, all these actions are either orchestrated or supported by external forces that are interested in so-called "regime change". In fact, in the current situation, these external forces are not even bothering to hide their involvement in violent actions, especially given that the President of the United States has openly called on protesters to take over Iranian State institutions. The United States and its cheerleaders are actively exploiting the economic and social problems of ordinary Iranians, caused by the unlawful sanctions pressure imposed on Iran by Western countries. They are using sanctions to stir up public tensions and destabilize the domestic political situation.

The current situation fits in clearly with Washington's declared policy, supported by its allies, of "maximum pressure" on Tehran in order to advance their own political interests in the Middle East. They are using every means available to achieve this. That includes not only unlawful unilateral sanctions, imposed in circumvention of the Security Council and in blatant violation of the principles of the

United Nations Charter, but also unceremonious blackmail of other States through raising trade tariffs. Our Western colleagues have no qualms about using the Security Council as a tool to promote their delusional agenda, which is divorced from reality.

The most striking example of this is the attempt by the United Kingdom, France and Germany to create the illusion of reinstating anti-Iranian Security Council resolutions by allegedly triggering the “snapback” mechanism provided for in resolution 2231 (2015). The justification for this was the Western countries’ fabrication about some sort of threat to international peace and security posed by Iran’s peaceful nuclear programme. This is despite the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency Director General has never reached such conclusions in his reports on this matter or found any evidence of the diversion of nuclear material for military purposes, and the entire crisis surrounding the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was provoked by Washington’s unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal in 2018. Nevertheless, the E3 — France, Germany and the United Kingdom — continues to promote its baseless narrative and deepen divisions within the Security Council.

What is most concerning is Washington’s aggressive course towards the use of military force and threats to use it against Iran. We condemn such actions, no matter arguments are used to justify them, as a gross violation of international law and the United Nations Charter.

We strongly urge the hotheads in Washington and other capitals, who seem to be contemplating a repeat military adventure, to come to their senses and avoid a repetition of the tragedy of June 2025, when United States-Israeli aggression nearly resulted in a major nuclear catastrophe, with irreversible humanitarian and environmental consequences. We demand that the United States and its partners refrain from further reckless decisions and actions, including those concerning nuclear facilities. Instead, they should focus on providing solid assurances against further confrontation and resume joint efforts in search of possible solutions, inter alia with a view to addressing prejudices regarding Iran’s peaceful nuclear programme. All this should be done on the basis of international law and seeking the balance of interests of all parties concerned. Our country stands ready to assist in every possible way.

The Russian Federation decisively condemns all forms of external interference, incitement to violence and threats to use force against the friendly nation of Iran. We urge the conveners of today’s meeting to stop presenting themselves as global judges and to put an end to their escalatory actions. Their actions risk plunging the region into even bloodier chaos, which may easily spill over beyond its borders. Specifically, we would like to appeal to our colleagues on the Council and to all United Nations Member to prevent a new large-scale escalation and ensure that the Security Council is not used to justify unlawful scenarios for regime change, spread accusations and label the legitimate authorities of a sovereign State.

Mrs. Balta (Greece): I would like to thank Ms. Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, as well as Ms. Alinejad and Mr. Batebi for their briefings today.

Greece is following developments in Iran with deep concern. The continued escalation of violence and the use of force against protesters, the loss of human life, including of children, and the widespread arrests are utterly condemnable.

Fundamental rights, including the inherent right to life, the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly, are universal rights and must be fully respected by all, without discrimination or exception. Any form of violent repression is unacceptable, and this is all the more true when it results in the loss of life. Violence of this kind must be absolutely condemned.

The use of force against individuals exercising fundamental rights can never be justified and must always be unequivocally rejected. The death penalty imposed merely as a result of people exercising a fundamental right constitutes an affront to justice. Such unjust actions gravely undermine respect for human dignity and fundamental rights. It is very important that no sentences be carried out against those demonstrating in favour of freedom.

At the same time, Greece recalls that full respect for international law and for the Charter of the United Nations remains paramount. Current developments on the ground, no matter how dire, should not lead to further escalation. No matter how difficult, dialogue remains the only viable path forward for the rights and the prosperity of the Iranian people. Greece firmly believes that this is the only way to address legitimate social grievances, prevent further violence and avert the risk of a wider regional conflagration.

