

# *U.S. imperialism is more dangerous than coronavirus for international community*

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Tehran, April 14 (RHC)-- Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says U.S. imperialism is a virus that is "more dangerous" than the new coronavirus for the international community. "Independent and freedom-seeking nations like Iran and Venezuela have always been under pressure as a result of Washington's excessive demands and bullying," Rouhani said on a phone call with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on Monday.

"Iran and Venezuela have been successfully resisting the aggressive and old virus of the US for years through solidarity and expansion of cooperation," he added.

The Iranian president pointed to the country's plans and measures to counter the deadly coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, and meet its needs, including with regard to the production of diagnostic testing kits, and expressed Tehran's readiness to share its experience in the fight against the virus with Caracas.

Rouhani stressed the importance of further strengthening of bilateral cooperation, saying: "The expansion of cooperation and relations between the two countries will certainly serve the interests of the Iranian and Venezuelan nations." Iran -- the worst hit state by the coronavirus spread in the Middle East -- has been

doing its utmost to contain the respiratory disease despite the hardships created by US sanctions.

Backed by the Armed Forces, the Iranian government has set up makeshift hospitals, increased production of hygienic items, introduced precautionary measures, stepped up coronavirus tests and launched a nationwide screening process to detect patients and isolate them.

The administration of Donald Trump has not only defied international calls on the US in recent weeks to halt its draconian sanctions on Iran, but has even slapped more such restrictive measures on the Islamic Republic.

Washington re-imposed its sanctions on Tehran in May 2018 after unilaterally leaving a historic UN-endorsed nuclear accord with Iran and five other major powers -- the UK, France, Russia, China plus Germany.

The Venezuelan president, for his part, said Tehran and Caracas have always been united and in the same front in the battle against imperialism. Nicolas Maduro also hailed the great achievements made by Iran in its fight against coronavirus, saying that all countries are now engaged in a common battle against coronavirus.

The Venezuelan president also indicated his country's willingness to take advantage of Iran's experience in fighting against the coronavirus infection.

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