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**Letter dated 3 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

I am writing to you regarding the terrorist attack by the armed forces of the United States of America which led to the horrific assassination of Major General Qasem Soleimani, the Commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps – an official branch of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran – and his companions on 3 January 2020 at Baghdad International Airport.

In recent years and in accordance with the obligations of the Islamic Republic of Iran under international law and relevant resolutions of the Security Council on combating international terrorism, Major General Qasem Soleimani had played a significant role in helping the peoples and Governments of some regional countries, at their request, in combating and defeating the most dangerous terrorist groups, such as Daesh, and other terrorist groups and entities designated by the Security Council. This was widely and repeatedly acknowledged by the officials of the countries concerned.

Conducted “at the direction of the President”<sup>1</sup> of the United States, the assassination of Major General Qasem Soleimani, by any measure, is an obvious example of State terrorism and, as a criminal act, constitutes a gross violation of the fundamental principles of international law, including, in particular, those stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations, and thus entails the international responsibility of the United States.

If anything, this unlawful and yet adventurist act clearly invalidates the claim of the United States that it is fighting terrorism. It is, in fact, fighting those who combat terrorists. Such a hypocritical policy – which also runs counter to the international obligations of the United States on combating international terrorism, including those arising from the relevant resolutions of the Security Council – seriously undermines regional and global efforts in combating international terrorism.

The designation, by one State, of an official branch of the armed forces of other State(s) as a so-called “foreign terrorist organization” constitutes a breach of generally recognized principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of sovereign equality of States, and cannot, under any circumstances, justify any threat or use of force against them, including in the territory of other States.

<sup>1</sup> See [www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Releases/Release/Article/2049534/statement-by-the-department-of-defense/](http://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Releases/Release/Article/2049534/statement-by-the-department-of-defense/).



Categorically rejecting all reasoning and references made by the officials of the United States for justifying the criminal assassination of Martyr Major General Qasem Soleimani, and condemning this heinous crime in the strongest possible terms, the Islamic Republic of Iran reserves all of its rights under international law to take necessary measures in this regard, in particular in exercising its inherent right to self-defence.

This extremely provocative move was aimed at escalating tensions to an uncontrollable level in a region already facing numerous challenges, and it is self-evident that the United States shall bear full responsibility for all consequences.

At the same time, it is incumbent upon the Security Council to uphold its responsibilities and condemn this unlawful criminal act, taking into account the dire implications of such military adventurism and dangerous provocations by the United States on international peace and security.

Finally, I must stress that the Iranian armed forces, especially the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps – that have consistently been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism and extremism in the region – are determined, in line with the rights and obligations of the Islamic Republic of Iran under international law, to vigorously continue the path of Martyr Major General Qasem Soleimani in combating terrorist groups in the region until they are uprooted completely.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* **Majid Takht Ravanchi**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative