United Nations A/HRC/RES/61/6

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 April 2026

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Sixty-first session
23 February–31 March 2026
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 27 March 2026

61/6. The negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling also all previous resolutions on human rights and unilateral coercive measures adopted by the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly,

Recalling further Human Rights Council resolutions 46/5 of 23 March 2021, 49/6 of 31 March 2022, 52/13 of 3 April 2023 and 55/7 of 3 April 2024, and General Assembly resolutions 76/171 of 16 December 2021, 77/214 of 15 December 2022 and 78/202 of 19 December 2023,

Taking note of the resolution adopted by the Assembly of the African Union on 19 February 2025 on the impact of sanctions and unilateral coercive measures on States members of the African Union,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which all States were strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in least developed and developing countries,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolutions 46/14 of 23 March 2021 and 49/25 of 1 April 2022 on ensuring equitable, affordable, timely and universal access for all countries to vaccines in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, in which the Council expressed deep concern about the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the enjoyment of human rights around the world and emphasized the importance of human rights in shaping the response to and inclusive recovery from the pandemic,

Welcoming the adoption of General Assembly resolution 79/293, adopted on 16 June 2025, establishing 4 December as the International Day against Unilateral Coercive Measures,

Please recycle

Recalling Human Rights Council resolution 27/21 of 26 September 2014 and the corrigendum thereto, in which the Council decided to organize a biennial panel discussion on the issue of unilateral coercive measures and human rights,

Recalling also the discussion on the biennial panel discussion on unilateral coercive measures and human rights,[1] held during the sixtieth session of the Human Rights Council,

Noting the International Conference on Sanctions, Business and Human Rights organized by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, held on 21 and 22 November 2024 in Geneva,

Welcoming the upcoming International Conference on Humanitarian Action, Remedy and Responsibility in unilateral sanctions environment organized by the Special Rapporteur on 9 and 10 April 2026 in Geneva,

Taking note of the guiding principles on sanctions, business and human rights presented by the Special Rapporteur, recognizing them as a useful tool in assessing the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures as related to international human rights and encouraging her to continue her efforts in the study and dissemination of information on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights,

Stressing that unilateral coercive measures and legislation and secondary sanctions are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, international human rights law, the Charter and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States,

Deeply concerned by the negative impact on human rights of widespread compliance and overcompliance with unilateral coercive measures among financial institutions, transport companies and other entities whose goods and services are necessary in the provision of humanitarian aid to populations in vulnerable situations,

Recognizing the universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated character of all human rights, and in this regard reaffirming the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of all human rights,

Expressing its grave concern at the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights, including the right to development, international solidarity, international relations, trade, investment and cooperation,

Reaffirming that no State may use, encourage or threaten to use any type of measure, including but not limited to economic or political measures, to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind,

Reaffirming also, among other principles, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, which are also enshrined in many international legal instruments,

Recognizing that unilateral coercive measures, inter alia in the form of economic sanctions, and secondary sanctions have far-reaching implications for the human rights of the general population of targeted States, disproportionately affecting the poor and persons in the most vulnerable situations,

Alarmed by the fact that all forms and manifestations of unilateral coercive measures have been imposed, at great cost in terms of the human rights of the poorest and of persons in vulnerable situations, on least developed and developing countries by developed countries, and in this context condemning this inhumane approach in the strongest terms possible,

Underlining that under no circumstances should people be deprived of their basic means of survival or access to critical infrastructure, services and goods,

Recognizing that unilateral coercive measures may result in social problems and give rise to humanitarian concerns in the States targeted,

[1] A/HRC/55/42.

Highlighting the deep-rooted problems and grievances within the international system and the importance for the United Nations to give a voice to all members of the international community in order to ensure multilateralism, mutual respect and the peaceful settlement of disputes,

Expressing its grave concern that the laws, regulations and decisions imposing unilateral coercive measures have, in some instances, an extraterritorial effect not only on targeted countries but also on third countries, in contravention of the basic principles of international law, in a manner that will coerce the latter also to apply the unilateral coercive measures,

Welcoming the final document and declaration adopted at the nineteenth summit of Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Kampala on 19 and 20 January 2024, in which the Movement reaffirmed, among other things, its principled position of condemnation of the promulgation and application of unilateral coercive measures against countries of the Movement, which are in violation of the Charter and international law and undermine, among other things, the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, self-determination and non-interference,

Welcoming also the establishment of the Sanctions Research Platform by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights as a comprehensive online reference tool dedicated to collecting articles, reports, videos and research material and information on unilateral coercive measures and their effect on human rights,

