

China slams 'illegal' US sanctions against Iran's defense programs

Russia supports end to UN missile-related ban on Iran



REUTERS

While the UNSC on Thursday officially ended its restrictions on Iran's missile program, the US and the EU vowed to maintain their bans on Iran's ballistic missile and drone programs.

International Desk

China and Russia have expressed their support for the expiration of the United Nations Security Council sanctions on Iran's missile program, while Iran also confirmed on Wednesday the "unconditional" end of the restrictions imposed by the UNSC on its missile-related activities. However, on the same day the United States imposed new sanctions on Tehran's missile and drone programs. In a note sent to the member states of the UN, the Security Council on Thursday officially declared an end to restrictions it had imposed on Iran's missile program, according to the organization's secretariat. The secretariat of the UNSC officially ended curbs set out in paragraphs 3, 4, 6 (c)

and (d) of Annex B to UN Resolution 2231. According to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), on October 18, another set of Iran's sanctions related to its missile activities were due to be lifted. However, the US and the EU member states have vowed to maintain restrictions on Iran's ballistic missile and drone programs. The Biden administration announced new sanctions and other measures designed to prevent Iran from selling or acquiring parts or technology related to ballistic missiles or drones, saying that Washington would remain focused on the issue despite the expiration of the UN measures. In a press release, the US Treasury claimed that the designated individuals and entities have "materially

supported" Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and the Defense Ministry "in the production and proliferation of missiles and UAVs."

'Illegal sanctions' condemned

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson slammed the new "illegal" sanctions on individuals and entities linked to Iran's missile and drone programs. Mao Ning expressed Beijing's opposition to the US sanctions after the Treasury Department slapped the restrictive measures on 11 individuals, eight entities, and one vessel in Iran, Hong Kong, China, and Venezuela for "enabling" Iran's ballistic missile and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) programs, Press TV reported.

"We are always firmly opposed to illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the US," the Chinese diplomat said.

"We will firmly safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies and citizens." Meanwhile, the EU said on Tuesday that it planned to join the US in retaining sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile program after the UN sanctions expire. "The [European] Council adopted legal acts to maintain the designations that had initially been imposed by the United Nations for individuals and entities involved in nuclear or ballistic missiles activities or affiliated to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC)," the statement said. "The council also agreed to maintain sectoral and indi-

vidual measures, existing under the EU's sanctions regime, notably those related to Iran nuclear proliferation, as well as arms and missile embargoes." On the same day, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani denounced the European Council's decision as "unilateral, illegal and politically unjustifiable".

Russia no longer obeys UN restrictions

Russia has said it need no longer obey the restrictions on giving missile technology to Iran once they expired on Wednesday, without saying whether it now planned to support Tehran's missile development, Reuters reported. "Supplies to and from Iran of products falling under the Missile Technology Control Regime no longer require

prior approval by the UN Security Council," Russia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday. Confirming the "unconditional" end of the restrictions, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said, "Today, the last part of the anti-Iran restrictions, including assets freeze and financial restrictions on certain Iranian individuals and entities, imposed for years by the UNSC in the areas related to missile activities and exchange of relevant services and technologies, were terminated unconditionally." Published on the Iranian Foreign Ministry website, the statement warned that any action aiming to impose sanctions or restrictions on Iran's defense interactions and cooperation is now in contradiction with the termination of the restrictions

under UNSC Resolution 2231, stressing Iran's right to implement the necessary measures to safeguard its national interests. Iran signed a nuclear deal, formally known as JCPOA, with world powers in July 2015, agreeing to put some curbs on its nuclear program in return for the removal of sanctions on the country. The US, however, pulled out of the deal in May 2018 and re-imposed its unilateral sanctions on Tehran, prompting the latter to drop some of its nuclear commitments under the deal. The talks on the revival of the JCPOA began in April 2021 in Vienna, Austria. Despite several rounds of talks, no significant breakthrough has been achieved since the end of the last round in August 2022.

Iran's Kandovan among UNWTO's Best Tourism Villages 2023

Kandovan, a charming village located in East Azarbaijan Province, Iran, has achieved a remarkable milestone by securing its place on the significant list of the world's Best Tourism Villages recognized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The Deputy Tourism Minister of the

Iranian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ali-Asghar Shalbafian announced this remarkable achievement, marking Kandovan as the first Iranian village to be honored among the world's top tourism destinations. The villages were named during the

UNWTO General Assembly, taking place in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, according to the international body. Kandovan faced serious competition from over 200 villages worldwide, yet it emerged victorious, securing its position among the globe's

most enchanting tourism destinations. This recognition is part of the UNWTO's ongoing initiative to boost tourism as a driver for rural development and the well-being of local communities. According to Shalbafian, eight villages

in Iran, including Kandovan, Bisheh in Lorestan, Meymand in Kerman, Soheili in Qeshm, Palangan in Kurdistan, Qasemabad in Gilan, Kandolus in Mazandaran, and Abyaneh in Isfahan were also introduced to the World Tourism Organization for participation in this competition, however, failed to receive global recognition. The World

Tourism Organization has established nine criteria for selecting global villages, which include possessing cultural resources, their promotion and preservation, economic sustainability, environmental and social considerations, tourism potential, development and value chain integration, governance and prioritization of tourism, as well as health, safety, and security matters, adding that Kandovan succeeded in obtaining an acceptable

score in these criteria. To earn its place on this exclusive list, Kandovan had to meet rigorous criteria set by the UNWTO, which included cultural resource preservation, economic sustainability, environmental and social responsibility, and a commitment to safety and security. Kandovan excelled in each of these areas, securing its well-deserved spot alongside 76 other exceptional villages from 40 countries.

