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Sanctions-sapping US Treasury is 'nothing more than a jail warden,' says Iranian FM Zarif

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Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has compared the US Treasury to a prison guard who throws inmates into solitary confinement for seeking sanction waivers. Washington, meanwhile, promised continued “maximum pressure.”

Zarif lashed out at the US Treasury a day after the department blacklisted several Iranian oil shipping companies. He slammed the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control as “*nothing more than a JAIL WARDEN.*”

“Ask for reprieve (waiver), get thrown in solitary for the audacity. Ask again and you might end up in the gallows,” Zarif [wrote](#).

***“The only way to mitigate US #EconomicTerrorism (sanctions) is to decide to finally free yourself from the hangman’s noose.”***

The minister was likely referring to a potential US sanctions waiver for France, which previously suggested providing \$15 billion in credit lines to Iran. Officials in Tehran said this would have sufficed as sanctions relief, prompting Iran to revert back to complying with the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

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Washington, however, rejected the prospect of a waiver, with its special envoy for Iran, Brian

Hook, promising *"more sanctions."*

***We can't make it any more clear that we are committed to this campaign of maximum pressure and we are not looking to grant any exceptions or waivers.***

The US insists that the sweeping sanctions are necessary to pressure Tehran into scrapping its nuclear and ballistic missiles programs, as well as ending its support for militant groups abroad. Iran, which denies any wrongdoing, says the sanctions are unjustified and violate international law.

In the past several months, Iran has been urging the EU to provide some sort of relief from US sanctions. The Islamic Republic made this a condition for its return to full compliance with the JCPOA, which the US unilaterally abandoned last year. Previous assessments by the nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), found that Iran had not violated any of its commitments by the time Washington left the agreement.

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