



Statement by Naser Asiabi Pourimani
The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran
before the Sixth Committee
on agenda item 87:
“Protection of persons in the event of disasters”
New York, 18 October 2021

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Madam Chairperson,

My delegation commends the International Law Commission for finalizing its work on the protection of persons in the event of disasters.

With respect to the draft articles, my delegation has previously expressed its views in this Committee. However, I would like to touch upon a number of important aspects with the text of the ILC and express the principled positions of my delegation as well as a way forward regarding this draft articles.

While the draft articles identify a “duty to cooperate” on the basis of the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and non-discrimination, they also fail to identify Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) as a human-made disaster that not only erodes cooperation among member states but also endangers the livelihood of societies as such measures are a source of disaster that hinder an effective response to alleviate the damage incurred from said disasters. It also prevents targeted states from meeting their obligations under the current legal frameworks to address disasters adequately.



For the Islamic Republic of Iran, a living example of this can be found in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) wherein the illegal sanctions that have impeded the endower have now rendered my Country to meet the four priorities and seven targets stipulated in the framework. UCMs also undermine the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 13, which calls for the strengthening of resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

To address these inhumane measures and without prejudice to the illegal nature of UCMs, an article shall be added to the draft articles wherein humanitarian aid in kind or in cash during events of disaster shall not be subjected to any direct or indirect restrictions.

Moreover, the future convention shall emphasize that, “Under no circumstances trade in humanitarian goods and commodities, such as foodstuff, medicine, agricultural and animal products, shall be subjected to any form of direct or indirect coercive economic measure or sanction” in line with the purpose of the future convention which is to facilitate not only the adequate and effective response to disasters but also the reduction of the risk of disasters and to meet the essential needs of the persons concerned.



I would also like to underline the exclusive right of affected States to request external assistance in the time of disaster and to announce its termination. Furthermore, principles governing humanitarian assistance must be observed in parallel with the principles of respect for sovereign equality and the territorial integrity of affected states as well as the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states. In this context, the formulation of draft article 13, paragraph (2) which states, “Consent to external assistance by the State victim to the disaster shall not be withheld arbitrarily” is vague and such a determination risks influence by political factors. Therefore, there should be no room for any arbitrary interpretation when drafting the articles which could potentially pave the way for interference in the internal affairs of affected states under the pretext of humanitarian intervention and in violation of the principle of state sovereignty.

In addition, I would like to emphasize that the rules and regulations of affected countries, as well as transit countries during the provision of assistance and granting of access, should be observed strictly and respectively.

In this regard, my delegation suggests that the Secretary-General to invite Governments to submit information on their practice and further to submit this material in his report well in advance to the next session of General Assembly.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.