

# *Iran dismisses Pompeo's hypocritical claim on coronavirus response*

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Tehran, February 29 (RHC)-- Iran has dismissed a "hypocritical" claim made by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo about making an offer to Tehran to help the Islamic Republic fight the new coronavirus, saying such remarks pursue political purposes and aim to distract the world public opinion.

"The claim on helping Iran fight the coronavirus which has been made by a country that led to extensive pressure on the Iranian people through its economic terrorism and even blocked the way to the purchase of medicine and medical equipment is a ridiculous claim and a political and psychological play," Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Friday.

He added that the Iranian Foreign Ministry had been in close contact with many countries in order to supply pharmaceutical and health needs to contain the outbreak of the disease. Iran, he added, has obtained the means of support to that end through certain friendly countries.

The Iranian spokesman emphasized that the fight against the coronavirus, which has turned into a global epidemic and spread to many countries, requires collective determination and broad international cooperation. Mousavi dismissed some politically-motivated moves that seek to take advantage of the

patients' condition.

In a hearing at the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Friday, the U.S. secretary of state claimed that the Islamic Republic did not have a solid healthcare infrastructure and said the United States had offered to help with the coronavirus response in Iran.

"We have made offers to the Islamic Republic of Iran to help. And we've made clear to others around the world and in the region that assistance, humanitarian assistance to push back against the coronavirus in Iran is something that the United States of America fully supports. We will continue to support," Pompeo said.

A Health Ministry spokesman says 34 people have died so far in Iran because of coronavirus infections, while 73 patients have recovered. The total number of people diagnosed with the disease is 388 after an additional 143 infections were detected over the past 24 hours, Iranian Health Ministry Spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said on Friday.

"The latest figures for the number of people with coronavirus infection in the country stand at 388 people, of whom 73 people have recovered in the past few days and 34 people have died."

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