In closing, Greece reiterates its belief in the need for de-escalation, dialogue and the peaceful resolution of the current crisis, in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Mr. Alfaro de Alba (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We express our gratitude to Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, Ms. Martha Pobe, for her detailed briefing and to Mr. Ahmad Batebi and Ms. Masih Alinejad for their respective briefings. We also welcome the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his delegation.

The Republic of Panama expresses its deep concern about the public protests unfolding in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which demonstrate the widespread discontent of the civilian population. The protests were initially peaceful but have since been violently suppressed. These events have been met with a disproportionate response from the Iranian authorities, who tend to intimidate citizens who express their opinions.

Owing to blackouts in the country's communication systems, it is difficult to objectively verify the facts, which means that there is little reliable information about the current situation, and it is not possible to confirm the information that is circulating. However, thanks to the efforts of various independent media outlets, non-governmental organizations and courageous Iranians, worrisome figures have come to light. According to those reports, the number of fatalities could be as high as 2,000 or more, and a considerable number of people have been injured or detained. In this context, there is legitimate concern about the possibility that the Government will carry out summary trials and executions of those detained during the nationwide protests.

In this regard, Panama rejects any type of execution in which the accused has not been offered the guarantees of defence and due process in accordance with international law. Such guarantees must never be applied selectively or with double standards. Many detainees could face this fate in flagrant violation of all procedural guarantees and fundamental rights protected by international law and enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly enshrined in international law must be fully respected and protected by all States.

The recent protests are the result of the deterioration of an economically and socially exhausted regime and of actions of the regime itself that have progressively worsened the daily life of the population and have affected in particular Iranian women and girls, preventing their education, their participation in public life and their

autonomy. Events in recent years have highlighted the need to guarantee women's legitimate right to exercise their fundamental rights in a safe and dignified manner.

However, it is also important to recognize that the economic isolation imposed by the international community may also have contributed to some extent to the breakdown of the social fabric in Iran, directly affecting the civilian population and exacerbating internal tensions. We therefore call on all actors to offer their support in a constructive manner and to avoid imposing additional pressure that could aggravate the situation. It is essential that the international community act with great responsibility and prudence, taking care not to cause adverse effects with unpredictable consequences that further affect the already suffering Iranian population or contribute to escalating tensions, so that the cure does not turn out to be worse than the disease.

We also urge the Iranian authorities to immediately cease and refrain from any violent or disproportionate action against the civilian population and to urgently facilitate a constructive space for peaceful dialogue. Similarly, we encourage measures to ensure access to information and communication, including the restoration of services that have been interrupted, as transparency is essential to building trust and preventing further escalation of tensions.

It is essential that human rights be respected, the safety of citizens guaranteed and the legitimate demands of society effectively addressed in order to restore stability in the country.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobe for her briefing on behalf of the Secretariat.

Let me also note the importance of objectivity and competence as regards the briefings by representatives of civil society for an informed discussion. And needless to re-emphasize here, there must be respect for decorum in the Security Council.

We have been carefully observing developments in Iran and the region in recent days. New threats to regional peace and stability are emerging at a time of heightened tensions and thus remain a serious cause of concern.

Iran is an immediate neighbour of Pakistan and a brotherly country. The people of our two nations share deep-rooted historical, friendly, cultural and religious bonds. We hope for an early normalization of the situation in Iran, and express support for all diplomatic efforts aimed at regional peace and stability. A stable and peaceful Iran is in the interest of Pakistan, the region and beyond. We have full confidence in the wisdom of the Iranian people and leadership, rooted in their rich culture, ancient civilization, history and resilience, in addressing all challenges.

The fundamental principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations are inviolable and sacrosanct. The Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against other States' territorial integrity or independence and interference in matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States. Any external interference in the domestic affairs of States is inconsistent with international law and the principles of the Charter of United Nations.

We strongly believe that all disputes must be resolved through peaceful means and in accordance with international law. Continued hostilities, the use of force and unilateral actions will only take us further away from the resolution of core issues and cause unnecessary humanitarian suffering. The threat or use of force would only aggravate the situation and undermine regional and international peace and stability.

All parties must exercise restraint, act responsibly, strictly stay within the bounds of international law and eschew any action that will be detrimental to regional

and international peace and security. Diplomacy and dialogue should be the guiding principles for achieving a negotiated settlement of all contentious issues in accordance with the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the parties concerned. Pakistan has consistently advocated the primacy of diplomatic engagement and the imperative of avoiding confrontation and conflict in a region already beset by tensions and volatility.

