

# The Lord of Hormuz

## IRAN



Trump issues  
48-hour ultimatum  
after weeks of  
scrambling to break  
IRGC's unyielding  
grip on the strait

## Strait of Hormuz

Persian  
Gulf

Gulf of Oman

### *The global backlash against Trump's 'maniacal' energy ultimatum*

TEHRAN — As the 48-hour clock expires on Donald Trump's inflammatory ultimatum, the United States finds itself facing a firestorm of internal dissent and unprecedented international condemnation.

The threat to "obliterate" Iran's civilian power infrastructure unless the Strait of Hormuz is immediately reopened has not only unified the Iranian nation but has also exposed a profound, structural rot within the American political establishment.

Inside the halls of Congress, the rhetoric has reached a fever pitch, with representatives describing the President as a leader who has completely lost his grip on both reality and strategy.

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### *Iran to deliver 'decisive response' to Trump's reckless threats 'on the battlefield'*

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### *The contradictions of power: Trump, the Strait of Hormuz, and the unravelling of a system*

By Xavier Villar

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### *Strait of Hormuz closure would trigger global economic shock: experts warn*

TEHRAN — In the wake of escalated military aggression by the United States and Israel against the Islamic Republic of Iran, regional tensions have reached a critical threshold.

Experts now warn that one of the most consequential outcomes of such hostilities—the potential closure of the Strait of Hormuz—could inflict severe damage on the global economy, with the United States standing to suffer significant repercussions.

The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway separating the Persian Gulf from the Gulf of Oman, serves as the world's most vital oil chokepoint. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, approximately one-fifth of global petroleum consumption passes through this strait daily.

Any disruption, even partial, would send immediate shockwaves through energy markets. ▶ **Page 4**

### *U.S. and Israeli energy sites across the region in Iran's crosshairs*

TEHRAN — Iran's response to President Donald Trump's ultimatum threatening its energy infrastructure has highlighted Tehran's readiness to defend its sovereignty and impose serious costs on any aggressor. Trump's post on Truth Social warned that if Iran did not fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz, "the United States of America will hit and obliterate their various power plants, starting with the biggest one first."

Iran condemned the threat, with Lieutenant Colonel Ebrahim Zolfaqari, spokesman for the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, reiterating that "if Iran's fuel and energy infrastructure is attacked by the enemy, all energy infrastructure, as well as information technology (IT) and water desalination facilities belonging to the United States and the regime in the region will be targeted pursuant to previous warnings." ▶ **Page 4**

## Iran intercepts another enemy fighter jet



TEHRAN- Iran's air defense units have announced that they shot down another enemy fighter jet, this time in the country's southern skies.

According to a statement from the Army's Public Relations Office, the Joint Air Defense Command successfully tracked an intruding F-15 fighter jet near Hormuz Island, off the southern coast, and struck it with a surface-to-air missile. Authorities are now investigating the fate of the aircraft and its pilot, the statement added.

The downing comes a day after Iran's air defense units intercepted and damaged an Israeli F-16 fighter jet, following a strike on an American F-35 warplane the previous day.

In a statement Saturday, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps said the F-16 was targeted and damaged at 3:45 a.m. local time by "modern air defense systems." A source later told the Tasnim news agency that the system was

made in Iran. The jet managed to escape to a neighboring country.

On Friday, Iran hit and damaged an American F-35 in the country's central skies—the first time that U.S. warplane model has ever been intercepted. That aircraft managed to flee Iran too, with U.S. media later reporting that the pilot was receiving medical care.

Iran also struck an F-16 in its southwestern territory during the first week of the war.

Earlier, Iran had intercepted three F-15s over Kuwaiti territory. U.S. Central Command initially attributed the losses to "friendly fire," but the aircraft had been hit in three separate locations.

Iranian air defense units have come a long way since the 12-day war in June 2025. Since the latest conflict began on February 28, they have struck around 200 enemy drones and missiles, including advanced Hermes and Heron drones, as well as Tomahawk missiles.

## Bases serving as launchpad for attacks on Iranian islands 'crushed', says IRGC Navy commander

The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps' Navy announced that the IRGC Navy has destroyed facilities at Al Minhad and Ali Al Salem air bases, including hangars and fuel depots used by U.S. and Israeli aircraft, with a massive barrage of ballistic missiles and strike drones.

Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said the two bases were the launchpad for aggression against Iranian islands. He also warned that across all Iranian islands, "graves have been dug for child-killing aggressors."

Al Minhad Air Base in the United Arab Emirates is one of the key logistics and support hubs for U.S. forces in the region. For decades, it has hosted hundreds of American personnel, serving as an operational and air transport center for moving troops and equipment across West Asia. Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait, known as "The Rock," has been described as the main air mobility hub and gateway for military power into the region. It is home to the U.S. Air Force's 386th Air Expeditionary Wing.



Kuwait hosts approximately 13,500 American troops—the largest concentration of U.S. forces in the region—and Ali Al Salem plays a critical role in air operations and logistics.

