

International Court of Justice orders U.S. to suspend sanctions against Iran



The Hague, October 3 (RHC)-- In a victory for Tehran against Washington, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ordered the United States to halt the unilateral sanctions it recently re-imposed on "humanitarian" supplies to Iran.

The Hague-based court, which is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, announced its ruling on Wednesday regarding the July lawsuit brought by Tehran against Washington's decision to re-impose unilateral sanctions following the US exit from the the 2015 nuclear deal.

Iran's lawsuit argued that the sanctions violate the terms of the 1955 Treaty of Amity between Iran and the United States. It also called on the court to order Washington to immediately suspend the measures.

On Wednesday, the UN's top tribunal -- known as the World Court -- unanimously ruled that the U.S. must ensure that the re-imposed sanctions do not impact humanitarian aid or civil aviation safety. According to the verdict, which was read out by Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, Washington "shall remove by means of its choosing any impediments arising from the measures announced on May 8 to the free exportation to Iran of medicines and medical devices, food and agricultural commodities" as well as airplane parts.

The court further said that sanctions on goods "required for humanitarian needs... may have a serious detrimental impact on the health and lives of individuals on the territory of Iran." U.S. sanctions on aircraft spare parts also had the "potential to endanger civil aviation safety in Iran and the lives of its users," it added.

The decisions of the ICJ -- which rules on disputes between UN member states -- are legally binding and cannot be appealed. However, the United States has stated that it will not abide by any decision issued by the international court.

In a post on his Twitter account on July 16, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the complaint challenged Washington's "unlawful re-imposition of unilateral sanctions."

"Iran is committed to the rule of law in the face of US contempt for diplomacy & legal obligations. It's imperative to counter its habit of violating int'l law," he tweeted.

In May, Trump pulled his country out of the 2015 nuclear agreement, called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), despite objections from the other signatories to the accord. In August, he re-imposed the first round of sanctions on Iran. The second phase of U.S. bans will come into effect next month.

Meanwhile, Tehran has welcomed the ruling by the 15-member panel of justices, saying it once again indicted Iran's "righteous" position against the hostile U.S. policies. In a tweet on Wednesday, Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif described the verdict as yet another defeat for the "sanctions-addicted" U.S. government.

Iran's Foreign Ministry also issued a statement, saying the decision "proved once again that the Islamic Republic of Iran is right, and that U.S. sanctions against people and citizens of our country are illegitimate and cruel." It also showed that "the U.S. government is growing more isolated day by day due to its wrong and extremist policies and as a result of its own excessive demands from other countries," the statement added.

Tehran further called on Washington to abandon its unpleasant addiction to imposing cruel and illegal sanctions against other people and act as a responsible member of the international community.

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