

# *U.S. rejects European Union call to allow economic aid to Iran to fight COVID-19*

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Brussels, April 24 (RHC)-- The European Union has censured the United States for refusing to ease sanctions on the Islamic Republic and blocking an International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan to Iran to help it fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We supported first to soften the sanctions and second, the request by Iran to the International Monetary Fund for financial help," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell told a virtual news conference after a video conference of EU foreign ministers.

"I regret that the Americans are, at this stage, opposing the International Monetary Fund from taking this decision. From a humanitarian point of view, this request should have been accepted," he added.

Last month, Iran asked the IMF for \$5 billion in emergency funding to assist its measures seeking to counter the spread of the coronavirus. However, Washington has moved to block Iran's request for the loan, according to various reports.

Citing IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in March that countries affected by the coronavirus pandemic were entitled to the emergency funding.

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