

Spillover

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STATEMENT AT THE 30TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
AT THE BI-ANNUAL PANEL ON UNILATERAL COERCIVE MEASURES

International-Lawyers.Org welcomes the Council's consideration of unilateral coercive measures. Indeed such measures are responsible for some of the more egregious human rights violations in recent years. In this respect we also very much welcome the creation of the post of Special Rapporteur as an indication of how seriously the Council takes this matter.

The report of Special Rapporteur draws attention to the deadly impact of sanctions imposed upon Iraq in the 1990s, after a war that the International Study Team report claimed had tripled child mortality. The sanctions eventually led to an estimated 500,000 children losing their lives.

Today, many of the same countries that undertook sanctions against Iraq are undertaking sanctions against Syria and have undertaken sanctions against Libya. As a consequence, Libya, which was before sanctions and aggression against it the richest country in Africa and on track to achieve all the MDGs is now a failed State. Sanctions threaten to handicap Syria's ability to confront violence and cause its people the same unjust fate.

We would like to ask the panel what responsibility States imposing sanctions on other States bear for the deterioration and, often after an additional use of force, destruction of the vital infrastructure of these States? Moreover, is there personal responsibility for individuals who are part of the executive of States that engage in such unilateral coercive measures?

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