

US Tankers in Persian Gulf Will Not be Safe If Iranian Oil Shipments Seized: Political Analyst

By [Ed Corrigan](#) and [Tasnim News Agency](#)

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A Canadian political analyst said the US is well aware that its oil tankers that are freely moving in the Persian Gulf would be exposed to retaliation if it attempts to seize Iranian oil shipments carrying fuel to Venezuela.

"The fact that Iran militarily responded to the Trump administration's murder of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani and the murder of Iraqi officials showed that Iran would protect its rights if the American's seized the oil shipments. The United States has many oil tankers that transit the Persian Gulf and they would be exposed to retaliation. The Americans also realize that their military bases in the Middle East are exposed and not welcome by many host countries in the Middle East. They are vulnerable," Edward Corrigan from Ontario told Tasnim.

Edward C. Corrigan is certified as a specialist by the Law Society of Ontario, Canada in Citizenship, Immigration and Immigration and Refugee Law. He is also an analyst and commentator for a number of media outlets around the world.

Following is the full text of the interview:

Tasnim: Iran is providing Venezuela with 1.53 million barrels of gasoline and refining components defying US sanctions against both nations. The 4th cargo of an Iranian tanker flotilla carrying fuel for Venezuela reached the South American nation's exclusive economic zone on Wednesday Refinitiv Eikon data showed. What are your thoughts on this?

Corrigan: These sanctions are unilaterally imposed by the Trump Administration. They are not imposed by the United Nations Security Council. Accordingly, they are not legally binding on Iran or Venezuela. The United States cannot unilaterally impose its sanctions on other countries to stop legal trade between Iran and Venezuela or any other country. The American unilateral sanctions are illegal under International law and Maritime law. To impose unilateral sanctions on another country and to enforce them by military means is seen as an act of war.

Tasnim: The United States has criticized the shipment, as both OPEC nations are under unilateral US sanctions. A Washington official said earlier this month that President Donald Trump's administration was considering responses to the shipment, prompting the Iranian government to warn Washington against military action. Why do you think the vessels did not appear to encounter interference?

Corrigan: Apparently saner and cooler heads prevailed. The United States would look like a bully and also foolish in the eyes of World opinion. Venezuela and or Iran could go to the International High Court of Justice for a ruling. The United States would lose. Iran and Venezuela could also go to the UN General Assembly for a symbolic vote and again the United States would lose. In my opinion, the Europeans would not support unilateral sanctions by one country that would jeopardize free trade and break International law and accepted principles of Maritime law.

The fact that Iran militarily responded to the Trump administration's murder of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani and the murder of Iraqi officials showed that Iran would protect its rights if the American's seized the oil shipments. The United States has many oil tankers that transit the Persian Gulf and they would be exposed to retaliation. The Americans also realize that their military bases in the Middle East are exposed and not welcome by many host countries in the Middle East. They are vulnerable. The fact that Venezuela sent ships and fighter aircraft to escort and protect the Iranian oil tankers also showed Venezuela's resolve to not be intimidated by American sanctions. The fact that there are Russian troops in Venezuela also would give a strong reason for the Americans to not to come into direct conflict with the Russian military.

Tasnim: President Nicolas Maduro has expressed gratitude to the Iranian leadership, government, and nation from "the bottom of my heart." He said Iran and Venezuela had a right just like any other nation in the world to engage in trade. We are "two revolutionary nations that will never kneel down before US imperialism. Venezuela has friends in this world, and brave friends at that", he said. What is your take on this?

Corrigan: I agree with President Maduro. Under International law and Maritime law, free trade and free transit are protected. The United States cannot use the argument for free navigation in the South China Sea against China and then turn around and not allow free trade in the Atlantic Ocean and in the Caribbean Sea. It would show that the American administration was being hypocritical and would look foolish. This episode is a clear victory for Iran and Venezuela. It is also a victory for the principle of free trade, Maritime Law, and International law and supports the view that no country can unilaterally impose its law on a third country and impose sanctions on other countries.

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