We sincerely hope that the situation in Iran will soon return to calm and normalcy, free from any internal turmoil or external pressure, and all relevant parties will return to the negotiating table to find a lasting solution to their differences on the basis of mutual respect and understanding.

Mr. Sun Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobe for her briefing and welcome the participation of the representative of Iran in today's meeting.

China and Russia have made their position clear to all Council members regarding the United States invitation of the relevant briefers.

Recent developments in Iran have drawn widespread attention. China notes that the Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs addressed these matters in his letter to the Secretary-General (see S/2026/30). For some time now, the United States has continued its rhetoric on the situation in Iran and has openly threatened to use force against Iran. As a result, the clouds of war are gathering over the Middle East, and tensions in the region continue to escalate.

China has always advocated adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We oppose the use or threat of force in international relations, the imposition of one's will upon other countries and any regression of the world to the law of the jungle. Sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs are basic principles of international law and the most fundamental norms governing modern international relations. Iran is an independent, sovereign State. Iran's affairs should be decided independently by the Iranian people. China supports safeguarding Iran's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity and calls on the international community to support the Iranian people and Government in overcoming current difficulties and in maintaining national security and social stability.

The use of force can never solve problems. It will only make them more complex and intractable. Any military adventurism would only push the region towards an unpredictable abyss. We urge the United States to abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and abandon its fixation on the use of force, and we call on all parties to exercise restraint and work together to play their due role in maintaining international peace and security.

At present, the Middle East remains the most fragile region in the global security landscape, with the risks of turmoil and conflict persistently high. The people of the region have a strong desire for peace and development. China has noted the grave concerns expressed by the vast majority of regional countries regarding military confrontation and their sincere expectation for disputes to be resolved peacefully through dialogue. China hopes that the United States and other relevant parties will take the calls of the international community and regional countries seriously and do more for peace and stability in the Middle East, rather than the opposite. All countries should play a constructive role in promoting peace and ending conflicts, avoid exacerbating tensions and refrain from adding fuel to the fire.

Peace and development are the shared aspirations of all peoples. History has repeatedly proven that an obsession with force, relentless pressure and wanton

interference only generate more conflict and hatred. No country has the power to dictate another's future, and no action that defies international law can be tolerated. We call on the international community to stand on the right side of history and on the side of fairness and justice and work tirelessly for peace and stability in the Middle East and global peace and tranquillity.

Ms. Abdulla (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Kingdom of Bahrain is closely following developments in the Islamic Republic of Iran with grave concern and calls on the authorities in Iran to exercise restraint and avert any escalation or violence that could lead to significant loss of life and property and grave repercussions for the security and stability of the region.

The Kingdom also extends its heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims affected by these unfortunate events.

In the light of these recent developments, the Kingdom of Bahrain reaffirms that the primary responsibility for promoting and protecting human rights rests with the State in accordance with its obligations under international law, including the relevant international treaties and rules and customs. The Kingdom of Bahrain also affirms the need to safeguard the best interests of the Iranian people and fulfil their aspirations for security and stability in the country and the region.

In conclusion, in view of its commitment to fostering regional and global peace and stability, the Kingdom of Bahrain stresses the need to avert any developments that could have broader regional repercussions.

Mr. Young (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobe, Ms. Masih Alinejad and Mr. Ahmad Batebi. We welcome this timely meeting.

The United Kingdom is appalled by the reports that potentially thousands of people in Iran have been killed and many more arrested in the most brutal repression of public protests in decades. Despite the regime's near-total Internet shutdown, videos emerging from Iran indicate that reports may underestimate the full scale of the horror currently under way. The regime will claim that these protests were instigated by foreign-backed forces but lies and propaganda cannot justify its actions. This behaviour is not an aberration on the part of this regime; it is the latest manifestation of the repression and brutality we have witnessed time and time again. Let me be clear: we condemn the regime's actions in the strongest possible terms. We pay tribute to the courage of the Iranian people, in particular Iranian women. Once again, they are bravely voicing their aspirations to live in freedom and dignity in the face of repression and violence.

As my Prime Minister stated alongside his French and German counterparts, we urge Iran to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of its people, including the right to protest without fear of violence or oppression. Iranian authorities must protect their people, not brutalize them. Iran must urgently change course. We have delivered this message directly to Minister for Foreign Affairs Araghchi. As the Group of Seven has made clear, we will act alongside our partners to impose additional restrictive measures if Iran does not. As my Foreign Secretary has said, the world is watching. The United Kingdom will continue to confront the regime's misinformation, call out its repression and support regional peace and security.

