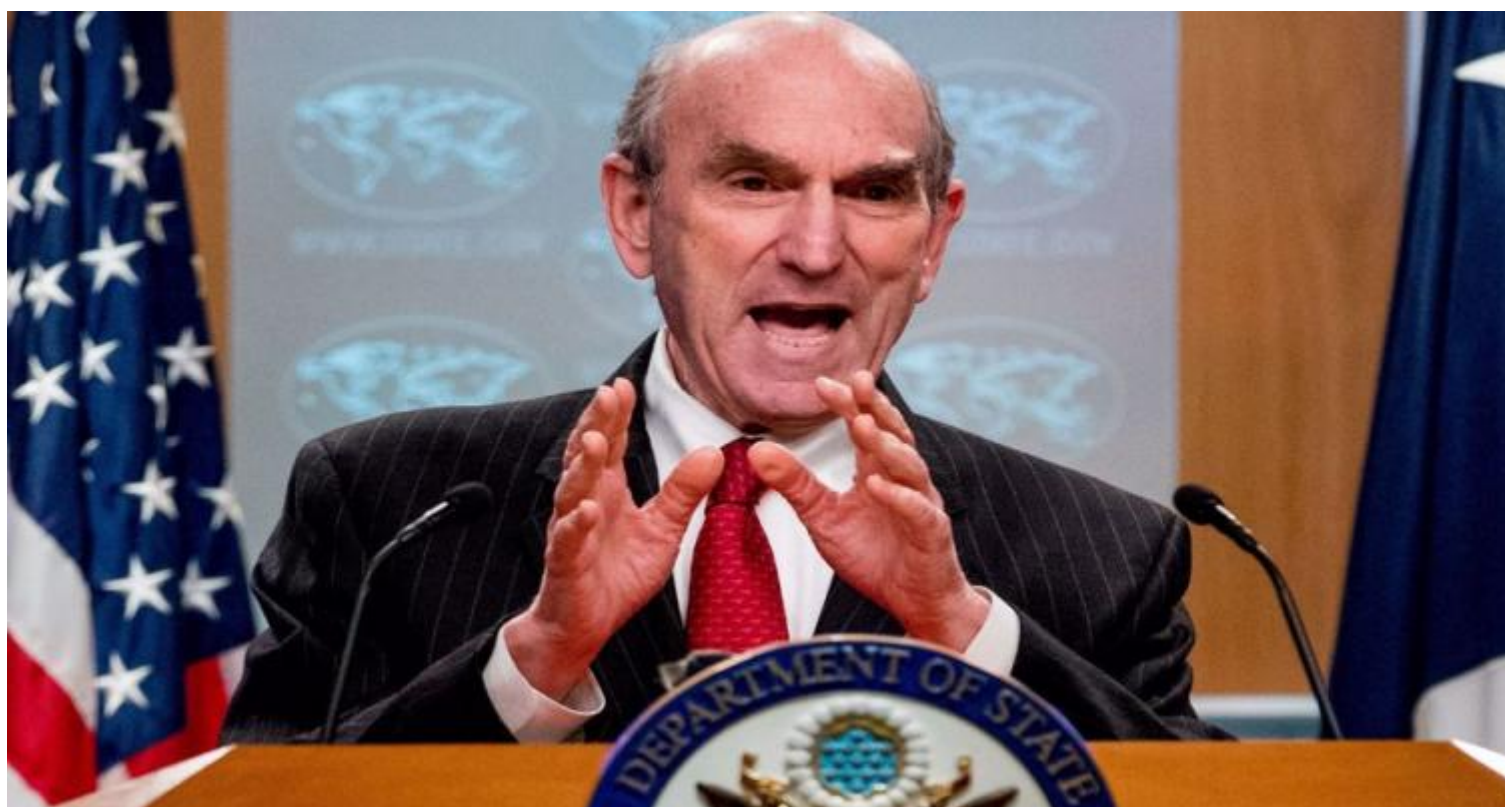


# *Washington threatens to slap sanctions on countries aiding Iran and Venezuela*

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Tehran, May 31 (RHC)-- The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has threatened to slap sanctions on the countries assisting Iran and Venezuela to conduct fuel trade. Elliott Abrams, Washington's special representative on Venezuela, that Washington was issuing warnings to the governments of countries en route between Iran and Venezuela "to be sure everyone recognizes this would be a very dangerous transaction."

"We've alerted the shipping community around the world, ship owners, ship captains, ship insurers, and we've alerted ports along the way between Iran and Venezuela" not to give any services to Iranian vessels, Abrams revealed.

Venezuela is facing a shortage of fuel and other essential commodities due to U.S. sanctions against the country. Venezuelans have slammed the U.S. threats to impede the shipment of Iranian fuel to the country.

A U.S. official familiar with the matter said various countries had been asked to deny port services to Iranian vessels.

Despite the U.S.-imposed sanctions on both countries, Iran has already made several fuel shipments to its South American ally Venezuela.

“I do not think that you will find ship owners and insurers and captains and crews willing to engage in these transactions in the future,” Abrams said.

Washington said this month that it had issued a global maritime advisory warning countries on how to avoid sanctions related to Iran, North Korea and Syria.

Experts say the harsh U.S. sanctions slapped on Iran were “illegal” and not authorized by the UN Security Council. Trump has also threatened to begin an illegal blockade on Venezuela.

Dan Kovalik, author and political commentator said Iran and Venezuela had the right to defend their nations against the harsh sanctions and get the much needed fuel and supplies to their people.

The United States’ possible attempt to intercept the Iranian vessel en route to Venezuela would have “no legal basis,” says an American political analyst.

Iran and Venezuela have warned the U.S. government against any use of US military force to stop the shipments of fuel.

The shipment of Iranian fuel despite the U.S. sanctions against the two allies has infuriated the Donald Trump administration.

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