Reaffirming that each State has full sovereignty over the totality of its wealth, natural resources and economic activity, exercising it freely, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) of 14 December 1962, and that violation of this right is contrary to the spirit and principles of the Charter and hinders the development of international cooperation and the maintenance of peace,

Recalling that the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, called upon States to refrain from any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter and that created obstacles to trade relations among States and impeded the full realization of all human rights, and that also severely threatened the freedom of trade,

Deeply concerned that, despite the resolutions adopted on this issue by the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Commission on Human Rights and at United Nations conferences held in the 1990s and at their five-year reviews, and contrary to norms of international law and the Charter, unilateral coercive measures continue to be promulgated, implemented and enforced by, inter alia, resorting to war and militarism, with all their negative implications for the social-humanitarian activities and economic and social development of least developed and developing countries, including their extraterritorial effects, thereby creating additional obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development, by peoples and individuals under the jurisdiction of other States,

Deeply disturbed by the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to life, the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and medical care, the right to freedom from hunger and the right to an adequate standard of living, food, education, work and housing, as well as the right to development and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,

Alarmed by the disproportionate and indiscriminate human costs of unilateral sanctions and their negative effects on the civilian population, in particular women and children, of targeted States,

Alarmed also by the expanding practice of enforcement of unilateral coercive measures, both nationally and extraterritorially, resulting in the expansion of overcompliance by States, international organizations, businesses and civil society, exacerbating the already devastating humanitarian effect of unilateral coercive measures,

Reaffirming the Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/128 on 4 December 1986, which established that States have the duty to cooperate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development,

Reaffirming also that unilateral coercive measures are one of the major obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development and to the realization of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Expressing concern that unilateral coercive measures have prevented humanitarian organizations from making financial transfers to States where they work,

Concerned that unilateral coercive measures impede the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in countries affected by natural and other disasters,

Underlining that, in each situation worldwide, unilateral coercive measures have a direct or indirect negative impact on human rights,

Underlining also the necessity of examining the wide-ranging impact of unilateral coercive measures on international humanitarian and human rights law and on the economy, peace, security and social fabric of States, as well as on global trade relations,

Highlighting the need for the Human Rights Council to take fully into account the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures, including that caused by the enactment and extraterritorial application of national laws and decisions that are not in conformity with the Charter and international law, in its task concerning the implementation of all human rights, including the right to development,

Recalling the recommendations set forth in the research-based progress report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee containing recommendations on mechanisms to assess the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and to promote accountability,[2]

Highlighting the need to monitor, assess and report on human rights violations associated with unilateral coercive measures, to prevent and minimize the adverse impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights, to promote accountability to deter future violations and to provide redress for victims,

Noting with appreciation the launch by the Special Rapporteur of the impact assessment and monitoring tool to assess, document, report on and follow up on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights,

Welcoming the continuing efforts of the open-ended Working Group on the Right to Development, and reaffirming that unilateral coercive measures are one of the obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development,

Recognizing that access to justice is fundamental to exercising all human rights and an important safeguard that ensures fundamental fairness, equality and integrity, also in the face of unilateral coercive measures and overcompliance,

Recalling Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 on institution-building of the Council and 5/2 on the Code of Conduct for Special Procedure Mandate Holders of the Human Rights Council, both of 18 June 2007, and stressing that the mandate holder shall discharge his or her duties in accordance with those resolutions and the annexes thereto,

Recalling also the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, according to which, inter alia, in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence and its fundamental rights,

1. *Urges* all States to stop adopting, maintaining, implementing or complying with unilateral coercive measures not in accordance with international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, in particular those of a coercive nature with extraterritorial

[2] A/HRC/28/74.

effects, which create obstacles to trade relations among States, thus impeding the full realization of the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the right of individuals and peoples to development;

2. *Calls upon* States and relevant United Nations agencies to take concrete measures to mitigate the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on humanitarian assistance, which should be delivered in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991;

3. *Strongly urges* all States to refrain from imposing unilateral coercive measures, also urges the removal of such measures, as they are contrary to the Charter and norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States at all levels, and recalls that such measures prevent the full realization of economic and social development of nations while also affecting the full realization of human rights;

4. *Urges* States to resolve their differences through dialogue and peaceful means and to avoid the use of economic, political or other measures to coerce another State with regard to the exercise of its sovereign rights;

5. *Strongly objects* to the extraterritorial nature of those measures which, in addition, threaten the sovereignty of States, and in this context calls upon all States neither to recognize these measures nor to apply them, and to take effective administrative or legislative measures, as appropriate, to counteract the extraterritorial application or effects of unilateral coercive measures;