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): I thank the Somali presidency for acting swiftly to convene this meeting; the gravity of the situation in Iran warrants this timely discussion. I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobe for her briefing and the civil society briefers Ms. Alinejad and Mr. Batebi for sharing their insights and personal experiences.

Once again, the Iranian people have taken to the streets to bravely voice their demands for a better life — a life in freedom, dignity and prosperity. And once again, they have been met with sheer brutality and ferocious violence. We are deeply concerned about the reports that several thousand protesters were killed by the Iranian security forces, and, as we have heard from Assistant Secretary-General Pobee, more than 18,000 were arrested. Iran's brutal crackdown on the protesters is unacceptable. We strongly condemn these killings and the use of violence, arbitrary detention and intimidation tactics by the security forces against the protesters. These actions must stop. All Iranians must be able to express their grievances peacefully and without fear. We urge the Iranian authorities to exercise maximum restraint to avoid the unnecessary and disproportionate use of force.

We stand in full solidarity with the Iranian people, while they exercise their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. We call on Iran to comply with its obligations under international human rights law and to ensure unhindered access to information and communication, including access to the Internet, for all Iranians.

Loud and clear, again and again, we hear the Iranians lift their voices for a better life and for their rights to be respected. For too long, the leaders in Tehran have not heeded this call. The time has now come for the Government of Iran to finally listen and to respond to the will of its people through peaceful means. We urge them to start today.

Mrs. Zalabata Torres (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this briefing. I extend my gratitude to the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa, as well as to the briefers, for their presentations.

Colombia reaffirms, as it has historically done in this Organization and also in the Council since its first day as an elected member, that its position will always be guided by international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations: commitment to peace, the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for human rights, applicable in all contexts and without exception.

Freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association are universal rights enshrined in international human rights law, whose validity admits no exceptions or relativizations. These freedoms must be guaranteed throughout the world, without differential treatment, as an essential condition for legitimacy, peace and democracy. The systematic nature of repression, criminalization and censorship, in response to the free exercise of the right to protest, is unjustifiable in any circumstance, constitutes a serious human rights violation and undermines the foundations of the rule of law.

In this context, we view with deep concern the events unfolding in Iran, including the use of the death penalty and other forms of repression in response to peaceful demonstrations. We are also alarmed by the use of expedited judicial proceedings that do not guarantee due process, in clear breach of international obligations. We are also concerned about censorship and restrictions on information, and we therefore believe that safe access for the international press and the restoration of the Internet must be guaranteed immediately.

The human rights situation for women in Iran remains alarming. Particularly disturbing is the disproportionate impact that the crackdown on protests may have on women, who have also played a central and leading role in these protests.

Colombia emphatically calls on all members to respect, protect, guarantee and fulfil all human rights for all persons. We stress the need to ensure accountability in

all cases, in order to prevent impunity and ensure access to justice and reparation for victims.

It is imperative to de-escalate tensions and avoid actions that could deepen the confrontation. Likewise, my country emphasizes the need for restraint. Any rhetoric or action that points to an escalation, including the threat of the unilateral use of force, carries serious risks for stability in a region already marked by highly volatile dynamics, and could even compromise international peace and security.

In conclusion, my country insists that only inclusive dialogue, involving all segments of the Iranian population, can offer a sustainable solution. Lasting solutions are not imposed by force, but are built through peaceful, participatory processes under national leadership.

Given the gravity of the situation, it is incumbent upon the Council to remain vigilant and to ensure the protection of the civilian population, full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and accountability for violations committed.

Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes (Latvia): Let me thank Assistant Secretary-General Pobeë for today's briefing. Also, I would like to thank Ms. Alinejad and Mr. Batebi for sharing their very personal and courageous testimonies.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has once again launched a war against its own people. It is killing innocent Iranians. As we sit here today, hundreds of thousands of brave Iranians, exhausted by repression and economic deprivation, are standing up for their freedom. On the streets across the country, they demand basic rights and human dignity. These demands are met with brutality, violence and censorship by the regime.

The failing Iranian regime is trying to hide its crimes behind a total telecommunications and Internet blackout. But it is not possible to hide the truth. Iran's State forces are killing protesters by the thousands. They are arresting and torturing Iranians to suppress and intimidate their own citizens.