The Iranian strikes on these two bases mark a direct hit on U.S. military infrastructure in two allied Persian Gulf states. They also underscore Iran's ability to strike deep into strategic bases used by aggressors on its doorstep, analysts say.

## Military spox: Iran seeks total enemy surrender through continued war

TEHRAN- An Iranian defense ministry spokesman said that given the demands of the people, the Leader and the families of the victims of U.S.-Israeli aggression, the Iranian armed forces must keep up nonstop combat with full force until the enemy is "completely defeated."

In remarks to Iranian media, Brigadier General Reza Talei-Nik described U.S. President Donald Trump as a "pawn of the Zionists," saying that in an attempt to please Israel, Trump and his fellow cabinet members have ignored the interests of the American people, many other nations, and the Iranian people by launching an unprovoked war against Iran.

## Iran did not issue any warning to evacuate Doha

TEHRAN- A well-informed source told Tasnim that Iran has not issued any warning telling people to leave Doha or target Qatari media outlets.

Last night, social media was buzzing with claims that Iran's armed forces had put out a statement calling on residents of Doha to evacuate the city.

The alleged message said that due to the presence of U.S. forces and American interests in the area, Doha had become a "legitimate target" and that residents needed to leave as

soon as possible.

A source with the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) told Tasnim News Agency that despite the false rumors making the rounds online, Iran has not issued any kind of warning about evacuating Doha or Qatari media outlets.

Iran reiterates its view that the countries in the region and governments are its brothers, and that it only targets the U.S. and Zionist interests in the region, the source added.

## War room chief says Iran's military doctrine has shifted to 'offensive' after successful strike in Dimona

TEHRAN – A top Iranian commander has declared that the Islamic Republic's military posture has evolved from defensive to offensive, a shift driven by the deployment of advanced weaponry and new tactics amid escalating reprisal strikes against American and Israeli targets.

Major General Ali Abdollahi, the head of Iran's highest operational command, the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, announced the strategic change on Sunday, stating that it is intended to "disrupt enemy calculations."

General Abdollahi said the transformation involves a comprehensive overhaul of battlefield tactics to support the new offensive approach. He added that Iran aims to introduce "new surprises" in future engagements.

He also stressed that the armed forces would remain steadfast under the guidance of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei. "The national cohesion and history-making solidarity of the warrior nation and the proud armed forces of Iran under the full subordination of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution promise more victories ahead," he said.

The commander noted that Iranian forces are increasingly harnessing the talents of young scientists to develop cutting-edge equipment, a development he said has not gone unnoticed by adversaries. "The criminal enemies of Iran have already understood some aspects of it on the battlefield," he said, adding that the new



Iranian missile retaliation struck the city of Dimona in the central part of the occupied territories on March 21, 2026.

military capabilities are already affecting enemy operations and strategic planning.

Abdollahi characterized the current period of transformation as "only the beginning."

The remarks followed the 74th wave of Iran's Operation True Promise 4, an operation it launched at the start of the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war against Iran hours after the two regimes' opening strikes on February 28. The latest wave targeted several U.S. bases in the region, something Iran has been conducting almost daily, as well as locations in southern and central Israel that it had not struck during the current

war.

Hebrew media, which has maintained strict censorship on Iranian strikes and their impacts, was forced to report on the matter after just two Iranian missiles were fired—both of which managed to infiltrate Israeli defense systems, hit their targets in two of the most protected areas in the occupied territories, and cause heavy damage. Iran struck two nuclear-related centers: one in Dimona and one in Arad. It came a day after the U.S. and Israel attacked the Natanz facility in central Iran.

Following the attack, Iran's top legislator stated that reports of significant damage caused to the city of Dimona in the central occu-

pied territories by Iranian missile strikes point to the disempowerment of Israeli defenses in the face of Iranian retaliation.

"If the Israeli regime is unable to intercept missiles in the highly protected area of Dimona, it is, in operational terms, a sign of entering a new phase of the battle," Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, wrote in a post on X on Saturday.

Analysts believe Iranians have prepared themselves for a prolonged war, where they gradually increase the quality and quantity of attacks against American and Israeli assets.

## Trump digging himself a bigger grave over Hormuz Strait

The US president says he is going to attack Iran's power plants after claiming ignorance about prior attacks on energy infrastructure

TEHRAN – U.S. President Donald Trump has openly threatened to commit war crimes by attacking Iran's power plants, "starting with the biggest one first," if the country does not allow all ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran began restricting passage through the strait after the United States and Israel launched their second war against Iran in less than nine months, even as Tehran and Washington were engaged in nuclear negotiations. Since early March, only ships belonging to or bound for countries that have not contributed to the U.S.-Israeli aggression against Iran have been allowed to transit the waterway, through which over 20% of the world's energy used to pass daily. This means that in addition to U.S. and Israeli-linked vessels, ships connected to Europe, the Arab Persian Gulf nations, and several other countries have been barred from moving through the Strait. Reports suggest that Chinese, Turkish, Pakistani, and some Indian vessels have been permitted to pass.

After failing to force the Strait open through bombings on civilian infrastructure and failing to get Washington's European and Asian allies to intervene, Trump took to social media Saturday afternoon to announce that he would attack Iran's power grids if it does not allow all ships to pass within 48 hours.

