

# Aviation chief warns ICAO of US sanctions impact on global air transport

Economy Desk

The head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization warned the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) that continued sanctions on the country's aviation sector could have consequences for regional and international air transport, saying civil aviation should not be used as a tool of political and economic pressure. The statement, reported by ISNA on Saturday, followed US sanctions on 27 Iranian airlines last week. Abouzar Shiroudi called on the ICAO to urgently address the serious and continuing consequences of US restrictive and extraterritorial measures against Iran's civil aviation sector. He said pressure on Iran's aviation industry had intensified, adding that following the failure of the United States and Israel to achieve their objectives during the wars of 2025 and 2026, pressure had expanded to Iran's civil aviation sector. He said all Iranian airlines were targeted by sanctions on Sept.

8, 2026. Shiroudi said such measures ran counter to the objectives and principles set out in the preamble to the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, which describes the future development of international civil aviation as a means of creating and preserving friendship and understanding among nations and peoples. He also warned that the misuse of civil aviation could become a threat to public safety. Shiroudi said the measures against Iran's aviation sector also posed a serious obstacle to achieving the central objective of the ICAO's 2026-2050 strategic plan, "No Country Left Behind," saying there was a significant gap between that goal and the situation in countries facing such restrictions. He further warned that military attacks on Iran's civil aviation, alongside unilateral sanctions, had consequences extending beyond the country's borders, including restrictions on airspace, disruptions to flight operations, increased diversions and operating costs, and reduced access

to essential aviation equipment and services. Seven Iranian airports were targeted during the 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February, with the attacks focusing more on tourism, passenger and cargo infrastructure than on military facilities. On Tuesday, the US Treasury Department imposed additional sanctions on 27 Iranian airlines as part of a new sanctions package unveiled on Aug. 24, which threatens secondary penalties against countries or entities maintaining trade ties with Tehran. The Treasury said the measures also target 35 companies and one individual, including foreign intermediaries linked to Iranian airlines in Turkey, Malaysia, Kazakhstan and the UAE. The sanctions could affect companies involved in financing, servicing and the international operation of Iran's air transport sector in addition to the airlines themselves. Shiroudi said on Wednesday that the US measures could increase operating and procurement costs but would not bring Iran's flight operations to a halt.



Separately, the head of Imam Khomeini International Airport City Company said on Saturday that all international flights from the airport were operating according to their scheduled timetables without restrictions. Ramin Kashef-Azar told IRNA

that there were so far no restrictions on passenger travel from Imam Khomeini International Airport to airports in neighboring countries or to more than 40 international destinations served from the airport, adding that all flights were operating as

usual. He added that both Iranian and foreign airlines were providing services and operating flights according to their regular daily schedules, with passenger services continuing normally at the airport.

## Iraq eyes \$20b in trade with Iran, adviser says



Economy Desk

A senior official from Iraq's Ministry of Trade said on Saturday that expanding trade ties with Iran was a shared goal and that the two countries were planning to raise annual trade to \$20 billion. Mohammed Hannoun, an adviser to Iraq's Ministry

of Trade, told Rudaw Media Network that his country, "welcomes the development of economic and trade relations with all neighboring and regional countries in ways that serve mutual interests and help achieve economic development goals." On efforts to lift bilateral trade to \$20 billion, Han-

noun said, "The expansion of commercial ties between the two countries is a shared goal that will be achieved by removing obstacles, facilitating procedures and creating a suitable environment for the private sector and economic operators." The head of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce said on Wednesday that the two countries could raise their annual trade to \$20 billion from unofficial estimates of \$14 billion to \$15 billion. Yahya Ale-Es'haq, speaking at a meeting with business figures in the western Iranian province of Kermanshah, described the target as "practical and achievable." Iran is one of Iraq's main trading partners, with most Iranian exports to Iraq concentrated in natural gas, electricity, construction materials and food products.

## Iran, Armenia plan green customs corridor at border crossing

Economy Desk

Iran and Armenia plan to convert the Norduz border crossing into a green customs corridor to cut customs clearance times and accelerate the processing of goods, the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said. The plan follows an agreement between the heads of the two countries' customs administrations, as reported by ISNA. The officials met in Iran on Saturday to discuss customs and transit issues. Under the proposed arrangement, the two sides are expected to sign a draft protocol establishing a simplified, or green, customs corridor. The protocol would involve the online exchange of commercial information and documents and the elimination of paper documents. The scheme would also require each country to provide the other with a list of select-



ed economic operators with an acceptable level of compliance risk. These companies would be guaranteed by the respective customs administrations, with the customs authorities covering any losses resulting from violations. Located in Iran's East Azerbaijan Province on the border with Armenia, Norduz customs post plays an important role in trade, transit and other exchanges between the sides.