Latvia stands in solidarity with the people of Iran who are claiming their legitimate rights to live their lives and decide their future freely. We demand that the Iranian authorities immediately stop the killings. All detained protesters must be released. All unjustifiable court sentences and threats of execution must end.

For decades, the Iranian regime has been playing a destabilizing role across the Middle East and beyond. It continues to pursue its illegal nuclear programme. It has persistently avoided re-establishing credible, verifiable cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The regime has supported, financed and armed various proxy forces and terrorist groups, including Hamas, Hizbullah and the Houthis. This has gravely undermined regional security and prosperity. The continued material support of the Iranian regime for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is despicable. Iranian weapons and technology are also used to destroy Ukrainian cities and commit atrocities against the Ukrainian people. Iran has chosen to supply and support the aggressors, while its own people have been driven to despair.

For far too long, the Iranian regime has posed an unacceptable threat to global peace and security. We condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the brutal actions of the regime and reiterate our support for the brave Iranian people.

Mr. Bonnafont (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Ms. Marta Pobeë, Ms. Masih Alinejad and Mr. Ahmad Batebi for their briefings.

We meet today to discuss the situation in Iran, and the briefings just delivered illustrated for us the extreme gravity of what is happening right before our eyes. Since 28 December, intolerable State violence has been unleashed against protestors who have mobilized across Iran in order to peacefully express their legitimate aspirations for dignity, freedom and respect for their fundamental rights. The innocent victims of this repression now number in the thousands.

Already in 2009, 2019 and 2022, the Iranian authorities had violently suppressed peaceful protests by the Iranian people, who had risen up for their dignity and their rights. We remember the death of Mahsa Amini in September 2022 at the hands of the Iranian morality police.

France condemns the widespread and deliberate use of violence by the Iranian security forces. We condemn the arbitrary detention of thousands of protestors. We condemn the Internet shutdowns across the country, aimed at imposing silence regarding the brutality of the repression. France expresses its solidarity with the victims and stands alongside the Iranian people, who are peacefully protesting for their rights and their freedom. We urge the Iranian authorities to comply with their international obligations and to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Iranian people, in particular freedom of expression, the right to information and freedom of peaceful assembly. The President of the French Republic, Mr. Emmanuel Macron, has spoken out in this regard. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs stated it plainly to his Iranian counterpart, and the Iranian Ambassador in Paris was informed of this in the clearest possible terms when he was summoned to the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs two days ago. We also reiterate our call for the immediate and unconditional release of all arbitrarily detained prisoners in Iran and the suspension of the death penalty. We call for the rapid convening of a special session of the Human Rights Council to address the situation in Iran and to task the dedicated mechanisms to investigate human rights violations.

Given the scale and brutality of the repression, the international community and the Security Council cannot look the other way. It is for the Iranian people, and them alone, to decide their destiny. However, our collective responsibility is to denounce the violence and repression to which they are subjected as they express their legitimate aspirations. As the President of the Republic recalled, respect for fundamental freedoms is a universal requirement. The Iranian authorities' brutal denial of this requirement constitutes both a violation of the State's responsibilities towards its people and an additional threat to international peace and security. The Council's vigilance is all the more justified given that the situation carries a very worrisome risk of escalation; that Iran, as we know, continues to endanger regional security through its support for non-State armed groups affiliated with it; and that it continues to defy the international non-proliferation regime by pursuing a threatening ballistic missile programme and a nuclear programme, the peaceful purposes of which cannot be verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

With its European and Group of Seven partners, France stands ready to impose additional restrictive measures on individuals and entities involved in the repression of protests in Iran. France calls on the Council to not turn its eyes away from what is happening in Iran. We call on all its members to urge Iranian authorities to respond to the legitimate aspirations of their people and to put an end to the violence and bloody repression directed against the protestors.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Darzi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Let me state from the outset our firm objection to the participation of the so-called representatives of civil society. I must

be absolutely clear: both briefers, imposed by the representative of the United States regime under this false label, do not represent Iran's civil society. They represent the political agendas of the United States and Israeli regimes. They have lived outside Iran for more than two decades and have consistently engaged in incitement to violence and the promotion of extremist and terrorist activities, including advocating and facilitating the use of lethal force against law enforcement officers. Their presence here is therefore neither legitimate nor credible, and it fundamentally undermines the integrity of this discussion.