"If Iran doesn't FULLY OPEN, WITHOUT THREAT, the Strait of Hormuz, within 48 HOURS from this exact point in time, the United States of America will hit and obliterate their various POWER PLANTS, STARTING WITH THE BIGGEST ONE!" he wrote on X. Only hours earlier, Trump had said that he has obliterated all of Iran's military capabilities and even "blown Iran off the map."

How does law view attacks on energy infrastructure?

Under both international humanitarian law and the U.S. Department of Defense Law of War Manual, attacking a country's energy infrastructure—including power plants—is illegal, as such facilities are presumed to be civilian objects protected from direct attack. The law prioritizes the protection of civilians and the infrastructure essential to their survival, and attacks on power grids are treated as inherently suspect—and in many cases, as war crimes.

Over the past few years, Western states and international institutions have consistent-

ly classified attacks on power infrastructure as war crimes when carried out by Russia in Ukraine.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Russian military and political officials specifically for alleged attacks on Ukrainian power plants and electrical grids. The United States Department of State has repeatedly stated that Russia's alleged attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure constitute crimes against humanity. The European Union, NATO, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have made similar assertions.

During previous attacks on Iranian energy infrastructure, Trump feigned ignorance, and U.S. media reported on the first ruptures emerging between Israel and the U.S. during the current war.

After Israel attacked Iran's South Pars Gas Field and damaged some facilities last week, Tehran responded by striking energy sites across the Persian Gulf where the U.S. holds stakes or has commercial ties, including the Ras Laffan Industrial City in Qatar, the SAMREF Refinery in Saudi Arabia, the Mina Al-Ahmadi and Mina Abdullah Refineries in Kuwait, as well as the Habshan Gas Facility and Bab Oil Field in the UAE. Shortly after, Trump claimed Israel alone was responsible for the initial attacks on South Pars and that such assaults would not happen again.

Iran says it will respond

Iranian authorities have said multiple times since the war began that any attacks on its energy infrastructure would be met with far larger attacks on U.S.-linked facilities in the region. Following Trump's latest threats, Iranian officials reiterated those warnings.

Iranian Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref has warned that any attack on the country's electricity generation infrastructure would trigger counterattacks resulting in a blackout across the entire region.

"Attacking public facilities is tantamount to directly targeting the people and constitutes a clear violation of humanitarian principles and international law. The Islamic Republic of Iran will act decisively in defense of its nation and territory," Aref said. "An attack on Iran's infrastructure will cause widespread blackouts across the region."

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qali-



Orot Rabin is Israel's largest power station, representing about 20% of the regime's total generation capacity

baf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi made similar remarks on social media. Iran's President, Masoud Pezeshkian, said his country will respond to the enemy's "nonsense and reckless threats on the battlefield."

The Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, the body overseeing the war, also issued a statement on Trump's threats.

"We have said repeatedly that the Strait of Hormuz is closed only to the enemy and to traffic that threatens us. It has not yet been fully closed, and it remains under our smart control," the statement read, adding that should the U.S. president act on his threats, "The Strait of Hormuz will be closed completely and will not be reopened until our destroyed power plants are rebuilt."

The headquarters also said that after attacks on Iranian energy sites, all power plants, energy infrastructure, and information technology (ICT) infrastructure in Israel will be targeted, all companies in the region with American shareholders will be destroyed, and all power plants in regional countries that host U.S. bases will be considered legitimate targets.

"We did not start this war, and we will not start it now. But if the enemy inflicts damage on our power plants, we will do whatever it takes to defend our country and the interests of our people," the statement added.

Iran has over 100 power plants scattered across the country. Its biggest provides about 2.9% of the country's electricity needs. Israel and the Arab Persian Gulf countries, however, each rely on a handful of facilities to meet their needs.

# The contradictions of power: Trump, the Strait of Hormuz, and the unravelling of a system



By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The joint American and Israeli assault on Iran, launched on February 28, 2026, was conceived as a demonstration of decisive force. Air superiority, applied with precision and persistence, was expected to compel Tehran into submission or, at minimum, to degrade its capacity to shape events in the Persian Gulf. Four weeks later, that premise appears increasingly detached from realities at sea. The Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of globally traded oil normally circulates, has not been formally closed, yet it has been rendered functionally inoperative for many ships. What has come undone is not simply a military plan, but a broader system in which power has long been equated with the ability to guarantee circulation.

At its narrowest point, the strait spans just 33 kilometres, with deepwater shipping lanes running closer to Iran's coastline than to the Arabian Peninsula. In 2025, roughly 20 million barrels per day passed through this corridor. By mid-March 2026, that figure had fallen sharply, with only a limited number of tankers attempting the crossing. The disruption has not taken the form of a declared blockade. There are no continuous lines of interdiction, no visible barriers to passage. Instead, Iran has introduced calibrated uncertainty into the environment through which ships must pass. Drones operate from Qeshm Island, monitoring movement and signalling presence. Missile launches remain intermittent, yet credible enough to alter calculations.

