

Tankers

US fully lifts Iran blockade, as Tehran promises swift Hormuz transit handling

Washington and Tehran proceed quickly to implement interim peace deal's maritime clauses



Hopefully an image from the past: damage sustained by the 25,300-dwt tanker Bochem Marengo (built 2017) as it crossed the Strait of Hormuz on the night to 13 June. Photo: Shivani Sharma on X

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Less than 24 hours after signing an interim peace deal between them, the US and Iran made first, concrete moves to implement its maritime provisions and gradually re-instate free navigation in the area.

The US late on Thursday announced a full lifting of its maritime blockage against Iran, effectively allowing the Islamic Republic to resume its crude oil exports after two months.



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US-Iran deal signed, confirms Hormuz opening within 30 days, 'no tolls' for 60

“American forces are not impeding the transit of vessels to or from Iranian ports,” US Centcom said in a statement, adding:

“All US military blockade enforcement efforts have ceased”.

At about the same time, Iran promised to swiftly process all requests by vessels seeking to transit the Strait of Hormuz.

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“The Persian Gulf Strait Administration has been instructed to process and respond to requests quickly and with priority to achieve the objectives of the [US-Iran] memorandum,” Iran’s Supreme National Security Council said in a statement.

The moves show both sides moving in good faith to implement the terms of the temporary peace agreement, which suspends hostilities until a permanent deal is found within 60 days.

Under the terms of the interim agreement, the US and Iran were supposed to lift their respective blockades in tandem, within 30 days.

The US decision on Thursday to fully and immediately lift its blockade is a positive surprise that puts extra pressure on Iran to honour its side of the bargain.

Iran's latest announcement suggests Tehran is serious about doing so.

Tehran, nevertheless made it clear that it intends to keep a watchful eye over Hormuz traffic flows over the next 60 days and to play a key role in coordinating them.

“The executive arrangements and technical details for passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be announced by the Persian Gulf Strait Administration,” the Supreme National Security Council said.

Citing “special conditions” and “certain safety hazards along the passage route”, Tehran said that “ships must pass at the time and route announced to them so that the possibility of transit can gradually increase”.



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‘Still risky’: New body to control rush for Strait of Hormuz exit

It remains to be seen how easily Iranian control can sit with the new navigation body that senior shipping figures said earlier on Thursday would be soon set up to coordinate the expected surge of traffic through the Strait.

The IMO has been working for weeks on an evacuation plan for the hundreds of ships and thousands of seafarers trapped in the Middle East Gulf since war broke

out on 28 February.

Some form of coordination with Iranian authorities looks inevitable, however, as the central part of the strait is mined and cannot be passed.

Video footage from one of the first ships to cross the Hormuz Strait on Thursday after the interim peace deal entered into force shows the master of the 7,724-ceu car carrier Grande Torino (built 2018) explicitly obtaining permission from an unidentified authority, likely from Iran, to make the transit.

Antonio Tajani 

@Antonio_Tajani · [Follow](#)



La nave mercantile italiana “Grande Torino”, del gruppo Grimaldi, a poche ore dalla firma dell’accordo tra USA e Iran è stata fra le prime ad attraversare lo stretto di Hormuz. Ora è in navigazione verso l’Oriente. Un successo della diplomazia italiana. Una bella notizia per la [Show more](#)

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According to Bimco’s chief security officer, Jakob Larsen, the only traffic zones reportedly free of mines are those close to Oman and Iran.

In a situation update late on Thursday, the US Navy recommended that ship masters follow the southern transit route, close to Oman, which is “confirmed clear of mines”.

Iran's statement late on Thursday also confirms the interim peace deal's assurance that the Islamic Republic will not charge any tolls on passing ships for 60 days.

"No fees will be charged from applicants, and these costs will be covered by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran," the statement reads.

Iran, however, has made no secret of its plans to introduce such charges later, as part of the strait's permanent, post-war status.



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Charges may not be called tolls then but instead take the form of fees charged for various maritime services relating to navigation, environmental protection and insurance.

The Islamic Republic claims to have been so far providing such services to shipping for free.

The international shipping community is rejecting any charges for Hormuz transits.

Some individual voices within shipping, however, said they might be a price worth paying if they help establish peace and free transits in the region.

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