It is shameful that the United States regime has turned this body into a scene for theatre and show, baseless accusations and statements. This is in line with the United States regime in dismantling and disgracing the United Nations system. If one wants to look for a case, the killing of an innocent woman in Minnesota last week and the nationwide crackdown can be brought here with a testimony and with briefers. And please, teach them the meaning of a briefing. A briefing is different from a personal statement or accusation. Please do not sell them to the world as representatives of Iran's civil society. Their acts and statements regarding Iran are far from civil, and they have long been divorced from Iran's society. They amplify the Israeli-American foreign agenda. They are both on Mossad's payroll, in accordance with undeniable evidence.

We have taken note of the briefing provided by the Assistant Secretary-General. Regrettably, her briefing was one-sided and not grounded in factual evidence.

I wish to extend my deepest condolences and sympathy, with a heavy and grieving heart, to the brave people of my country and the families of the many victims. In recent weeks, Iran has lost numerous innocent civilians and devoted members of its security and law enforcement forces. Many of our young people were brutally murdered in acts of extreme violence resulting from the atrocities committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS). Many of our police officers sacrificed their lives in the line of duty to protect civilians and preserve public order. I speak today on behalf of a nation in mourning.

It is deeply regrettable that the representative of the United States regime, who requested this meeting, has today resorted to lies, the distortion of facts and deliberate misinformation to conceal his country's direct involvement in steering unrest in Iran to violence. In fact, the request of the United States for this meeting is shameful, as it seeks to conceal its direct complicity in the crimes committed by its missionaries against our nations from 8 to 10 January, as part of Israel's malicious attempt to drag the United States into another war of aggression against Iran. Under the hollow pretext of concern for the Iranian people and claims of support for human rights, the United States regime is attempting to portray itself as a friend of the Iranian people, while simultaneously laying the groundwork for political destabilization and military intervention under a so-called humanitarian narrative. These claims are particularly cynical when viewed against that regime's long and well-documented record of unlawful military interventions, regime change operations and systematic violations of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Across the world, these policies have led to mass civilian casualties, the collapse of States, prolonged humanitarian disasters, and the emergence and empowerment of extremist and terrorist groups. This is not a matter of opinion. It is a matter of historical record and fact. The Iranian people, for decades, have experienced the true meaning of that so-called support.

The pattern of coercion and interference by the United States under deceptive pretexts is clear: from the orchestration of the 1953 coup against the democratically elected Government of Dr. Mossadegh, to its extensive political, military and intelligence backing of the Saddam Hussein regime's war of aggression against Iran;

from the downing of Iran Air Flight 655 in 1988, killing 290 innocent civilians, to its complicity in assassinations, sabotage and attacks against Iranian civilians and infrastructure, including the war of aggression carried out in June 2025; and from decades of unlawful unilateral sanctions, to systematic economic coercion. These measures have gravely violated the fundamental rights of the Iranian people, including their inherent rights to life, health and development.

Unfortunately, several Western members of the Council, including the French and United Kingdom regimes, have, once again, adopted their familiar double standards. While claiming to champion human rights and to support the Iranian people, they have, alongside the United States regime, imposed some of the most severe and unlawful sanctions in modern history — sanctions that have inflicted widespread suffering on civilians. At the same time, they have failed to condemn, let alone sanction, the Israeli regime for its acts of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Between 8 and 10 January, the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran were confronted with acts of terrorism and extreme violence in the style of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) across the country. Peaceful protests that began on 28 December 2025 with legitimate economic demands were deliberately hijacked by organized armed groups and transformed into violent riots. Documented cases include beheadings, people being burned alive, police officers and ordinary citizens beaten to death, widespread use of firearms, and the deliberate torching of ambulances, fire engines, health facilities, residential buildings and places of worship. These were not isolated incidents. They reflect a clear and systematic pattern of organized violence. A significant number of police officers were killed or severely injured. Those heavy casualties demonstrate the extreme brutality of the terrorist elements.

The situation is in fact very simple. The United States regime and its accomplices, in particular the Israeli regime, cannot evade responsibility for the innocent blood that has been shed in my country. Unable to achieve their objectives through the 12-day war of aggression against Iran in June 2025, they now seek to pursue the same goals through political destabilization, internal unrest and chaos. That strategy relies on manufacturing casualties, spreading false and inflated figures, and creating a pretext for foreign intervention. It is a familiar script, one that has been used repeatedly from Iraq to Libya and to Venezuela.