The effect has been cumulative rather than spectacular. Tankers are not routinely destroyed, but they do not need to be. The contemporary global economy depends less on the possibility of movement than on its predictability. Once Lloyd's of London withdrew war risk insurance from large parts of the route, and premiums rose to levels that shipowners could not absorb, transit effectively ceased. The strait has been closed not by legal declaration or physical obstruction, but through the repricing of risk.

This distinction marks a shift in how power is exercised. Rather than asserting territorial control in a conventional sense, Iran has altered the conditions under which circulation occurs. The management of uncertainty becomes the central mechanism. Air strikes, however precise, do little to restore confidence in such an environment. They can destroy infrastructure and eliminate personnel, but they cannot easily reverse a situation in which the cost of movement has become prohibitive.

Statements from Tehran suggest that this approach is neither improvised nor reactive. In his first address, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei described the strait as a lever through which

broader pressures could be applied. American planning appears to have rested on the assumption that Iran's dependence on oil exports would act as a restraint. That assumption reflects a narrow understanding of economic rationality. It privileges volume over position, overlooking the extent to which influence over the terms of circulation can outweigh temporary losses in output.

The immediate economic consequences are visible but uneven. Oil prices have risen to around \$118 per barrel, generating windfalls for some producers while imposing costs on consumers. American firms benefit from higher prices, even as domestic fuel costs increase. High prices expose the enduring centrality of Persian Gulf energy to the global economy, underscoring how attempts to marginalise Iran have only deepened systemic dependence on the region it helps anchor. At the same time, they enhance the relative attractiveness of alternative technologies, particularly those produced at scale in China, whose expansion increasingly aligns with energy realities shaped in part by Iranian leverage. Yet substitution remains constrained by infrastructure, geography and time, reinforcing the limits of any strategy that seeks to bypass rather than accommodate Iran's role.

More significant than price movements are the transformation in how the strait is understood. For decades, it has been treated as a neutral conduit, a space of transit secured by American naval dominance and open to all participants in the global market. That neutrality was always contingent on the absence of effective challenge. It is now openly contested. Iran has not replaced the system, but it has exposed its underlying assumptions and demonstrated their fragility.

## Circulation, risk, and the littoral

Iran's strategy in the strait draws on a long-developed doctrine of littoral warfare, in which geography and proximity are leveraged to offset conventional inferiority. The shallow waters, confined channels and island networks of the Persian Gulf favour dispersed systems over concentrated force. Drones, fast attack craft and naval mines operate not as instruments of decisive engagement, but as tools for introducing friction into movement.

The objective is not to defeat the United States Navy outright, but to render its presence insufficient to guarantee passage. A navy can dominate open waters while remaining unable to secure narrow, contested corridors in which risk is distributed and difficult to eliminate. In such environments, the cost of assurance rises rapidly.

Insurance markets have become the decisive arena in which this cost is expressed. Premiums for transit have increased multiple times over,

in some cases surpassing the value of the vessels themselves. Crews face heightened exposure without corresponding compensation. Shipowners delay voyages or seek alternatives where possible. The infrastructure of trade begins to stall, not because it has been destroyed, but because it can no longer operate under predictable conditions.

This form of disruption is inherently selective. Iran does not impose a total blockade. Instead, it allows certain vessels to pass while obstructing others. Reports indicate that Chinese flagged tankers have continued to move with fewer impediments, and that cargoes denominated in non-dollar currencies may receive preferential treatment. Whether fully systematised or evolving, such practices introduce differentiation into what has historically been presented as a uniform system of access.

The implications extend beyond shipping. The predominance of the dollar in global energy trade has long underpinned American financial power, enabling sanctions to function as instruments of coercion. By linking maritime access to alternative payment arrangements, Iran is not displacing this system but probing its limits. Even incremental shifts in settlement practices, when tied to physical control overflows, carry disproportionate significance.

The strait thus emerges as more than a geographic bottleneck. It is a site where logistics and finance intersect, where the movement of goods is inseparable from the systems that price and ensure that movement. Control in this context does not require exclusivity. It requires sufficient influence over risk to shape behaviour.

The historical formation of this space remains relevant. The Persian Gulf's shipping lanes were structured through imperial intervention, first under British authority and later through American naval dominance. Ports, pipelines and security arrangements were designed to ensure outward flows of hydrocarbons while embedding regional economies within external circuits of accumulation. The notion of a global commons, applied to these waters, obscures the extent to which access has always been managed.

Iran's actions do not dismantle this inherited system, but they interrupt its smooth functioning. By operating at the level of probability rather than prohibition, Tehran introduces a form of control that is difficult to counter without escalation. The burden of disruption is unevenly distributed. Tanker crews, often drawn from migrant labour pools, face immediate physical risk. Port workers and ancillary industries experience volatility. Insurance firms adjust exposure and transfer costs. What appears as strategic

manoeuvre at the state level translates into differentiated forms of vulnerability across the chain of circulation.

The limits of force and the reconfiguration of order

The American response has exposed the constraints of a strategy centred on military superiority. Carrier groups remain deployed in the region, and air strikes continue against Iranian targets. Yet the fundamental objective, the restoration of predictable passage through the strait, has not been achieved. Efforts to assemble a multinational escort operation have faltered, reflecting diverging interests and the risks associated with escalation.