6. *Strongly condemns* the continued unilateral application and enforcement by certain powers of such measures as tools of pressure, including political and economic pressure, against any country, particularly against least developed and developing countries, with a view to preventing these countries from exercising their right to decide, of their own free will, their own political, economic and social systems;

7. *Expresses deep concern* at the growing resort to unilateralism and unilaterally imposed measures that undermine the Charter and international law;

8. *Expresses its grave concern* that any unilateral coercive measure imposed necessarily runs counter to some provisions of the International Bill of Human Rights and peremptory norms of customary international law, and entails adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights by innocent people and persons in vulnerable situations;

9. *Expresses its deep concern* over the increasing negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on the environment and natural resources, leading to serious violations of human rights of targeted populations, and strongly condemns the continued unilateral application of such measures, which result in various environmental transboundary and transgenerational implications for present and future generations;

10. *Expresses its grave concern* that, in some countries, the socioeconomic conditions of family members, particularly women and children, are adversely affected by unilateral coercive measures, imposed and maintained contrary to international law and the Charter, that create obstacles to trade relations among States, restrict movement through various means of transport, impede the full realization of social and economic development and hinder the well-being of the population in the affected countries, with particular consequences for women, children, including adolescents, the elderly and persons with disabilities;

11. *Reiterates* its call upon States that have initiated, enforced or implemented such measures to commit themselves to their obligations and responsibilities arising from relevant provisions of the international law and human rights instruments to which they are a party by putting an immediate end to such measures;

12. *Reaffirms* in this context the right of all peoples to self-determination by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their own economic, social and cultural development;

13. *Also reaffirms*, as enshrined in the Charter, its opposition to any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a State;

14. *Recalls* that, according to the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and to the relevant principles and provisions contained in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, in particular article 32 thereof, no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measure to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind;

15. *Reaffirms* that essential goods, such as medical equipment, spare parts for vaccines, software and operational codes, equipment and spare parts for livestock vaccines, seeds and fertilizers necessary for food production, processing and preserving, as well as critical infrastructure necessary to ensure basic needs, well-being and development of the population such as electricity, water, gas and gasoline supply and healthcare infrastructure, shall never be used as tools for political coercion and that under no circumstances should people be deprived of their means of subsistence and development;

16. *Underlines* the fact that unilateral coercive measures are one of the major obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development, and in this regard calls upon all States to avoid the unilateral imposition of economic coercive measures and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws that run counter to the principles of free trade and hamper the development of least developed and developing countries;

17. *Rejects* all attempts to introduce unilateral coercive measures and the increasing trend in this direction, including through the enactment of laws with extraterritorial application that are not in conformity with international law, and urges States Members of the United Nations to take fully into account the negative impact of those measures, including through the enactment and extraterritorial application of national laws that are not in conformity with international law in their task concerning the implementation of the right to development;

18. *Requests* States to refrain from drawing up illegal and unilateral lists, such as the list of States that allegedly sponsor terrorism, which constitutes an additional unilateral coercive measure and violates fundamental principles of international law, including the principle of the sovereign equality of States, the prohibition of intervention in the internal affairs of States and the principle of peaceful settlement of international disputes;

19. *Requests* all States to take all measures, including legislative, administrative, and judicial, to ensure, in accordance with their obligations under international law, that businesses and other private actors acting under their jurisdiction and control do not violate human rights, including extraterritorially in the course of implementation, complying or over-complying with unilateral coercive measures;

20. *Recognizes* that the Declaration of Principles adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva in December 2003, strongly urged States to avoid and refrain from any unilateral measure in building the information society;

21. *Stresses* the need for an impartial and independent mechanism of the United Nations human rights machinery for the victims of unilateral coercive measures to address the issues of remedies and redress, with a view to promoting accountability and legal, equitable, timely and effective remedies and reparations;

22. *Urges* all special rapporteurs and existing thematic mechanisms of the Human Rights Council in the field of economic, social and cultural rights to pay due attention, within the scope of their respective mandates, to the negative impact and consequences of unilateral coercive measures and to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in fulfilling her mandate;

23. *Recognizes* the importance of the quantitative and qualitative documentation of the negative impact associated with the application, promotion, compliance with, promulgation and implementation of unilateral coercive measures in the context of ensuring

the accountability of those responsible for human rights violations resulting from the application of unilateral coercive measures against any State;

