UAE: Convincing Evidence Needed on Gulf Tanker Attacks

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A war of words between Washington and Tehran has escalated over the tanker attacks and Iran's downing last week of an unmanned American drone.

United Arab Emirates (UAE) officials say clear and convincing evidence was needed to place blame for attacks on four oil tankers off its coast last month and tensions in the region needed to be dialled down.

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The United States and Saudi Arabia have publicly blamed Iran for a May 12 attack on t????wo Saudi oil tankers, a Norwegian tanker and an Emirati vessel that were damaged in the act of agression in the Gulf of Oman. Tehran has denied any involvement.

The UAE has submitted the results of an investigation into the attack that indicated that a state entity was behind it, without naming the country.

“Honestly, we can’t point the blame at any country, because we don’t have evidence,” UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan said on Wednesday in Moscow with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. “If there is a country that has the evidence, then I’m convinced that the international community will listen to it. But we need to make sure the evidence is precise and convincing.”

The UAE official stated his nation did not want any "more turbulence and ... more worries"

for the region.

Sheikh Abdullah also said discussions were under way for a global coalition to protect oil shipping lanes in the region.

A senior U.S. State Department official said Monday the Navy was building a "proactive deterrence" program that would see a coalition of nations provide both material and financial contributions.

Around 20 percent of the world's crude passes through the Strait of Hormuz where the May incident took place and where another two vessels were attacked in June, making it the world's busiest shipping area for oil.

Sheikh Abdullah said the project would involved regional and other "(oil) exporting and importing" countries.