

US Blames Iran for Attacks on Two Oil Tankers, Says Iran Is “Trying to Interrupt the Flow of Oil”

written by GEG | June 13, 2019



Two oil tankers were reported to have suffered attacks by torpedoes or magnetic mines in the Persian Gulf on Thursday. The damaged tankers belong to Norway and Japan. Iran denied responsibility for the attack. Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has noted that it is suspicious that a Japanese-owned vessel would be attacked while Iranian leaders were meeting with the Japanese prime minister in Tehran, and that Iran has nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by provoking the Europeans and Japanese. South Korean and Iranian ships helped rescue all 44 sailors who were aboard the two ships.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said earlier that the US was in possession of “intelligence” suggesting Iran is behind the attack, but he neglected to offer any proof. He claims the attack was part of a campaign to escalate tension in the region and disrupt the flow of the international oil trade. However, critics suspect this was a false flag attack that will lead to another US war in the Middle East and higher oil prices. Ron Paul says sanctions are acts of war and US sanctions against Iran have left the country crippled. Paul blamed neocons for provoking wars in the Middle East and stoking hatred.

Update 7: Ahead of comments to the UN Security Council (which will presumably block any action, with China and Russia backing Iran), unnamed officials are sharing with reporters some of what the US intends to say:

- U.S. OFFICIALS ALLEGE IRANIAN ATTACK MEANT TO ESCALATE CONFLICT
- OFFICIALS: ATTACK SHOWS IRAN UNINTERESTED IN DIALOGUE WITH U.S.

▪ OFFICIALS: OPTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION INCLUDE TANKER ESCORTS

Earlier, the Saudis presented a letter to the council claiming that the Iran-backed Houthis had obtained special weapons training and were responsible for Wednesday's attack on Abha airport.

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Update 6: And there it is...

The Trump Administration has officially concluded that Iran is responsible for Thursday's attacks, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Thursday during a press briefing.

The secretary of state and longtime Iran hawk said Iran's "unprovoked" attacks are part of a campaign to escalate tension in the region and disrupt the flow of the international oil trade (if we can't sell our oil, nobody can, would appear to be the logic). He also said that Tehran rejected Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's outreach for diplomacy.

Here's an abridged version of Pompeo's statement, courtesy of [CNN](#):

"It is the assessment by the United States government that the Islamic Republic of Iran is responsible for the attacks that occurred in the Gulf of Oman today," Pompeo told reporters at the US State Department.

"This assessment is based on intelligence, the weapons used, the level of expertise needed to execute the operation, recent similar Iranian attacks on shipping, and the fact that no proxy group operating in the area has the resources and proficiency to act with such a high degree of sophistication."

The US is planning to raise concerns about Iran at the UN Security Council, Pompeo said, which is planning to meet to discuss the attacks at 4 pm ET. The US has already presented evidence to the security council that Iran was behind the last round of tanker attacks. The UN has been somewhat more measured in its approach to the attacks. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres denounced Thursday's incidents at a Security Council meeting, saying: "I strongly condemn any attack against civilian incidents," before adding that "facts must be established and responsibilities clarified."

He warned that the world can't afford "a major confrontation" in the Gulf, [Al Jazeera](#).

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