
New US Illegal Sanctions Looming for Venezuela: Report

By: Telesur

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Attempts by the United States to destabilize Venezuela continue as Washington considers blacklisting dozens of ships for transporting the country's oil, amid the impact of a pandemic, according to a Reuters report published Tuesday.

Two tankers that were sailing toward Venezuela to load crude have turned around since the weekend and three other vessels have left Venezuelan waters while U.S. again threatens to impose sanctions on tankers involved in exporting Venezuela's oil as the U.S. government seeks to choke off the main source of revenue for the South American country.

"More concrete evidence of Washington's criminal assault. They attack the heart of the Venezuelan economy to prevent the country from receiving income to import food, medicines, treatments, goods and services. And they do it in the middle of a pandemic. An attack on all Venezuelans," Foreign Affairs Minister Jorge Arreaza denounced on his Twitter account.

The minister also accompanied his tweet with the Reuters agency's report about the U.S.'s obvious intentions for strangling the Venezuelan economy.

Previous rounds of sanctions have reduced Venezuelan oil exports to a 17-year low while deepening the country's economic crisis but the legitimate president Nicolas Maduro has held on, frustrating the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump, according to the agency.

Tighter U.S. restrictions on shipping would make it more difficult for state oil firm PDVSA to deliver crude to refineries abroad. Exports dropped to about 452,000 barrels per day in May, the lowest since a national strike paralyzed the economy and hit exports in December 2002 and January 2003.

Some ship operators have started diverting vessels away from Venezuela to avoid the risk of incurring sanctions that would make it harder to keep the tankers working. Some of them like Malta-flagged tanker Seadancer, operated by Greek firm Thenamaris Ships Management and chartered by Thai refiner Tipco Asphalt.

The U.S. illegal move could be connected to threats made a week ago after Venezuela consolidate a series of agreements and support from countries like Iran that announced the will to send more oil-tankers to Venezuela.

Meanwhile, Venezuela has denounced the Donald Trump government to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for these illegal coercive measures in the middle of the pandemic, and the file includes open evidence, of the violation of international law and the human rights of Venezuelans.