European allies have shown little appetite for direct involvement. Persian Gulf states, while affected by the disruption, remain cautious about provoking further instability. China, as a principal importer of Persian Gulf energy, has little incentive to participate in an arrangement that might compromise its bilateral channels with Tehran. The absence of a coherent coalition underscores the fragmentation of what has often been assumed to be a unified maritime system.

Historical precedents offer limited reassurance. The escort operations of the late twentieth century required extensive preparation and cooperation, and still incurred losses. The current environment is more complex, with a wider array of actors capable of projecting force across different domains. Groups aligned with Iran extend the geography of risk beyond the strait itself, raising the potential costs of any attempt to impose a purely military solution.

Within Washington, policy signals have lacked consistency. Statements threatening expanded strikes coexist with discussions of releasing strategic reserves and calls for restraint. This oscillation reflects uncertainty about both objectives and means. Restoring circulation requires more than suppressing immediate threats. It depends on re-establishing confidence among commercial actors, a task that cannot be accomplished through force alone.

Iran, for its part, continues to operate within constraints while demonstrating an ability to convert them into leverage. Its own exports have declined, but they have not ceased. Alternative routes, intermediaries and elevated prices mitigate losses. More importantly, the disruption reinforces the extent to which regional stability cannot be sustained without its participation. Exclusion proves costly not only for Iran, but for the system as a whole.

The broader consequences are already visible. Energy importing economies in Asia face renewed volatility. European states confront supply constraints that revive concerns over dependency. Persian Gulf producers accelerate efforts to expand pipeline infrastructure, though geography imposes limits on what can be achieved. Quiet diplomatic engagement with Tehran suggests recognition that the current configuration is unsustainable.

At the level of perception, the shift may be more profound. The image of an open Persian Gulf, secured by American power and integrated into a stable global market, has been central to the postwar order. The present disruption does not dismantle that order, but it reveals its contingency. Control over circulation appears less absolute, more subject to negotiation and interruption.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## The global backlash against Trump's 'maniacal' energy ultimatum

TEHRAN — As the 48-hour clock expires on Donald Trump's inflammatory ultimatum, the United States finds itself facing a firestorm of internal dissent and unprecedented international condemnation.

The threat to "obliterate" Iran's civilian power infrastructure unless the Strait of Hormuz is immediately reopened has not only unified the Iranian nation but has also exposed a profound, structural rot within the American political establishment.

Inside the halls of Congress, the rhetoric has reached a fever pitch, with representatives describing the President as a leader who has completely lost his grip on both reality and strategy.

On X, Congresswoman Yassamin Ansari labeled Trump a "maniacal tyrant" who is "hell-bent on destroying this country and the world along with it."

She highlighted the stark hypocrisy of an administration that previously claimed to "support" the Iranian people but is now threatening to plunge millions of them into darkness through explicit war crimes.

Representative Don Beyer echoed this sentiment, calling for an urgent discussion regarding the President's "increasingly erratic behavior" and "worsening instability," which Beyer views as a primary threat to global security.

This domestic revolt highlights a nation exhausted by four weeks of a war that has yielded nothing but body bags and economic chaos for the American taxpayer.

Beyond the political class, the American public and international observers are expressing horror at the potential for a total regional energy collapse.

New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof warned that targeting civilian power plants is a blatant war crime that will "go over badly" with regional partners.

He argued that such a move would naturally force Iran to retaliate against the energy and desalination infrastructure of U.S. allies, leaving the entire region in ruins.

Author Robert Wright was even more blunt, stating there is a "0% chance" Iran will blink in response to such blackmail, while there is a "100% chance" of a catastrophic, symmetric escalation.

## Iran to deliver 'decisive response' to Trump's reckless threats 'on the battlefield'

TEHRAN — In the face of a desperate ultimatum from Washington threatening to "obliterate" Iranian power plants if the Strait of Hormuz remains closed, Iranian officials and prominent figures have issued resolute warnings emphasizing defensive necessity and readiness for proportional escalation, while condemning Trump's reckless threats of renewed aggression against civilians.

President Masoud Pezeshkian issued a powerful rebuke on Sunday, declaring on X that "the illusion of erasing Iran from the map shows desperation and helplessness in the face of a history-making nation's will."

He clarified that while the Strait of Hormuz remains open to the ships of most nations, it is strictly closed to those who aggress against Iranian soil, vowing to "firmly confront delirious ramblings and reckless threats on the battlefield."

This executive resolve is matched by the legislative and military branches.

Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, warned that if Iranian power plants are hit, all "vital infrastructure and energy/oil infrastructure across the entire region" will be considered legitimate targets.

Qalibaf emphasized that these facilities would be "irreversibly destroyed," ensuring that global oil prices remain at record highs for years.

He invoked a Quranic mandate, stating: "Throw what is in your right hand; it will swallow up what they have made," symbolizing the Resistance's ability to consume the aggressors' schemes.

The Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters has already outlined a precise "punishment plan."

