



Escalation: Iran seizing oil tankers in vital strategic waterway after US confiscates Iranian oil sailing under Russian flag

Description

USA: If Joe Biden's anti-fossil fuel policies weren't enough to spike gasoline and diesel fuel prices in the United States three and four times higher than they were when Donald Trump had to leave office following a stolen election, another major oil producer and exporter — Iran — is now adding to inflationary pressures.

Elite Iranian commandos with the country's navy have begun boarding Greek tankers and seizing their cargos, along with the crews, leading to stern warnings from other European countries and the weak Biden regime.

The Greek government, in particular, is having a difficult time with its oil tankers.

The Athens government issued an alert earlier this week warning all Greek vessels that are currently sailing in Persian Gulf waters to make adaptations and be on the lookout for heightened threats against them after the seizure of two Greek oil tankers by the Iranian military. According to maritime tanker monitors, at least a dozen Greek oil tankers are currently navigating waters near Iran.

The alert instructed those vessels to immediately "adapt to the unacceptable situation and reality created by the Iranian government's tactic," said Ioannis Oikonomou, a government spokesman, [at a press briefing in Athens on Monday](#), per Bloomberg News.

Over the weekend, the Tasnim news agency threatened that 17 additional tankers flying under the Greek flag in the Persian Gulf also risked being seized by the Islamic Republic in what is being seen as further retaliation for the U.S. confiscating Iranian oil in the Mediterranean after a tanker carrying Iranian crude was seized off the coast of Greece.

"The vessels were seized a day after Athens assisted the United States in seizing an Iranian oil tanker over alleged sanctions violations," [RFERL reported](#).

[Jason Ditz of Antiwar.com added:](#)

Fresh off of the US targeting a series of companies involved in an Iran-linked oil smuggling network, the US has now seized an oil tanker near Greece, taking the Iranian oil within to be sent to the US.

The oil was on a Russian-operated ship, which had been singled out for US targeting in February. It was then called the Pegas. The company renamed the ship the Lana and was Russian flagged. Greece had impounded the Pegas and its Russian crew last month over the invasion of Ukraine, but ultimately released it.

[Also, Politico noted:](#)

Nour News, a website close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, had warned earlier on Friday that Tehran planned to take "punitive action" over Greece assisting the U.S.

The reports continued to note that Iran engaged in an apparent act of "revenge" last week, with Greece's foreign ministry confirming that the tanker, Delta Poseidon, sailing under the Greek flag, was boarded by Iranian special forces commandos via helicopter. Later, the personnel were identified as being members of the Iranian Republican Guard Corps, or IRCG. The foreign ministry called the incident an act of "piracy" as well as a "violent taking over of two Greek-flagged ships." In that first boarding, at least two Greek citizens were detained by the Iranians.

"A similar incident was reported on another Greek-flagged ship, carrying seven Greek citizens, off the Iranian coast," said the ministry in describing the boarding of a second ship, identified as Prudent Warrior, which is operated by the Greek company Polembros Shipping.

Greek oil tankers in March, April & May 2022 were 60% of total tanker capacity taking oil out of Russia (blue). In the same period in 2021, they were 33% of capacity. So Greek tankers have clearly shifted towards transporting Russian oil. A business decision. With [@JonathanPingle pic.twitter.com/gXcBsdpowX](https://twitter.com/gXcBsdpowX)

— Robin Brooks (@RobinBrooksIIF) [May 29, 2022](#)

France is among a group of leading Western nations that are publicly condemning the Iranian moves, though they are not acknowledging the initial U.S. seizure of Iranian oil, to begin with.

"We call on Iran to immediately release the crew and ships," said an announcement from the French government, while going on to warn that Tehran must end all maritime interference in international waters near its coastline.

It sounds as if Iran has [called Joe Biden's bluff](#).

Sources include:

[ZeroHedge.com](#)

AntiWar.com

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