Allow me to recall only a few of the interventionist and reckless statements made by officials of the United States, which clearly demonstrate Washington's direct involvement in this unrest.

On 29 December 2025, during a joint press conference with the Prime Minister of the Israeli regime, the President of the United States declared: "If Iran continues with its missile program, yes, I support a strike. If they continue with their nuclear program, the strike should be immediate." He further threatened: "We are going to have to knock them down. We'll knock them down. We'll knock the hell out of them."

On 2 January, the former United States Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, openly acknowledged the presence of Mossad agents among the rioters. The exact wording of his message on X was: "Happy New Year to every Iranian in the street. Also to every Mossad agent beside them."

On 3 January, the President of the United States regime stated: "We are locked and loaded and ready to go."

On 10 January, Senator Lindsey Graham publicly incited violent action, stating: "When President Trump says, 'Make Iran Great Again', it means protesters in Iran should defeat the Ayatollah."

On 12 January, the White House spokesperson confirmed that President Trump would not be hesitant to use military force against Iran. On the same day, Senator Graham declared: "Iran's leadership must be destroyed. This is the best opportunity since 1979 to change the Middle East."

On 13 January, the President of the United States stated: "Iranian patriots, keep protesting. Take over your institutions. Help is on its way."

The statement of the representative of the United States regime today will be added to this list.

These are not isolated remarks. They constitute explicit calls for regime change, violence and military aggression.

The exploitation of peaceful protests for geopolitical purposes and the reckless endangerment of civilian lives are fully aligned with the destructive role that unlawful unilateral sanctions have played in creating this situation. Claims of concern for human rights ring hollow when made by those who have systematically violated them. Three days ago, millions of Iranians marched to restore calm in our cities, to support law and order and to reject reckless attempts to push our country towards civil conflict. President Trump chose to ignore this historic display of unity and restraint. Instead, he issued a provocative statement aimed at reigniting unrest. But the people of Iran, nationwide, ignored his invitation to further violence. This is why calm has been re-established across the country.

Any threat to use force against the Islamic Republic of Iran, under any pretext, including claims of protecting protesters or supporting the Iranian people, constitutes a grave and manifest violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Such unlawful actions directly breach Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force, and Article 2, paragraph 7, which enshrines the principle of non-intervention. No doctrine, narrative or political justification can legitimize military action or coercion without explicit Security Council authorization, under Chapter VII. Invoking humanitarian rhetoric to justify force is a deliberate abuse of international law. The Security Council, its members and the Secretary-General bear a clear legal, moral and political responsibility to unequivocally reject and condemn such unlawful actions before it is too late. The credibility of the United Nations and the survival of the Charter itself now depend on whether this fundamental prohibition is upheld or eroded by one of its own permanent members.

Iran seeks neither escalation nor confrontation. However, any act of aggression, direct or indirect, will be met with a decisive, proportionate and lawful response, under Article 51 of the Charter. This is not a threat; it is a statement of legal reality. Responsibility for all consequences rests solely with those who initiate such unlawful acts.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran remains fully committed to its human rights obligations, including the right to peaceful protests. It has exercised maximum restraint while fulfilling its duty to protect its people and preserve public order. However, the incitement to violence, encouragement of internal destabilization and the explicit threat of military action against a sovereign Member State constitute a threat to international peace and security, within the meaning of Article 39 of the Charter.

In conclusion, we categorically reject all politically motivated accusations made today against my Government. The facts on the ground contradict the fabricated narratives presented by the United States regime and its allies at this meeting. United States fabrications of the senseless killing of protesters neither reflect the reality on the ground nor would they whitewash America's crimes against the great people of

Iran. The allegation that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has killed peaceful protesters is a distortion of the facts on the ground. What the Iranian security forces did was confront firmly and responsibly armed Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham-style terrorist cells and violent separatist groups funded and armed by a few foreign entities, including the Israeli regime. These groups deliberately targeted civilians and law enforcement officers in an attempt to ignite civil war and create the conditions for foreign intervention.

The claim that Internet restrictions were imposed to conceal harm to our own people is equally false. On the contrary, temporary limitations were necessary to protect the Iranian nation from evil operations that foreign agents, including Israeli agents, are conducting against the safety of the nation. It was also absolutely vital to prevent huge cyberattacks against Iran and its infrastructure, and to disrupt communications among terrorist networks coordinating terror operations from within our cities.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.