USA - Iran: Battle between David and Goliath

As Donald Trump's current administration continues to impose tougher illegitimate sanctions against Iran, it has now moved to the next step of attempting to completely isolate Tehran's economy and to erode its standing in the Middle East. The decision to prevent five of Iran’s biggest clients from purchasing oil from Tehran became the latest inhumane blow to the standard of living enjoyed by Iranian people. We ought to remind our readers that up until recently, Iran sold 1.3 million barrels of oil per day and used the received revenues to ensure the nation's main needs were met.

The ban will now extend to China (which purchases almost half of Iran's oil exports), India, Japan, South Korea and Turkey. "We will no longer grant any exemptions," said Mike Pompeo, the US Secretary of State, in his statement announcing that the current waivers enjoyed by the five nations will expire on 2 May. This will subsequently allow the U.S. to impose economic sanctions on any companies or financial institutions that will participate in deals involving the purchase of Iranian oil. In other words, Washington plans to institute its current sanctions (that apply to Iran) against any nations that are brave enough to trade with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Apparently, there is no longer a need for the United Nations, international laws or numerous global organizations, which, at times, start poking around, since, nowadays, Washington has started to condone racketeering and cross-borders criminal activities. After all, at present, Donald Trump and his puppets are in charge of the global "dance floor". But why are they behaving in this manner? The answer is that they do not have a clue as to what the laws governing the global community are, because, currently, the United States is not really part of the civilized world but is instead on its periphery.
At present, the U.S. political elite is engaging with 80 million Iranians not by means of persuasion or negotiations, but by attempting to starve this entire nation and erase from the face of this Earth a country that has a history spanning more than 5,000 years. From May onwards Washington's draconian measures will come into effect to punish all the nations that are brave enough to trade with Iran. So who ultimately benefits from these severe sanctions? The answer is, naturally, the governments of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. After all, these nations are, on request from Washington, ramping up extraction of "black gold" thereby making up for its shortages on the world markets that have resulted from Iran, Venezuela and Libya ceasing their supplies of oil.

As reported by the state media outlet, Saudi Press Agency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, Ibrahim bin Abdulaziz Al-Assaf, even expressed his profound gratitude that the United States had made the decision to stop granting waivers to certain nations purchasing oil from Iran as part of their policy of sanctions.

Washington's lawless initiatives have resulted in acute dissatisfaction in many of the world's nations, especially in the countries of the Middle East. Only a few hours after the United Stated announced that it would not be extending the current weakened sanctions that allow for exceptions on purchases of Iranian oil, Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu stated that such actions threatened the peace and stability in the region and criticized the decision coming from White House. The politician tweeted "The US decision to end sanctions waivers on Iran oil imports will not serve regional peace and stability, yet will harm Iranian people. Turkey rejects unilateral sanctions and impositions on how to conduct relations with neighbors." Incidentally, Iran is a leading supplier of oil to Turkey, and last year it exported more than 25 million tons of oil to this nation.

The Chinese government immediately expressed its disagreement with the U.S. decision, but analysts have stated that both Beijing and Washington will probably tread carefully so as not to interfere with their ongoing trade negotiations.

For its part, the European Union has expressed its regret that the USA made the decision not to extend the period during which the waivers remain in place for 8 nations and territories importing hydrocarbons from Iran, and that these countries can now be sanctioned for purchasing oil from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Maja Kocijancic, the Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the EU, expressed deep regret that the United States had made the decision a week earlier that poses "a serious challenge to the continued implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)". She highlighted that the EU intended to continue its support of the JCPOA "As we remain committed to our side of the deal, we also expect Iran to continue implementing in full all its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA."

And you will probably agree with me when I say that this can already be interpreted as mutiny "on the U.S. ship", since the whole of Europe is unhappy with Washington's decision, and is vocal and open about its dissent. We can also add another categorical statement to the list of dissenting voices, which was made on 22 April by the current commander of Navy of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Admiral Alireza Tangsiri. In it he forewarns the United States and its allies in the region of the consequences of stopping the passage of Iranian oil via the Strait of Hormuz, a strategically important choke point in the Persian Gulf. According to the Mehr News Agency, the military commander said that in retaliation for any attempts of this nature, Tehran would immediately blockade the Strait of Hormuz and would not allow other nations in the region to transport oil to external markets. Alireza Tangsiri described the presence of foreign forces, first and foremost American ones, in the region of the Persian Gulf as a destabilizing factor. He added that any actions taken by these external troops would only disrupt regional security. He also said that the Iranian Navy and the nation's entire military force have close ties and maintain regular communications with two other nations of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Qatar. Incidentally, while Iran completely controls the Northern route in the Strait of Hormuz, the Sultanate of Oman has dominion over the Southern route.

And no one ought to have any doubts about this. At present, Iran earns around $50 billion from selling oil annually, which constitutes 40% of the government's revenue. Naturally, any interruption in oil sales will have an immediate effect on lifestyles of the Iranian populace. And even if, to a certain extent, more food can be harvested within the country, the lack of the most basic items essential for daily life, such as many medications and spare parts of modern gadgets, will negatively affect, first and foremost, ordinary civilians. Perhaps this is the aim of policies promoted by the so-called "democrats" in Washington, who are attempting to plant the seeds of discontent among Iranians that may eventually lead to an uprising and an overthrow of the existing government. But we should not forget that Iran is not a meek nation, and that Islam is different from the "old-fashioned" Protestantism. And soon Donald Trump and his cronies, who are for the moment still "receiving leftovers from the U.S. table", will be able to experience this first-hand. But it will be too late by then. Just recall the famous battle between David and Goliath and the way it ended. And as the saying goes, history repeats itself.
Viktor Mikhin, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”