



PERMANENT MISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

30TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

BIENNIAL PANEL ON UNILATERAL COERCIVE MEASURES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY SIERRA LEONE

17 September 2015

Mr President,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Algeria on behalf of the African Group.

Sierra Leone takes this occasion to thank the panellists for their interventions which has provided us with a more tangible overview of the negative impacts of unilateral coercive measures applied on the countries concerned.

The far reaching implications of unilateral coercive measures are a source of major concern for my delegation. Sierra Leone believes that economic, trade or other measures taken by one State to compel a change in the policy of another country are detrimental to the full enjoyment of human rights, and therefore, are not in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, and in many instances, in direct contravention of humanitarian law.

The restriction of trade agreements, as well as the obstruction of financial and investment flows between sender and targeted countries, disrupts the ability of

States to meet their development commitments and has the added impact of fracturing international relations and promoting a spirit of suspicion and distrust.

Furthermore, asset freezing, embargoes and other sanctions are often used to limit access to funds which are vital for meeting the various economic and financial obligations of the targeted State.

My delegation believes that the extraterritorial nature of unilateral coercive measures aimed at coercing another State to bend their sovereign will, inevitably have long term and destabilizing effects which will cause political and economic hardship on the targeted country.

In addition, these sanctions are often applied without safeguards which protect the human rights of local populations, including vulnerable groups who are frequently the worst affected by these punitive measures. For example, preventing the importation of food and medicines would render the situation in the targeted country unstable and could potentially lead to a humanitarian crisis.

In conclusion, while oversight and accountability are important considerations, my delegation considers that it would be more beneficial to ensure that human rights mechanisms delimit the application and scope of this practice.

Should any such measures be nonetheless contemplated, an analysis of the negative socio-economic consequences and humanitarian implications must take considered and actions taken to avoid them.

Finally, Sierra Leone would like to ask the panellists how best to rebuild national frameworks rendered fragile, in order to ensure that the harsh consequences of these sanctions on civilian populations could be best mitigated or managed?

Thank you, Mr President.