First, the Strait of Hormuz will be completely sealed until every Iranian power plant is rebuilt.

Second, the Israel's entire electricity, energy, and ICT infrastructure will be targeted.

Third, regional companies with American shareholders will face destruction.



Canadian commentator Frank Vaughan characterized the threat as a "crime against humanity," a sentiment shared by activists like Gareth Icke, who remarked that Trump would "see the whole world burn" to maintain his grip on power.

Legal expert Reza Nasri has provided a lengthy critique on X, noting that under International Law and Additional Protocol I, civilian power plants are not legitimate military objectives.

He pointed out that Trump himself previously claimed the Strait of Hormuz has no strategic value to the U.S., making any strike on Iranian infrastructure purely punitive, coercive, and illegal under the Rome Statute.

Many view this ultimatum as the panicked anger reaction of an administration shocked by Iran's ability to strike deep inside Israel and penetrate multi-layered defense systems despite Washington's claims of "decimating" Iran's military.

An X user wrote that Washington is "frantically trying to tweet its way through a war" that has completely escaped its control.

European and Asian economies, described by observers as "rabbits caught in the headlights," are watching in terror as their energy security is gambled away by a desperate administration.

This ultimatum has not projected strength; it has instead signaled the final moral and strategic bankruptcy of an empire that no longer knows how to win, only how to destroy.

The American people, increasingly weary of being dragged into another "forever war" for the benefit of a foreign entity, are beginning to realize that the real threat to their safety resides not in Tehran, but in the reckless decisions emanating from the White House.

Finally, any nation hosting U.S. bases that participates in aggression will see its own power stations neutralized.

The headquarters affirmed that "everything is ready for a grand jihad" to eradicate U.S. economic interests in the Middle East.

A critical component of this retaliation is the region's extreme vulnerability regarding water security, especially in the countries that host U.S. bases attacking Iran.

In the United Arab Emirates, desalinated water accounts for over 80% of drinking water.

Qatar and Bahrain are virtually 100% reliant on desalination, with Bahrain's groundwater reserved only for emergencies.

Saudi Arabia, despite its size, still draws 50% of its supply from these plants.

Because these desalination plants require massive amounts of electricity, a strike on the regional power grid would not only bring darkness but an immediate, life-threatening thirst to those who host American aggression.

This domestic resolve inside Iran is echoed by First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref, who slammed Trump's shift from feigned "friendship" to threatening civilian lives, stating that "a nation stands together" when its sovereignty is at stake.

Minister of Energy Abbas Ali Abadi reminded the world that attacking a power plant is no different than attacking a school or hospital, representing a violation of the Geneva Conventions.

Meanwhile, former Communications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi suggested that Trump's erratic behavior is a distraction from domestic scandals, including the Epstein documents, with the Iranian people being forced to pay for the "evil actions" of American politicians.

As economist Majid Shakeri succinctly put it: "Forcing the Strait of Hormuz open will only close it tighter."



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## When geography wins: Why the war has reached a strategic standoff for US



By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Since late February, when the United States and Israel imposed a war on Iran aimed at toppling the Iranian government, the conflict has moved into a complicated and uncertain phase.

The war, miscalculated by the enemies, soon turned into a wider confrontation with serious political and economic consequences far beyond the region. At the center of this confrontation is the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow but highly strategic waterway that connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the rest of the world.

Now, Iran's resilience to control the waterway has come to show something deeper: geography can sometimes outweigh even the most advanced military power. Today, with constant headlines and rising oil prices, it is clear that control over this narrow passage, more than military strength alone, is shaping how the conflict is unfolding.

From the beginning, U.S. planners and their allies knew that the Strait of Hormuz could become a problem. Still, Iran's ability to endure pressure has gone beyond what many expected. Despite military strikes, Iran has managed to keep its influence over the strait. So, U.S.'s efforts to bring shipping back to normal have not succeeded so far.

Also, even without a full closure, there is a fear and uncertainty among shipping companies. Even with U.S. naval escorts, many ship owners are not willing to risk sending their vessels through such a "dangerous" zone.

### Contradictory signals from Washington

Since the start of war, U.S. President Donald Trump has come under growing pressure, both inside the United States and internationally, to end the war because of its global economic impact. His reactions, however, have not always been consistent.

At times, Trump has said that the United States does not need the Strait of Hormuz and has called on other countries, especially allies in Europe and Asia, to take responsibility for reopening it. But at other times, his tone has become much more aggressive.

He on Friday said the U.S. does not need the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of the world's oil passes, and said other nations "will have to get involved."

In a controversial statement on Saturday, Trump warned Iran to fully reopen the strait in two days unless it would destroy Iran's power plants.

"If Iran doesn't FULLY OPEN, WITHOUT THREAT, the Strait of Hormuz, within 48 HOURS from this exact point in time, the United States of America will hit and obliterate their various POWER PLANTS, STARTING WITH THE BIGGEST ONE FIRST! Thank you for your attention to this matter."

