

# *Iran says U.S. supports anarchists, not Iranian people*

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Tehran, November 19 (RHC)-- Iran has denounced U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's support for rioters who rode the tide of fuel price hike-related protests in the country during the past few days, saying that Washington is not sympathetic toward the Iranian people, but supports the spread of chaos.

Last week, Iran began rationing gasoline and substantially increased the price of fuel, saying the revenue would be used to assist the needy. The decision sparked rallies in a number of Iranian cities, some of which were marred by violence as opportunist elements tried to exploit the situation and ride the wave of peaceful protests against hiking fuel prices. Consequently, the demonstrations turned violent in some cities, with reports of clashes between security forces and certain elements vandalizing public property.

Pompeo took to Twitter on the same day, supporting the violent acts of rioters and writing: "As I said to the people of Iran almost a year and a half ago: The United States is with you."

Reacting to Pompeo's "interventionist" remarks, Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abbas Mousavi said: "The dignified people of Iran are well aware that such hypocritical remarks contain no honest sympathy and the [violent] actions of a group of anarchists and saboteurs who are supported by the likes of him are by no means in line with the conduct and behavior of the majority of the understanding and insightful Iranian people."

Referring to malicious intentions of the government of the United States, especially its secretary of state, toward the Iranian people, Mousavi said: “It is interesting that [Pompeo] is sympathizing with the people who are under pressure of the United States’ economic terrorism. He had already explicitly said that the people of Iran must be kept hungry until they give in to ‘our demands’.”

In an interview with BBC Persian last November, the U.S. secretary of state said that Iranian officials must listen to Washington “if they want their people to eat.” Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif slammed his American counterpart’s starvation threat, stressing the Islamic Republic will survive and even advance despite Washington’s sanctions.

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