



Reacting to U.S. Sanctions, Iran Boasts of Ability to Control Persian Gulf

Reacting to President Trump's announcement of sanctions against Iran on August 7, the head of the navy of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, General Alireza Tangsiri, said on August 27 that Iran has full control of both the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz that leads into it. The veiled threat implied by Tangsiri's statement is that if the sanctions reduce Iran's oil exports to zero — as U.S. officials have said is their goal — then Iran might retaliate by blocking oil exports through the Gulf of other countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia.



"We can ensure the security of the Persian Gulf and there is no need for the presence of aliens like the U.S. and the countries whose home is not in here," Tangsiri said, as quoted in an English translation by the Tasnim news agency in Iran.

An August 27 Fox News report cited information from the U.S. Energy Information Administration noting that most of the oil from Saudi Arabia passes through the Strait of Hormuz. Although the Saudis have constructed pipelines to bypass the strait, they still ship a majority of their crude oil by sea, meaning that any action by Iran to halt shipping may affect consumers across the world.

"The blockage of the Strait of Hormuz, even temporarily, could lead to substantial increases in total energy costs," the agency said in a 2012 report.

The report also quoted Fox News security analyst Walid Phares, who said that the Iranians can damage the international passage "if they want," but that the United States can easily "intercept them, stop them, and damage their own capacity."

Fox News reported that in recent weeks Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that if sanctions threatened Iran's crude oil exports, the rest of the Middle East's exports would be threatened as well.

President Trump responded by tweeting the following message to Rouhani, in all caps:

Never, ever threaten the United States again or you will suffer the consequences the like of which few throughout history have ever suffered before. We are no longer a country that will stand for your demented words of violence and death. Be cautious!

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