



Concept Note
Virtual Arria meeting on
“End Unilateral Coercive Measures Now”
16 November 2020

The Permanent Missions of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of the Niger, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and South Africa to the United Nations will hold a virtual Arria meeting on “End Unilateral Coercive Measures Now” on 25 November 2020.

BACKGROUND

Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) usually refer to one State's economic measures to compel changes in the policy of another State. Examples of such measures include trade sanctions in the form of embargoes and the interruption of financial and investment flows between senders and target countries. UCMs are contrary to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law, and severely hamper the economic development and health capacity of affected countries. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, their negative influences have drawn more attention and concerns from Member States ever.

The General Assembly adopts biannual resolution entitled “Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries” since 1989 alongside resolutions entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" every session since 1992 and resolutions entitled "Human rights and unilateral coercive measures" annually since 1997. Recently, both the UN Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights called for waiving sanctions that undermine countries' capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the general debate of the 75th UN General Assembly, many leaders called for the lifting of UCMs. On October 5, 26 countries made a joint statement at the General Debate of the Third Committee of the General Assembly

calling for the complete and immediate lifting of UCMs.

OBJECTIVES

The Arria meeting allows hearing from first-hand information about the impact of UCMs on the suffering peoples and societies, and gives an opportunity to reiterate the necessity of ending UCMs now.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What are the impacts of UCMs on the fight against COVID-19?

What are the negative impacts of UCMs on the affected countries' social and economic development? How to mitigate those impacts?

What are the impacts of UCMs on the humanitarian situation of the affected countries? How effective are the so-called humanitarian exemptions?

How to push for the lifting of the UCMs? What could the Security Council do?

BRIEFERS

1.Ms. Alena Douhan, UN Special Rapporteur on the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights

2.Mr. Fermín Quiñones, President of the United Nations Cuban Association

3.Mr. Khaled Erksoussi, the Secretary General of the Syrian Red Crescent

4.Dr. Nhamo Mhiripiri, Associate Professor & Chair person, Society Studies Department, Midlands State University, Zimbabwe

FORMAT

The meeting will be co-hosted by the Permanent Missions of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of the Niger, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and South Africa to the United Nations, taking place on Wednesday, 25 November 2020, via video conference at 2:00 pm, EST. Further technical details and the registration arrangement will follow.

There will be statements by briefers. In order to allow as many interventions as possible, the interventions by the Security Council members and all other UN member states are limited to three minutes each. The meeting will be streamed live. For any other questions, please use the following emails: liuyuejunes@gmail.com, lisong6393@gmail.com. The list of speakers closes on 23 November.