



Security Council

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Implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)

Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which was concluded by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the European Union with the Islamic Republic of Iran on 14 July 2015, and its unanimous endorsement by the Security Council in resolution 2231 (2015) on 20 July 2015, were the result of intensive negotiations over several years to achieve shared non-proliferation and regional security objectives, in a manner that delivers tangible economic benefits for the Iranian people. Eight years later, I remain convinced that the Plan is the best available option for ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

2. The continued lack of progress toward a return to the full and effective implementation of the Plan and the resolution, despite reaffirmation by all participants in the Plan and the United States in December 2022 that it was the only viable option, is disheartening. Unfortunately, since my previous report, negotiations remain stalled, curtailing the prospects for a return to full implementation of the Plan. I am nonetheless encouraged that participants in the Plan and the United States remain committed to a diplomatic solution. Lasting peace and security for all Member States can be only achieved through dialogue and cooperation.

3. I therefore urge all the parties concerned to demonstrate a greater sense of urgency, to renew dialogue and engagement and to strive to reach an agreement on outstanding issues as soon as possible. I reiterate my call on the United States to lift or waive its sanctions as outlined in the Plan and to extend the waivers with regard to the trade in oil with the Islamic Republic of Iran. I also repeat my call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to refrain from taking further steps away from full implementation of the Plan and to reverse the steps that it has taken since July 2019, which it had pledged were reversible. In addition, it remains necessary for the Islamic Republic of Iran to carefully consider and address the other concerns raised by participants in the Plan and by other Member States in relation to resolution 2231 (2015).

4. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to play an indispensable role in the monitoring and verification of all nuclear-related activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran. I welcome the joint statement relating to the high-level meetings of March 2023 between IAEA and the Islamic Republic of Iran “to expedite as appropriate the resolution of outstanding safeguards issues” and the willingness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to “allow the IAEA to implement further



appropriate verification and monitoring activities”.¹ In its most recent report,² IAEA noted that, in May 2023, in line with the joint statement, it had installed surveillance cameras at workshops where centrifuge parts are manufactured. Regarding the presence of high enriched uranium particles containing up to 83.7 per cent uranium-235 detected at one location, the Agency reported that the information provided by the Islamic Republic of Iran was not inconsistent with its explanation for the origin of these particles and that it had “no further questions on the matter at that stage”. The Agency further noted that it had not been able to verify the total stockpile of enriched uranium in the Islamic Republic of Iran since February 2021, but it estimated that, as at 13 May 2023, the total stockpile of enriched uranium was 4,744.5 kg (which exceeds the 202.8 kg limit), including 509.7 kg enriched to 20 per cent U-235 and 116.1 kg enriched to 60 per cent U-235.

5. While various challenges continue to be faced in the implementation of the Plan, I am nonetheless encouraged by the efforts being made by the Islamic Republic of Iran and other Member States in the region to improve their bilateral relationships. The recent progress made to restore diplomatic ties, pursue cooperation on security and economic issues and reduce tensions are welcome developments and essential steps for achieving regional stability. I am hopeful that this nascent rapprochement across the region will provide greater incentives and create conditions conducive to achieving the objectives of the Plan.

6. The present report, my fifteenth on the implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), provides an assessment of the implementation of the resolution since the issuance of my fourteenth report ([S/2022/912](#)) on 12 December 2022. Consistent with previous reports, the focus of the present report is on the provisions set forth in annex B to the resolution.

II. Implementation of nuclear-related provisions

7. Since 12 December 2022, no new proposals for participating in or permitting the activities set forth in paragraph 2 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) have been submitted to and approved by the Security Council through the procurement channel. During the reporting period, the Security Council received 10 new notifications pursuant to paragraph 2 for certain nuclear-related activities consistent with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that do not require approval, but do require notification to the Council or both the Council and the Joint Commission.

8. The renewal by the United States of waivers with respect to certain nuclear non-proliferation projects foreseen in the Plan and the nuclear-related provisions in annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) for another 180-day period was an important and necessary step. The waivers cover operations, training and services related to Unit 1 of the Bushehr nuclear power plant; the transfer of enriched uranium out of the Islamic Republic of Iran in exchange for natural uranium; the transfer into the Islamic Republic of Iran of enriched uranium for the Tehran Research Reactor and the transfer out of the Islamic Republic of Iran of nuclear fuel scrap and spent nuclear fuel; the transfer, warehousing or other appropriate storage outside of the Islamic Republic of Iran of Iranian heavy water; the preparation and modification of the Fordow facility; and the modernization of the Arak reactor.

¹ Joint statement by the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, 4 March 2023. Available at www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/joint-statement-by-the-atomic-energy-organization-of-iran-aeoi-and-the-international-atomic-energy-agency-iaea.

² See the Agency’s report of 31 May 2023.

III. Implementation of provisions related to paragraphs 3 and 4

A. Restrictions on paragraph 3-related activities by the Islamic Republic of Iran

9. In paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), the Security Council called upon the Islamic Republic of Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology.

