

**To: His Excellency Mr António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations**

**Subject: A Principled Appeal for the Defence of Sovereignty, Science, and Civilisation**

**Your Excellency,**

In the early hours of Friday, the thirteenth of June, the world bore witness to an obscene calamity that must, in both legal conscience and historical memory, be called what it is: a premeditated act of war against the sovereign territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, perpetrated by the Israeli regime with deliberate and unlawful intent. It was a flagrant violation of international law, a transgression against the Charter of the United Nations, and an affront to the foundational principles of justice, sovereignty, and the civilised conduct of nations.

With calculated precision and manifest intent, the Israeli regime bombarded Iranian cities, striking civilian quarters, scientific institutions, medical facilities, cultural sites, and peaceful nuclear installations safeguarded under the oversight of the International Atomic Energy Agency. These were symbols of a nation's striving for knowledge, peace, and cultural dignity. Among the casualties were scholars, researchers, and professionals whose lives had been devoted to the service of humanity. The deliberate targeting of such individuals and institutions renders this assault a moral crime — a strike against the very idea of civilisation.

The Academy of Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the principal guardian of the nation's scientific life and as a member of the broader global academic community, raises its voice in solemn protest. When laboratories become battlegrounds and scientists are marked for death, the very covenant that binds the international community is torn. When hospitals are struck and research centres are reduced to rubble, it is not only Iranian soil that bleeds, but the shared moral fabric of humanity that is wounded.

We assert unequivocally that these crimes constitute a direct and wilful breach of Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations, which forbids the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. We assert unequivocally that these acts constitute a direct and wilful breach of Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. This core principle is reaffirmed in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations among States (UN General Assembly Resolution 2625, 1970), which expressly forbids armed intervention against the



sovereignty, independence, or territorial integrity of any nation. Moreover, the deliberate targeting of critical civilian infrastructure—including nuclear facilities, universities, and hospitals—violates fundamental norms of international humanitarian law. Such acts have recently been recognised as war crimes and crimes against humanity, as reflected in the arrest warrants issued on 5 March 2024 against two senior Russian officers for ordering strikes on Ukraine's vital infrastructure. The assault on Iran's sovereign institutions, both symbolic and material, must therefore be understood as a serious criminal offence against the moral and legal order of the international community.

These acts transgress the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which guarantees the right of all signatory states to pursue peaceful nuclear technologies under international safeguards. They undermine the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency, whose neutrality and credibility have been assailed by this illegal assault. And they disregard the enduring authority of United Nations Security Council Resolution 487 (1981), which condemned military attacks on nuclear facilities under IAEA supervision — a condemnation that speaks directly to the present hour.

Yet the illegality of this aggression extends even further. It violates Article 56 of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 — a provision which, though not universally ratified, has acquired the status of customary international law. That article explicitly prohibits attacks on installations containing dangerous forces, including nuclear power stations, where such assaults may cause severe loss of civilian life. The targeting of Iran's safeguarded nuclear facilities, long verified as peaceful by the IAEA, constitutes a breach of this norm and a hazard to regional and global safety.

The gravity of this act is further underscored by the authoritative voice of the international community. The United Nations General Assembly, in Resolution A/RES/78/316 of 15 July 2024, condemned attacks on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in Ukraine, affirming the inviolability of civilian nuclear infrastructure. The General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency has also, through Resolutions GC(XXIX)/RES/444 and GC(XXXIV)/RES/533, repeatedly affirmed the imperative of nuclear security and the obligation to shield scientific sites from acts of war.

In its most recent report, the Director General of the IAEA confirmed that there is no evidence of Iran's nuclear programme being diverted toward weaponisation — a conclusion reinforced by the assessments of United States intelligence services. These findings invalidate any pretext for military action under the guise of nuclear threat. The claim of 'anticipatory self-defence', advanced by the Israeli regime and echoed by its allies, must therefore be firmly rejected — because it desecrates the spirit of the Charter it purports to invoke.





The Academy of Sciences  
Islamic Republic of Iran

The doctrine of preventive war, masquerading as self-defence, has been categorically disavowed by the international community. In Resolution 3314 (1974), the General Assembly affirmed that any use of force absent an actual armed attack constitutes aggression — an international crime recognised under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

To legitimise 'preventive self-defence' is to herald an era in which law yields to power, in which restraint is ridiculed, and in which international order collapses into strategic whim. The letter submitted by the United States to the President of the Security Council on 27 June 2025, purporting to justify such a position, represents not a contribution to legal dialogue but a rupture in the normative architecture of peace.

These aggressions constitute an affront to the very idea of international law. The Israeli regime seeks to normalise the assassination of scientists and the bombardment of academic and research institutions. The erasure of scholars, the obliteration of knowledge hubs, and the suppression of scientific voices through violence represent a grave threat to the principles of peaceful coexistence and the fragile order of international cooperation.

This act of aggression is a challenge to every institution that holds sacred the values of scientific progress, cultural autonomy, and human dignity. It is a moment that calls upon the United Nations to reaffirm its vital role as a guardian of international peace, justice, and scientific cooperation. The ideals upon which the United Nations was founded — the restraint of violence, the protection of life, and the promotion of justice — remain more vital than ever in this moment. If such a grave act of aggression were to go without a clear and unified international response, the enduring promise of law prevailing over violence, as the cornerstone of the post-war order, would face serious challenges.

We call upon your moral authority and institutional leadership to condemn this war of aggression in the strongest possible terms and to articulate, through word and deed, the unwavering commitment of the international community to the defence of science, the protection of scholars, the sanctity of scientific and academic institutions, and the inalienable sovereignty of all nations.

This should include the prompt engagement of relevant international mechanisms to investigate the strikes as breaches of humanitarian and scientific standards; the facilitation and support for independent UN and UNESCO fact-finding missions to evaluate the damage sustained by academic institutions, research centres, and peaceful nuclear facilities; and the encouragement of appropriate international legal avenues to ensure accountability within the framework of international law. We acknowledge that such measures depend on the collaboration of relevant UN bodies.



The Academy of Sciences  
Islamic Republic of Iran

As historians of the future look back upon this moment, let it never be said that the world watched idly by while a law-defying regime launched its assault on science, murdered scholars, and laid siege to the shared edifice of human civilisation. Let them instead record that voices rose from every corner of the globe—especially from those entrusted with the highest international responsibilities—to defend the dignity of nations and the rights of all peoples in their pursuit of knowledge and peace, free from tyranny and annihilation.

With earnest hope and unwavering resolve, we await your principled stand.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Mohammad Reza Mokhber Dezfouli**  
**President of the Academy of Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran**  
**08 July 2025**