

Information Circular

INFCIRC/1300

Date: 27 June 2025

General Distribution

Original: English

Communication from the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Agency

1. On 26 June 2025, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale, together with an attachment, from the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Agency.
2. As requested, the Note Verbale and its attachment are herewith circulated for the information of all Member States.



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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جمهوری اسلامی ایران
نماینده دائمی نزد دفتر ظل مقدس سازمانهای بین المللی
وین

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

No. 2540369

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and has the honor to hereby enclose "*Legal Note on the United States' Flagrant Misrepresentation of International Law in Justifying Its Recent Act of Aggression Against the Islamic Republic of Iran*" and would like to request the latter to publish it as an INFCIRC document.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Vienna avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency the assurances of its highest consideration.

Vienna, 26 June 2025

To: The Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)





Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Vienna

Legal Note

On the United States' Flagrant Misrepresentation of International Law in Justifying Its Recent Act of Aggression Against the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran unequivocally rejects the unfounded and legally spurious arguments presented by the United States in an attempt to justify its recent acts of aggression against the three nuclear facilities—Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan—operating under full IAEA safeguards.

During the urgent meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors on 23 June 2025, the U.S. representative cynically attempted to justify the illegal use of force against Iran's safeguarded nuclear facilities by invoking the right to self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter. He further stated that "*Nothing in the IAEA Statute prevents States from taking legitimate steps for their own or collective self-defense.*" Such assertions constitute a clear distortion of international law. The IAEA Statute was established to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to uphold the non-proliferation regime—not to legitimize or provide a pretext for unlawful acts of aggression.

Accordingly, the following points—firmly grounded in applicable international legal obligations and substantiated by established facts—should be duly taken into account:

1. The justification advanced by the United States for its recent acts is legally untenable and constitutes a flagrant misrepresentation of international law and the United Nations Charter. The unlawful resort to force against the Islamic Republic of Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities—facilities that are under full IAEA safeguards and whose peaceful nature has been consistently verified—cannot, under any interpretation, be subsumed under the "self-defense" as enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter. This

arbitrary and unilateral reinterpretation of Article 51 stands in direct contradiction to the established principles of international law, the text and object of the UN Charter, and the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice.

2. If accepted, such a claim would gravely undermine one of the cardinal principles of the international legal order: the prohibition of the use of force. As codified in General Assembly Resolution 3314 (Definition of Aggression), any so-called preventive or preemptive use of force in the absence of an actual armed attack constitutes a manifest act of aggression. The ICJ, in both the *Nicaragua v. United States* case (1986) and the *Oil Platforms* case (*Islamic Republic of Iran v. United States*, 2003), has clearly articulated that the right of self-defense is strictly limited to circumstances involving an armed attack, and is further constrained by the requirements of necessity and proportionality. The actions undertaken by the United States fail to meet these legal thresholds in their entirety.
3. The United States and the Israeli regime have invoked an alleged nuclear threat posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran as a pretext to justify their unlawful acts of aggression—claims that are entirely devoid of any credible legal or factual foundation. The most recent report of the Director General (GOV/2025/25) — despite Iran’s serious reservations regarding its content— does not identify any breach by Iran of its safeguards obligations, nor does it indicate any diversion of declared nuclear material. On the contrary, the Agency’s findings continue to confirm that there is no evidence of a nuclear weapons development program in Iran. This conclusion has also been consistently echoed by the United States’ own intelligence community.
4. As such, any invocation of a purported “*imminent threat*” as a justification for the use of force lacks any basis under international law or the Charter of the United Nations. The principle of the prohibition of the use of force, enshrined in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, is clear and unambiguous. Moreover, UN Security Council Resolution 487 (1981) explicitly condemned attacks against nuclear facilities and reaffirmed that such actions constitute a violation of the Charter. Similarly, the IAEA General Conference, through various resolutions—including GC(XXIX)/RES/444 and GC(XXXIV)/RES/533—has unequivocally affirmed that any armed attack or threat of attack against nuclear installations devoted to peaceful purposes represents a grave

breach of international law and directly undermines the IAEA's mandate and the integrity of its safeguards and verification system.

5. This flagrant misrepresentation by the United States raises a fundamental question: what is the utility of comprehensive safeguards and international monitoring if States are permitted to substitute unilateral and unlawful uses of force for internationally agreed verification mechanisms? Such conduct not only undermines the authority and credibility of the IAEA but also poses a serious threat to the integrity and viability of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.
6. Security Council Resolution 487 (1981), adopted unanimously on 19 June 1981 in response to Israeli regime's attack on Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor, unequivocally condemned the military strike as a "*clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international conduct*" and called upon Israel to refrain from any such acts or threats thereof in the future. The resolution further requested the Secretary-General to report on its implementation. In this context, the deliberate targeting by the United States of Iran's peaceful, safeguarded nuclear facilities—namely Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan—constitutes a flagrant breach of this binding resolution, and starkly contradicts the obligations of a permanent member of the Security Council charged with upholding international peace and security. By violating a resolution it once supported, the United States has gravely undermined the authority, credibility, and integrity of the Security Council itself, and set a dangerous precedent that risks further erosion of the international legal order.
7. The unlawful use of force and unprovoked armed attacks carried out by the Israeli regime on 13 June 2025, and subsequently by the United States—a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council and a depository of the NPT—on 21 June 2025, targeted Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities, which were fully under IAEA safeguards. These acts, committed under the pretext of self-defense, represent a grave and dangerous precedent. They have profoundly undermined the authority of the NPT, inflicted serious and irreparable damage to the credibility and integrity of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and posed a direct threat to international peace and security. Such actions, if left unchallenged, not only erode the fundamental principles of international law but also jeopardize the institutional integrity of the IAEA and the entire safeguards system.

In light of these serious breaches and their far-reaching implications, the invocation by the United States of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter—purporting to justify the acts of aggression perpetrated by both the United States and the Israeli regime—must be categorically rejected and unequivocally condemned. Such a distortion of Article 51 not only contravenes the text and purpose of the Charter, but also threatens to undermine the foundational legal prohibition on the use of force in international relations.