10. In identical letters dated 28 April 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/302](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel brought to my attention the test flight of the space launch vehicle QAEM-100 conducted by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on 4 March 2023. According to the Permanent Representative, this activity is inconsistent with paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), as the QAEM-100 space launch vehicle incorporates technologies that are “virtually identical to those of ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons”. In addition, in letters dated 30 and 31 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/390](#) and [S/2023/398](#)), the Permanent Representative of Israel and the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom reported that, according to Iranian media reports and to the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on 25 May 2023, the Islamic Republic of Iran had tested a new ballistic missile (referred to as the “Khorramshar-4” or “Khaibar”), with a claimed range of 2,000 km and a 1,500 kg payload. In a letter dated 12 June 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/428](#)), the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom informed the Security Council that, according to media reports, the Islamic Republic of Iran on 6 June 2023 had unveiled the “Fattah” ballistic missile, with a claimed range of 1,400 km. The Permanent Representatives classified the missiles as Missile Technology Control Regime category I systems³ and concluded that, as such, these missiles were inherently capable of delivering a nuclear weapon, and therefore would fall under paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).

11. In the letter dated 3 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2023/317](#)), the letter dated 24 May 2023 addressed to me ([S/2023/376](#)) and the letters dated 2 and 14 June 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/403](#), [S/2023/404](#) and [S/2023/439](#)), the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterated the position that their country's missile and space programmes, including the launches of ballistic missiles or space launch vehicles, are within its “legitimate rights and in full conformity with international law” and fell “outside of the purview or competence of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and its annexes”. The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, in letters dated 23 May and 5 and 14 June 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/373](#), [S/2023/410](#) and [S/2023/440](#)), reiterated that the parameters of the Missile Technology Control Regime were never intended to be used in the context of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) to ascertain whether certain missiles were designed to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons. He noted that the Russian Federation remained of the view that the Islamic Republic of Iran

³ Category I systems under the Missile Technology Control Regime are defined as “complete rocket systems (including ballistic missiles, space launch vehicles, and sounding rockets) capable of delivering at least a 500 kg ‘payload’ to a ‘range’ of at least 300 km” (see section 1.A.1 of the Equipment, Software and Technology Annex of the Missile Technology Control Regime, available at <https://mtcr.info/mtcr-annex/>).

was “respecting in good faith the relevant call addressed to it in paragraph 3 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#)”.

B. Restrictions on paragraph 4-related transfers to or from the Islamic Republic of Iran

12. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), all States, provided that they have obtained the prior approval of the Security Council on a case-by-case basis, may participate in and permit the supply, sale or transfer to or from the Islamic Republic of Iran of all items, materials, equipment, goods and technology set out in document [S/2015/546](#) and any items, materials, equipment, goods and technology that the State determines could contribute to the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems. Document [S/2015/546](#) includes ballistic missiles and uncrewed aerial vehicle systems (including target drones, reconnaissance drones and cruise missiles), all having a range equal to or greater than 300 km, and related items, materials, equipment, goods and technology.

13. Paragraph 4 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) also applies to the provision of various services or technical assistance to the Islamic Republic of Iran and its acquisition of an interest in any commercial activity in another State related to the supply, sale, transfer, manufacture or use of the items, materials, equipment, goods and technology as described in its subparagraph (a).

14. In March 2023, the authorities of the United Kingdom invited the Secretariat to examine ballistic missile components seized by the British Royal Navy in February 2023 from a vessel travelling in international waters in the Gulf of Oman.⁴ Through a letter dated 18 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/362](#)), the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom shared photographs of the seized components and noted that the authorities of the United Kingdom assessed them to be of Iranian origin and transferred from the Islamic Republic of Iran in a manner inconsistent with resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).⁵ In a joint letter dated 22 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/368](#)), the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom conveyed that, in their view, some of those components met the parameters of document [S/2015/546](#) and their transfer without the prior approval of the Security Council was inconsistent with resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).

15. In the letter dated 23 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/373](#)) and the letter dated 24 May 2023 addressed to me ([S/2023/376](#)), the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, respectively, expressed concerns about the February 2023 seizure, as well as about prior seizures by the British Royal Navy in 2022 ([S/2022/912](#), para. 18). The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran both stated that there was, in their opinion, no evidence linking the intercepted vessels and their cargo to the Islamic Republic of Iran and no clear indication that the seized missile components were of Iranian origin.

16. While the Secretariat has not yet examined the components seized in February 2023, based on a preliminary examination of the photographic evidence provided, the

⁴ Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom, “Royal Navy ship seizes weapons transiting in the Gulf”, 2 March 2023. Available at www.gov.uk/government/news/royal-navy-ship-seizes-weapons-transiting-in-the-gulf.

⁵ The components included chemical batteries, graphite jet vanes, re-entry vehicle nose cones, an active navigation satellite antenna and an inertial navigation system.

Secretariat has observed that some of these components appear to have design characteristics and markings similar to components it has examined previously among the debris of ballistic missiles launched by the Houthis towards Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (see, for example, [S/2018/602](#), paras. 28–30, and [S/2022/490](#), paras. 18–19). The Secretariat is still analysing the information available and will report to the Council, as appropriate, in due course.

17. Regarding the alleged transfer of uncrewed aerial vehicles from the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Russian Federation referred to in my previous report ([S/2022/912](#), para. 19), the President of the Security Council and I received a number of additional letters in December 2022.⁶ In her letter dated 18 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/362](#)), the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom also informed the Secretariat that the United Kingdom possessed two uncrewed aerial vehicles recovered by the Armed Forces of Ukraine and loaned to the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom alleged that the uncrewed aerial vehicles, on the basis of comparison with Iranian uncrewed aerial vehicles as seen in open sources and with debris recovered from other uncrewed aerial vehicle attacks in the Middle East, were of the Iranian types Shahed-131 and Shahed-136, and that they were transferred by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Russian Federation in a manner inconsistent with resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). In their letter dated 22 May 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/368](#)), the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany and the United Kingdom jointly alleged that there was significant open-source evidence that the Islamic Republic of Iran has continued to transfer uncrewed aerial vehicles to the Russian Federation in a manner inconsistent with resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) since October 2022. In a letter dated 9 June 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/418](#)), the Permanent Representative of Ukraine reported that Ukrainian investigators had found components assessed to be of Iranian origin among the debris of uncrewed aerial vehicles launched towards the territory of Ukraine by the Russian Federation since October 2022.⁷ Based on this, as well as on a comparison with Iranian uncrewed aerial vehicles as seen in open sources and with debris recovered from other uncrewed aerial vehicle attacks in the Middle East,⁸ Ukraine assessed that the uncrewed aerial vehicles were of the Iranian types Shahed-131, Shahed-136 and Mohajer-6 and transferred by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Russian Federation in a manner inconsistent with resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). In their letters, the Permanent Representatives of France, Germany, Ukraine and the United Kingdom reiterated their request for the Secretariat to examine the debris of these uncrewed aerial vehicles in Kyiv or any other suitable location.

18. The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, in letters dated 23 May and 14 June 2023, addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me ([S/2023/373](#) and [S/2023/440](#)), disputed the imagery and analysis provided by the

⁶ Letter dated 5 December 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ([S/2022/908](#)); letters dated 6 December 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation ([S/2022/911](#)), the Permanent Representative of Germany ([S/2022/913](#)), the Permanent Representative of France ([S/2022/914](#)) and the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran ([S/2022/915](#)) addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council; and letters dated 7 December 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation ([S/2022/922](#)) and the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran ([S/2022/923](#)) addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council. I also received a letter from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine on 20 December 2022.

⁷ An engine and a servomotor.

⁸ Inter alia, a “Model V9” vertical gyro that the Secretariat also found among the debris of the delta-wing uncrewed aerial vehicles used in the attacks on Saudi Arabia in 2019 (see for example [S/2022/490](#), para. 21).

United Kingdom and Ukraine of the uncrewed aerial vehicle debris, as well as the allegation by France, Germany and the United Kingdom that the Islamic Republic of Iran transferred uncrewed aerial vehicles to the Russian Federation in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015), stating that these accusations were “not substantiated with any credible evidence”. The Chargé d’affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a letter dated 24 May addressed to me (S/2023/376), and the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a letter dated 12 June 2023 addressed to the President of the Security Council and to me (S/2023/429), rejected the “unfounded” allegations made by France, Germany, Ukraine and the United Kingdom regarding the alleged uncrewed aerial vehicle transfers and stated that the “so-called” evidence presented in their letters “lack[s] credibility”. In her letter, the Chargé d’affaires a.i. also reiterated the view that paragraph 4 of annex B to resolution 2231 (2015) restricted only the transfer of items, materials, equipment, goods and technology “that the State determines could contribute to the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems” and that her country “never manufactured or supplied, nor does it intend to manufacture or supply, items, materials, equipment, goods and technology that it determines could contribute to the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems”.

19. The Secretariat continues to examine the information available regarding the alleged transfer of uncrewed aerial vehicles. Any findings will be reported to the Security Council, as appropriate, in due course.

20. During the reporting period, the Secretariat also received an invitation from the Government of Yemen to examine the debris of a cruise missile used in an attack by the Houthis on the Dabbah oil terminal in November 2022,⁹ alleged to have been transferred by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Houthis in a manner inconsistent with resolution 2231 (2015). The Secretariat is still analysing the information available and will report to the Council, as appropriate, in due course.

IV. Implementation of the asset freeze provisions

21. During the reporting period, the Secretariat did not receive any official information alleging actions inconsistent with the asset freeze provisions of resolution 2231 (2015).

V. Secretariat support provided to the Security Council and its Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015)

22. The Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs has continued to support the work of the Security Council, in close cooperation with the Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). The Division provided induction briefings for the incoming Facilitator and members of the Council to assist them in their work on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). The Division has also continued to liaise with the Procurement Working Group of the Joint Commission on matters related to the procurement channel. In addition, the Division participated in an event for outreach to Member States on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

⁹ The Maritime Executive, “Houthi rebels strike Yemeni oil terminal for the second time”, 21 November 2022. Available at <https://maritime-executive.com/article/houthi-rebels-strike-yemeni-oil-terminal-for-the-second-time>.