

New US sanctions bespeak 'hostility' to Iranian nation: *FM spox*

International Desk

The spokesperson for Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly denounced new US sanctions targeting dozens of brokers, tanker operators, and shipping companies for their role in selling and transporting Iranian petroleum.

"Making decisions about economic and commercial interactions with countries is part of the legal right of nations to self-determination," Esmail Baghaei said on Tuesday night, adding that no party has the right to use political excuses to obstruct or disrupt their commercial and economic relations. Baghaei further pointed out that the imposition of new sanctions by the US against Iran's foreign trade is contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, especially "the principle of respect for national sovereignty and self-determination of nations," as well as against international laws governing free trade among countries.

"Therefore, it is considered unjustified, illegitimate, and a violation of the human rights of the Iranian people," he said, calling for international accountability of the US government.



The spokesperson for Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Esmail Baghaei

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The spokesperson pointed to assertions by some US officials about their willingness to engage in talks with Iran, describing the new sanctions as the strongest evidence of their insincerity and "hostility to the well-being, development, and happiness of the great Iranian people."

"The Iranian nation — fully aware of the United States' long history of hostile and interventionist policies as well as its repeated breaches of commitments toward Iran — will continue on its path toward progress, dignity, and independence," Baghaei stated.

The US Treasury and the US State departments on Monday sanctioned a combined total of 22 persons — including the heads of Iran's National Iranian Oil Co., and the Iranian Oil Terminals Co. — and identified 13 vessels as blocked property, across multiple jurisdictions, for their involvement in brokering the sale and transportation of Iranian oil.

This is the second round of sanctions imposed on Iranian



oil sales since US President Donald Trump issued the so-called National Security Presidential Memorandum 2, which

seeks to bring Iran's crude exports to zero. Iran has long been subjected to Western sanctions over its

nuclear activities and other pretexts. The Trump administration has escalated these measures since

taking office, reinstating the so-called maximum pressure policy, a campaign of hybrid warfare targeting Iran.

Tehran to hold talks with European troika in coming weeks



International Desk

A senior Iranian diplomat said Tehran and the European troika — France, Germany, and Britain — would likely hold meetings within the next three weeks.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs, made the remarks on Tuesday, stressing that Iran's talks with any country are solely based on the national interests and security of the Islamic Republic.

Referring to the latest round of talks with political directors of the three European countries, he added that they were conducted as a continuation of the discussions from the three previous rounds held in Geneva and New York. "We agreed to continue our interactions. The issue is of importance, covering the lifting of sanctions as well

as the nuclear issue and the expectations of both sides," Gharibabadi said in an interview with Iran's Tasnim news agency.

"After the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei announced the principled policy regarding negotiations with the United States, this has become a policy and a line that we must all follow. Naturally, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always rejected negotiations under sanctions and pressure, and this time as well, this stance must be pursued with strength," he further said.

Back on February 7, the Leader rejected holding talks with Washington, stressing that experience has shown that negotiations with the US have no effect on solving Iran's problems.

"Of course, this does not mean that we will not have dialogues with other coun-

tries, including the Europeans. Therefore, on the sidelines of [Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas] Araghchi's trip to Geneva to attend the Disarmament Conference and the Human Rights Council, I held a meeting with the political directors of the three countries," Gharibabadi added on Wednesday.

He noted that both sides agreed to continue the discussions at a more technical and specialized level, and that the two sides would probably "meet again within the next three weeks, while our experts continue to engage in further discussions and evaluations."

"However, our efforts are not solely limited to negotiations with the European parties; we are also pursuing other initiatives," Gharibabadi emphasized, adding, "We do not link our policies to the positions of other countries; we pursue our own interests."

"We do not put all our expectations and hopes into the basket of a potential rift between Europe and the United States. We always plan for worst-case scenarios."

In 2015, Iran proved the peaceful nature of its nuclear program to the world by signing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with six world powers. However, the US's unilateral withdrawal in 2018 and its subsequent re-imposition of sanctions against Tehran left the future of the deal in limbo.

Top Iranian officials meet Hezbollah chief in Beirut

International Desk

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held talks with the secretary general of Lebanon's resistance movement Hezbollah in Beirut.

Lebanon's al-Manar media outlet reported on Wednesday that Qalibaf and Araghchi met with Sheikh Naim Qassem before leaving Lebanon. Mojtaba Amani, Iran's ambassador to Beirut, also attended the meeting.

The Iranian officials and the Hezbollah leader exchanged views on the latest developments in Lebanon and the broader region.

Qalibaf and Araghchi were in Lebanon to attend the funeral ceremony of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the long-time leader of Hezbollah, and the chief of the resistance movement's Executive Council, Sayyed



Hashem Safieddine, which was held in the Lebanese capital on Sunday.

Nasrallah, who had been the leader of Hezbollah for over 30 years, was killed in an Israeli air strike on southern Beirut on September 27 last year. The same large-scale air strike also resulted in the death of Abbas Nilfroushan, a high-ranking commander in Iran's Quds Force.

Safieddine had been selected to succeed Nasrallah but was later killed in another Israeli strike.



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (c) and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (l) meet with Sheikh Naim Qassem, the secretary general of Lebanon's resistance movement Hezbollah, in Beirut, Lebanon, on February 25, 2025.

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In response to their deaths, Iran launched approximately 200 missiles at Israel in October as an act of retaliation. Hezbollah postponed funeral ceremonies for both leaders due to fears of Israeli attacks on the ceremony.

Nuclear chief calls on IAEA to act professionally

International Desk

Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to maintain professional conduct and avoid politicized approaches. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a weekly cabinet meeting in Tehran on Wednesday, Eslami said the AEOI is in contact with the UN nuclear agency and is being monitored by it. He noted that the IAEA inspectors conduct their rou-

tine inspections in Iran on schedule and on a daily basis. Deploing the attempts by the European troika to mount pressures on the IAEA to prepare a report against Iran, Eslami called on the UN nuclear agency to protect the rights of all member states in accordance with the law.

He further emphasized that the IAEA should act professionally, refrain from politicization and political bias, and ensure its actions are guided by legal frameworks. Eslami expressed hope that the IAEA would not become

a tool for exerting pressure or implementing illegal measures against Iran.

Tehran has consistently emphasized the peaceful nature of its nuclear programs, asserting compliance with international regulations. Historically, Iran has allowed extensive IAEA inspections, demonstrating its commitment to transparency and peaceful nuclear activities. Even after the US withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018, Iran maintained cooperation with the IAEA while urging the agency to remain impartial.