The warning was widely seen as a serious escalation, raising concerns about international law and fears that the conflict could

grow even more dangerous. From a humanitarian perspective, and even allowing for some exaggeration, Trump's threats may be compared to the United States' use of atomic bombs on Japan at the end of World War II, both reflecting an escalation toward extreme measures that raise serious concerns about the potential for inhumane actions in pursuit of strategic objectives.

As of now, nearly a day has passed since that ultimatum, and the Islamic Republic, for its part, has responded by warning that any such attack would be met with retaliation against U.S. infrastructure in the region, including energy facilities in the Persian Gulf. This exchange shows just how tense and fragile the situation has become.

### A selective closure

Iranian officials reject the idea that the Strait of Hormuz is completely closed. Instead, they say access is being controlled in a selective way.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday in an interview with Japan's Kyodo News: "We have not closed the strait. It is open." He explained that restrictions apply only to ships from countries involved in attacks against Iran. Other countries can still pass through the strait if they coordinate with Tehran.

Reports suggest that ships from countries such as Japan, India, Pakistan, and Turkey have continued to pass under these conditions. This approach allows Iran to keep pressure on its opponents while avoiding conflict with neutral countries.

### Iran's strategic strength

Even though Iran has suffered heavy losses during the conflict, including the sinking of a number of armed ships, it still has enough military capability to control access to the Strait of Hormuz. Moreover, it has a good knowledge of the area that is narrow and difficult to navigate, which gives an advantage to the country that controls its coastline.

The coming days, however, especially in light of Washington's ultimatum and Tehran's response, could be critical. But one point is already clear: in this war, geography and geopolitics are just as important as military power in deciding the final outcome that is closely intertwined with the fate of the Strait of Hormuz.

There are two potential scenarios: either Iran continues to exert significant influence over the strait, consolidating its strategic control, or a new order emerges where Iran's role is diminished, subject to negotiated arrangements or international enforcement mechanisms.

Despite heavy losses of its nuclear and military facilities, sustained Iranian oversight over the Strait of Hormuz, could itself constitute a form of strategic and clear victory, for the ancient country.

# Strait of Hormuz closure would trigger global economic shock: experts warn

TEHRAN- In the wake of escalated military aggression by the United States and Israel against the Islamic Republic of Iran, regional tensions have reached a critical threshold.

Experts now warn that one of the most consequential outcomes of such hostilities—the potential closure of the Strait of Hormuz—could inflict severe damage on the global economy, with the United States standing to suffer significant repercussions.

The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway separating the Persian Gulf from the Gulf of Oman, serves as the world's most vital oil chokepoint.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, approximately one-fifth of global petroleum consumption passes through this strait daily.

Any disruption, even partial, would send immediate shockwaves through energy markets.

Recent provocations by U.S. and Israeli forces have placed Iran in a position where defending its sovereignty is both a right and a necessity.

Iranian military officials have repeatedly stated that in the event of an attack, the Islamic Republic reserves the option to restrict passage through the strait—a legitimate act of self-defense under international law.

Beyond energy, the strait is also a critical artery for liquefied natural gas (LNG). Qatar, one of the world's largest LNG exporters, relies entirely on this route. Any closure would cripple European energy security at a time when the continent is already vulnerable.

Economists at Reuters and Bloomberg have echoed these



concerns. In a recent analysis, Bloomberg Economics estimated that a month-long closure of the Strait of Hormuz could shave 1.5 to 2 percentage points off global GDP growth, tipping major economies into recession. The United States, despite being less directly reliant on Persian Gulf oil than in previous decades, would not be immune. U.S. oil prices are set by global markets, and American consumers would feel the impact at the pump within days.

Moreover, the U.S. military presence in the region would come under direct threat, potentially drawing American forces into a costly and prolonged conflict.

International maritime insurers have already issued warnings about escalating risk premiums for vessels transiting the Persian Gulf.

The cost of shipping and insurance would rise dramatically even before any formal closure, further fueling global inflation.

It must be stated clearly: the

current crisis stems directly from aggressive posturing by the United States and Israel.

These actions constitute clear violations of international law and the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Any nation subjected to such belligerence has the inherent right to defend its territorial integrity.

The condemnation of these unlawful attacks is not merely a matter of political stance but a prerequisite for peace and stability in West Asia.

The United Nations Security Council has repeatedly called for restraint, yet Washington and Tel Aviv have continued their escalatory measures.

Iranian officials have emphasized that Iran seeks peace and stability in the region, but will not hesitate to respond decisively if attacked.

Analysts caution that miscalculation on either side could lead to an uncontrollable spiral.

Professor Liu Zhongmin of the Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies

University, in comments to the Global Times cited by TASS, offered a sobering assessment: "While concerns previously focused on the security of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, the situation now threatens not only transportation but also production. Strikes on gas fields and oil production facilities could put both energy production and transportation at risk simultaneously, with potentially immeasurable consequences for the global economy".

In sum, the reckless provocations by the United States and Israel endanger not only regional peace but also the economic well-being of nations far beyond West Asia.

The international community must unequivocally condemn these aggressive acts and support diplomatic solutions.

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz is not a scenario anyone should contemplate lightly—but it is one that the aggressors are irresponsibly making more likely with every passing day.

