

The Demonization of Iran at the UN Security Council

Russian Ambassador Nebenzia Describes Fifth UN Secretary-General Report on Iran as “Malicious Attempt to Create a Groundlessly Negative Climate Around Iran”

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Global Research, July 09, 2018

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On June 27, the Security Council was briefed on the “Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231.” The report, which was short on corroborated fact and long on insinuation resembled an attempt at demonization of Iran, that early stage laying the groundwork for severe punitive action against a nation. The unsubstantiated innuendo began:

“In this reporting period, the Secretariat received information from two Member States on the supply, sale, transfer or export to Iran of dual-use items that may have been undertaken contrary to the resolution...Since our last report, Saudi authorities have brought to the attention of the Secretariat nine additional launches of ballistic missiles by the Houthis, which in their assessment were Iranian Qiam-1 missiles.....We provided preliminary observations, in our last report, from our examination of the debris of the missiles launched into Saudi Arabia on 22 July and 4 November 2017. Based on the information and material analysed, the Secretariat assesses that the debris of the five missiles launched at Yanbu’and Riyadh since July 2017 share key design features with the Iranian Qiam-1 ballistic missile. It is also our assessment that some component parts of the debris were manufactured in Iran. ...The report also reflects information received from Israel regarding the possible presence of an Iranian drone in Syria, which was reportedly downed after entering Israeli airspace on 10 February. The Secretariat did not have the opportunity to examine its debris, but images provided by Israeli authorities show that its wing configuration appears to be consistent with that of an Iranian drone unveiled in October 2016.”

“The Secretariat examined arms and related material that was seized in Bahrain after 16 January, 2016, and obtained additional information on the unmanned surface vessel, laden with explosives, that was recovered by the United Arab Emirates. In both cases, the Secretariat is confident that some of the arms and related material it examined were manufactured in Iran....”

The Fifth Secretary-General report does not provide any valid evidence of Iran’s violation of international law, or violation of Resolution 2231. However, the report’s presentation so starkly resembles crude propaganda, that it is surprising, indeed, that the UN Secretary-General would permit his imprimatur to be used in connection with this report. It appears to have been written by the US and its allies, and merely rubber-stamped by the Secretary-General.

In fact, the US delegation, referring to the report, stated:

“If there was ever any doubt regarding Iran’s clear threat to international peace and stability, the findings of the report should lay it to rest.”

In contrast to the biased and defamatory character of this report, Ambassador Ma Zhaoxu of China stated:

“The International Atomic Energy Agency has reported 11 times in a row that Iran has been implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, originally signed by the U.S., China, France, Germany, Britain , Russia and Iran)...China believes the report of the Secretary-General should reflect the implementation efforts in an objective, balanced and comprehensive manner, and take the legitimate concerns of Iran into consideration. The Secretariat should act in strict accordance with its mandates and functions.”

And Russian Ambassador Nebenzia’s scathing and intellectually flawless critique of the crude insinuations of the report brilliantly repudiated the shameful presentation:

“Considering the significance that the unilateral actions by the United States have for the implementation of resolution 2231 and the JCPOA, we were astonished that the report mentions it only in passing. It is simply unfathomable that it was possible to draft a document entitled “Implementation of resolution 2231” with no mention whatever of the fact that Washington’s reimposition of unilateral sanctions is a direct violation not only of its obligations under the JCPOA, but also of resolution 2231....the report is overtly unbalanced and more like a collection of unproven accusations about Iran than an attempt to paint an objective picture of the situation concerning the implementation of resolution 2231, an approach that is all the more incomprehensible considering that none of the examples of Tehran’s alleged violations of the resolution have been confirmed, owing to insufficient information and the lack of a firm body of proof. We are once again compelled to point out that it is unacceptable for the Secretariat to carry out any so-called investigations of potential violations of resolution 2231 without a clear mandate from the Security Council. We again emphasize that the Secretariat staff do not have the qualifications or expertise for analyzing and evaluating missile systems or conventional weapons. The report therefore indicates an absence of any of the elements that constitute a violation. The same applies to the Secretariat’s illegitimate inspections in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.....We must continue to insist that the report should not contain information from open sources or references to unverified or unverifiable information provided by individual countries, especially when it is not even being brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. WE BELIEVE SUCH PRACTICES ARE COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE AND CONSIDER THEM MALICIOUS ATTEMPTS TO CREATE A GROUNDLESSLY NEGATIVE CLIMATE AROUND IRAN BY CIRCUMVENTING THE COUNCIL.”

The startlingly biased character of this fifth report raises troubling questions, especially following the US withdrawal from the JCPOA, and the re-imposition of unilateral sanctions against Iran. What is the agenda, and why is the Secretary-General allowing his offices to be associated with a report which lacks credibility, and which is an intellectual embarrassment to the United Nations? Why is an attempt being made to unjustifiably

accuse Iran of violations, with no valid proof provided?

In an effort to salvage the JCPOA, Iran's President Rouhani traveled to Vienna this week, hoping to reach agreements with the other supporters of the JCPOA within Europe, in order to mitigate the damage to Iran's economy caused by the re-imposition of sanctions by the USA. In a bizarre "coincidence," which conspicuously appears not to be coincidental, Austria arrested an Iranian diplomat, allegedly involved in an attempted attack on a rally of Iranian opposition demonstrators in Paris. This "coincidence" blatantly undermines President Rouhani's mission, undertaken to alleviate the distress of the Iranian people resulting from the re-imposition of sanctions by the United States. Iran's dazzlingly smart and sophisticated Foreign Minister, Mohammed Javid Zarif, described this "coincidental" arrest as a "false flag ploy and deliberate distraction," and Zarif tweeted:

"How convenient: Just as we embark on a Presidential visit to Europe, an alleged Iranian operation and its 'plotters' arrested!"

President Rouhani stated:

"If other signatories apart from the United States, can guarantee Iran's interests, then Iran will stay in the JCPOA."

If Europe fails to cooperate, Iran may restart nuclear activities, and there are now even rumors that Iran may consider blocking the Strait of Hormoz. More than ten years ago "The New Yorker" published a series of articles by Seymour Hersh, describing detailed plans for US military intervention in Iran. Is that where these provocations of Iran are leading?

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Michel Chossudovsky

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Year: 2015

Pages: 240 Pages

List Price: ~~\$22.95~~

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