24. *Acknowledges* the need to ensure that all relevant United Nations human rights treaty bodies and subsidiary organs of the Human Rights Council mainstream the issue of the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and perform specific activities, such as during the review of periodic reports submitted by States to such bodies and in the context of the universal periodic review;

25. *Decides* to give due consideration to the issue of the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights in its tasks concerning the implementation of the right to development;

26. *Recalls* the report of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and the addendum thereto on elements for a draft General Assembly declaration on unilateral coercive measures and the rule of law, submitted to the Human Rights Council at its forty-second session,[3] and also recalls the reports of the Special Rapporteur submitted to the Council at its fifty-first session[4] and to the Assembly at its seventy-seventh session;[5]

27. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights to continue her work on identifying and proposing concrete measures to ensure the removal of unilateral coercive measures affecting the enjoyment of human rights of victims and on the human rights impact of secondary sanctions and overcompliance;

28. *Invites* all States, civil society and other stakeholders to provide information for the tool to ensure impartiality and comprehensiveness of assessments;

29. *Calls upon* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, to continue to provide the necessary technical and financial support for, and ensure the operationalization of, the monitoring tool as a stable mechanism under the auspices of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, with a view to ensuring its accessibility, usability and effectiveness for all stakeholders;

30. *Reiterates* the request to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee:

(a) To prepare, in close cooperation with the Special Rapporteur, an in-depth study review – drawing on existing available resources and, if necessary, supplemented by voluntary contributions – on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to health of individuals in vulnerable situations, particularly women and children, based on research undertaken and data collected at the national, regional and international levels, including in particular:

(i) An overview of the adverse impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to health to better evaluate the scope of their consequences and to identify gaps in data collection;

(ii) An analysis of the mechanisms, including root causes and contributing factors, by which unilateral coercive measures undermine access to health;

(iii) An assessment of the short-, medium- and long-term consequences for the health, well-being and human rights of women and children;

(iv) An evaluation of the health, social and economic costs associated with unilateral coercive measures;

(v) The identification of best practice examples in legislative, policy, programme and remedial measures aimed at mitigating these adverse effects;

[3] A/HRC/42/46 and Add.1.
[4] A/HRC/51/33.
[5] A/77/296.

(b) To present its comprehensive report and findings to the Human Rights Council at its sixty-fourth session;

31. *Invites* the Special Rapporteur to engage with scholars, researchers and others in the academic community to encourage research that is relevant to the mandate, including but not limited to the areas of law, economics, political science, social science, medicine and agriculture, and also through the Sanctions Research Platform;

32. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur to finalize the development of the guiding principles on humanitarian action in the unilateral sanctions environment and the guiding principles on effective remedy and responsibility in the unilateral sanctions environment and a commentary thereto;

33. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to organize, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 27/21, a biennial panel discussion, to be held at the sixty-sixth session of the Council, on the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the rights of persons in vulnerable situations, with the participation of States, relevant United Nations bodies, agencies and other relevant stakeholders, and requests the Special Rapporteur to act as rapporteur of the panel discussion and to prepare a report thereon, and to submit and present the report to the Council at its sixty-seventh session;

34. *Calls upon* all States and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in the performance of her tasks, and to provide all necessary information requested by her;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the assistance necessary to the Special Rapporteur to fulfil her mandate effectively, in particular by placing adequate human and material resources at her disposal;

36. *Recognizes* the importance of the role of the Office of the High Commissioner in addressing the challenges arising from unilateral coercive measures and their negative impact on the human rights of peoples and individuals who wish to realize their economic and social rights, including the right to development;

37. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in discharging his functions relating to the promotion, realization and protection of the right to development and bearing in mind the continuing impact of unilateral coercive measures on the population of least developed and developing countries, to give priority to the present resolution in his annual report;

38. *Requests* the High Commissioner, and urges relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies, to pay attention, within the framework of their mandates, to the situation of persons whose rights have been violated as the result of unilateral coercive measures;

39. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the assistance necessary to the High Commissioner to fulfil his mandate effectively, in particular by placing adequate human and material resources at his disposal;

40. *Urges* States and other stakeholders to promote and preserve multilateralism and to take the measures necessary to strengthen bilateral, regional and international cooperation aimed at addressing the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

41. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this issue in accordance with its programme of work.

51st meeting
27 March 2026

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 28 to 17, with 1 abstention. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Angola, Benin, Brazil, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia,

Gambia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Mauritius, Mexico, Pakistan, Qatar, South Africa, Thailand, Viet Nam

Against:

Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Abstaining:

Marshall Islands]