

# Backlash in US-China Trade War. China Defies Sanctions against Iran, Resumes Purchase of Iran Oil

China's Tanker 'PACIFIC BRAVO' loaded approximately 2 million barrels of Iranian oil

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)  
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Region: [Asia](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)  
Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Oil and Energy](#),  
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*On May 5, Donald Trump announced a devastating 25% tariff on Chinese commodity imports valued at 200 billion dollars.*

*According to Trump:*

*"China is cheating the system".*

*"Dirty Bureaucrats in Washington have allowed China to take advantage of our great Nation for far too long".*

*How has Beijing responded?*

Look at the Trade War chronology

The trade war and the Iran sanctions regime are intimately related. Trump's tariff decision was announced two weeks after the US administration's resolve to "push Iran's oil and gas revenues to Zero".

On April 20, the Trump administration announced that it would start imposing sanctions on several countries including China, "unless they stop buying oil from Iran [when the waivers expire]"...

"If you don't abide by this, there will be sanctions," said Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

**ENERGY**

## Trump aims to drive Iran's oil exports to zero by ending sanctions waivers

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"When the waivers expire on May 2, the United States could sanction the remaining five countries" including China (WP, April 22, 2019)

How has Beijing responded to Trump's 25% tariff on China's imports?

Trump made the announcement regarding the 25% tariff on May 5, three days after the announced expiry of the Iran sanctions' waivers on May 2nd.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi was adamant. He is reported to have [told Secretary of State Pompeo in a telephone conversation not to go "too far"](#). Ironically, that same week on May 17, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was in Beijing for talks with Wang Yi. The timely issue of sanctions on Iran oil exports was on the agenda.

And how has Beijing responded to the Iran sanctions regime? China had already confirmed it's "intention to defy U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil industry" (April 23, 2019) prior to Trump's decision to impose the 25 % tariff:

"The normal energy cooperation under the international law between Iran and other members of the international community, China included, is legitimate and lawful; thus it must be respected and protected," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang [told reporters](#).

According to reports:

On the same day that Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif was in Beijing for talks with Wang Yi, China's giant oil tanker PACIFIC BRAVO was reported to have, "loaded approximately 2 million barrels of Iranian oil from the Soroosh and Kharg terminals in the Persian Gulf "

According to analysis provided by 'TankerTrackers.com', PACIFIC BRAVO is the first major tanker to load Iranian crude after the Trump administration revoked waivers permitting the purchases by eight of Iran's oil customers, Bourseandbazaar Web Site reported. ([Iran Press](#))

Trump's sanctions regime directed against Iran's oil exports has "fallen flat": an utter failure.

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