## U.S. and Israeli energy sites across the region in Iran's crosshairs

TEHRAN – Iran's response to President Donald Trump's ultimatum threatening its energy infrastructure has highlighted Tehran's readiness to defend its sovereignty and impose serious costs on any aggressor. Trump's post on Truth Social warned that if Iran did not fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz, "the United States of America will hit and obliterate their various power plants, starting with the biggest one first."

Iran condemned the threat, with Lieutenant Colonel Ebrahim Zolfaqari, spokesman for the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, reiterating that "if Iran's fuel and energy infrastructure is attacked by the enemy, all energy infrastructure, as well as information technology (IT) and water desalination facilities belonging to the United States and the regime in the region will be targeted pursuant to previous warnings."

Analysts note that this statement signals Tehran's capability and willingness to strike vulnerable energy and electricity infrastructure in Israel, as well as in Persian Gulf countries hosting U.S. military bases. Israeli power plants, in particular, are considered highly

vulnerable and could be primary targets in Iran's retaliation, reflecting Tehran's credible deterrent posture: any attack on its vital energy assets would not go unanswered.

Iran's integrated military posture combines long-range ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced unmanned aerial systems, and electronic warfare capabilities, giving Tehran the tools to threaten critical energy and strategic targets affiliated with the U.S. and Israel across the Persian Gulf. Beyond the Strait of Hormuz, the regional resistance has demonstrated its ability to influence the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a strategic chokepoint linking the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. Observers note that regional resistance could disrupt energy flows through Bab al-Mandab, amplifying Tehran's strategic leverage.

The Islamic Republic's retaliation is not hypothetical. In response to U.S.-Israeli strikes on the South Pars gas field, Iran conducted precise missile and drone operations against enemy positions, demonstrating operational readiness and the ability to respond proportionally to attacks on national infrastructure. Analysts say this un-

derscores Tehran's doctrine of deterrence through credible capability, highlighting that Iran can target key energy sites vital to hostile regional actors while maintaining strategic control.

Since the outbreak of joint U.S.-Israeli aggression on February 28, Iran's missile and drone strikes have targeted U.S. positions in the Persian Gulf and strategic installations in Israel, showcasing Tehran's integrated approach and the regional reach of its deterrent.

At the center of the confrontation is the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly 20% of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas shipments pass daily. Iran has emphasized that the strait remains open to international shipping, except for vessels from nations deemed hostile, particularly the United States and Israel. Tehran's representative to the International Maritime Organization, Ali Mousavi, reaffirmed that passage is possible when safety and security are coordinated with Iran, highlighting Tehran's balance of national security with commercial interests.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## Trump's 48-hour ultimatum exposes seven falsehoods about Iran

TEHRAN – President Donald Trump's recent 48-hour ultimatum threatening strikes on Iranian energy infrastructure if Tehran does not fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz has once again laid bare contradictions in his statements about Iran.

The threat illustrates a recurring pattern of misleading claims that, when measured against facts and the current situation, undermine U.S. credibility and expose the gap between rhetoric and reality.

Amid the joint U.S.-Israeli war on Iran, Trump's prior statements have consistently presented the United States as decisive, morally superior, and strategically in control. Yet, the latest ultimatum highlights multiple claims that do not withstand scrutiny:

**Alleged support for the Ira-**

**nian people:** Trump has often claimed that U.S. actions are intended to assist ordinary Iranians, particularly protesters. The latest threat, however, focuses solely on punitive measures against national infrastructure, revealing that the humanitarian justification was never genuine.

**Claim that Iran cannot control the Strait of Hormuz:** Trump has suggested that Iran lacks the ability to influence maritime traffic. Tehran's careful management of the strait—allowing commercial vessels safe passage while restricting hostile movements—demonstrates that this assertion was false.

**Assertion of complete destruction of Iran's military:** Despite previous claims of having neutralized Iranian forces, Iran's coordinated missile and drone capabilities indicate a military

fully capable of responding to any aggression.

**Alleged U.S. victory in the conflict:** Statements implying that the war was effectively won are contradicted by the necessity of issuing an ultimatum to compel Iranian compliance, signaling that U.S. objectives remain unfulfilled.

**Claim that the U.S. is ahead of its war plans:** Assertions of swift progress are undermined by the public deadline and threats required to influence Iran, showing a reactive, rather than controlled, campaign.

**Statement that the U.S. does not rely on the Strait of Hormuz:** The ultimatum itself highlights the strait's critical role in global energy security and U.S. strategic interests, exposing earlier claims of indifference as misleading.

**Warnings about Iranian mines in the strait:** Trump has previously emphasized the threat of mines, but the current focus on attacks rather than mine incidents reveals selective framing and exaggeration.

Iran has consistently emphasized a deterrence-based, proportionate approach. Officials have warned that any attack on Iranian infrastructure would provoke retaliatory measures targeting U.S. and Israeli energy and desalination facilities in the region. Tehran has made clear it does not intend to close the strait entirely, allowing commercial shipping to continue safely, underscoring a policy of measured, responsible security rather than aggression.

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