Trade between Iran and Armenia reached \$768 million in 2025, with Iran exporting about \$680 million worth of goods to Armenia and importing about \$88 million from the country, according to official Armenian statistics. In the first half of 2026, Armenia's trade turnover with Iran reached \$371.4 million, up 8.4% from the same period a year earlier, according to Reuters citing official Armenian data.

## Strait of Hormuz ...

The Islamic Republic, concerned about the destructive consequences of the continued naval blockade on the national economy and the possibility of internal unrest and protests, is seeking to establish new land and sea routes for importing goods via the Caspian Sea and the Eurasian region with Russia at its center. One of the objectives of the recent visit by Iran's Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh to Moscow was precisely this matter; during the trip, negotiations were also held on finalizing the receipt of a one-billion-dollar loan from Russia. In recent days, following the controversial remarks of former Iranian president Hassan Rouhani emphasizing that the Strait of Hormuz should not become a strait of war, and the widespread reactions of his opponents, a source close to the SNSC, who requested anonymity, exclusively told me "Individuals such as Mr. Rouhani who view the exist-

ing problem solely through the lens of the strait's closure are committing a strategic error in analyzing the present situation. The Islamic Republic does not intend to keep the Strait of Hormuz closed permanently, but the responsibility for its continued closure lies with the United States, which has failed to fulfill its commitments under the Islamabad Understanding. Iran has the right to use its sole instrument of power within its territorial waters." The source, who previously held senior military and security positions in the Islamic Republic for years, added "Iran is engaged in a hybrid and multi-dimensional war with the United States and Israel. Over the past year, they have employed every measure, including surprise attacks, deception operations, attempts to ignite civil war, coups, blockade, and full-scale war. Of course, we believe that in all these plans, the United States has acted as a tool or plaything in the hands of the

Zionists. For this reason, we place no trust in Washington's promises and statements; only practical American actions that serve Iran's interests can lead to a reduction in tensions." In response to the question of what steps the United States must take to reduce tension, the source stated "America's participation in the assassination of the Leader, commanders, children, and innocent people constitutes the primary reasons for the Islamic Republic's distrust. These actions have further intensified the people's hatred and anger toward the enemy. Moreover, the destruction of the country's infrastructure has inflicted heavy damage, while the naval blockade and intensification of sanctions not only fail to push Iran toward surrender but encourage it to take offensive actions against the United States. Therefore, the solution lies in halting America's destructive policies and replacing them with con-

fidence-building measures." According to this official of the Islamic Republic, the United States seeks, through cognitive warfare and media and propaganda campaigns, to conceal realities and portray the closure of the Strait of Hormuz by the Islamic Republic as the obstacle to establishing peace in the region. In this media atmosphere, it aims to close the file of the war without paying the price for its own actions. For this reason, the insistence of officials of the Islamic Republic on maintaining control over the Strait of Hormuz is not merely a military issue; it is a pretext and a field of power-testing for the realization of national rights. Accordingly, the SNSC, while emphasizing the exercise of Iran's sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz, simultaneously pursues the country's other demands in a combined manner. The most important of these are: cessation of the war in Lebanon and Yemen, lifting of the naval blockade,

removal of sanctions, release of Iran's frozen assets in foreign banks, and, above all, a guarantee against any renewed violation of Iran's territorial integrity. In the view of officials of the Islamic Republic, as long as Washington is unwilling to take steps to compensate for the heavy damages of the two recent wars and continues its aggressive approach toward Iran, the Strait of Hormuz will remain an important and effective instrument in the field of confrontation and power-testing between the two countries. The experience of the past six months has also shown that this instrument can be effective in achieving the objectives of the Islamic Republic. In contrast, some politicians and experts inside Iran believe that Tehran should use the Strait of Hormuz bargaining chip as soon as possible, because time will not always be on Iran's side, and this bargaining chip may lose its value and credibility in the not-too-distant future.