

**Statement**

**By**

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**Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

**Before the Sixth Committee**

**On**

**Agenda item 77**

**Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives**

**New York, 24 October 2008**

**In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary General for his report on “Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives”, as contained in document A/63/121.

As a party to all international conventions and protocols pertaining to the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives listed in section IV of the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/121), the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches high importance to the security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives. Iran is committed to take every measure to enhance the protection of foreign diplomatic and consular missions and representatives. A special Police unit has for long been responsible for the protection of diplomatic and consular missions. Moreover, recently, we have set up a national coordinating committee in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prevent and monitor any violation of safety and security of diplomatic missions and representatives. The Committee, as a relevant national focal point, is tasked to make necessary coordination between relevant governmental authorities in order to provide sufficient preventive measures for ensuring the safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives. The Committee is to work on practical measures to enhance the overall capabilities of relevant bodies for discharging their responsibility in protecting the safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions. In case of any violation of safety and security of

diplomatic and consular missions, the Committee would take prompt measures to minimize the consequences and make sure that the alleged perpetrators would be prosecuted and punished in accordance with law and without undue delay.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran would like to highlight the legal obligation of all States under international law to respect the immunity and inviolability of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives as well as the obligation to protect them against any violation. We condemn any act of violence against the security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives. In this context, my delegation would like to express its serious concern over the systematic and continuing violence against the safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions by foreign forces in Iraq.

**Mr. Chairman,**

During the last two years there has occurred several attacks against the Iranian diplomatic and consular missions in Iraq, a short summary of which has already been sent to the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/31 (4 December 2006). The most serious violence occurred against the Iranian diplomatic and consular missions were the attack launched by the United States military forces against our Consulate-General in the northern Iraqi city of Erbil. On 11 January 2007, the United States military forces stormed the Consulate General and occupied its premises. They abducted five consular officers, confiscated official documents and computers and damaged the properties. The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations informed the Secretary General of this insolent unlawful act by its letter dated 19 January 2007 (circulated as document A/61/706-S/2007/28), and stressed that this unlawful act required an urgent and resolute response from the United Nations. This was followed up by subsequent letters dated 4 April 2007 and 13 June 2007 (circulated as document A/61/955-S/2007/355). The abductees have been subject to horrific physical and mental torture. Two of them were released months later. Despite the repeated calls for their release, the three abductees are still in detention.

That was not the only act of violence against Iranian diplomatic and consular missions and personnel by the foreign forces in Iraq. On 7 April and 8 May 2007, the premises of the Consulate General of Islamic Republic of Iran in Basra was attacked by the British military forces as a result of which the walls and protection facilities as well as vehicles belonging to the Consulate General were extensively damaged. On 13 June 2007, three Iranian diplomats were detained by American troops in Baghdad. They were interrogated for 18 hours and their belongings were confiscated. Moreover, in August 2007, three Iranian diplomats were detained at the entrance of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Baghdad by American troops. One of them was released 24 hours later and the other two were held in detention for four days. On 29 August 2007, an Iranian diplomat together with 6 members of the delegation of the Iranian Ministry of Electricity who were in Iraq on an official visit, were detained by American troops. They were released after several hours. On 11 January 2008, four staff members of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Basra together with four security

guards of the Consulate General were detained by foreign forces. They were released after hours of detention.

**Mr. Chairman,**

There is no justification for these unlawful violent acts against Iranian diplomats and consular officers in Iraq which are in grave violation of conventional and customary international law governing the diplomatic and consular relations and their activities. These blatant unlawful acts have not only violated the sovereignty of the receiving State but also endangered the institution of diplomatic and consular immunity. The United States and British Government are principally responsible for these internationally wrongful acts. The U.S Government shall take urgent measures for the immediate release of the abducted consular officers as well as compensating the damages incurred.

While we appreciate the cooperation and efforts of the Iraqi Government, we expect that the relevant authorities in Iraq would continue their efforts and take necessary measures in this regard, and ensure that the safety and security of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives would not be endangered by foreign forces as well as terrorist groups. We are in close contact with relevant Iraqi officials and looking forward to receiving information as of the result of their investigations and measures taken to identify and prosecute the alleged offenders.

**I thank you, Mr. Chairman.**