

# *Iranian tankers begin fueling El Palito Refinery in Venezuela*

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Caracas, May 25 (RHC)-- The two Iranian tankers that have arrived at the coasts of Venezuela, carrying fuel to meet the demand of this South American country, started fueling gasoline Monday at the northern state of Carabobo in the Palito Refinery.

The Fortune, that docked on Saturday, and the Forest, which arrived in the early morning hours of Monday, are two of the five tankers already in the country. The tankers were escorted by ships and planes of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB) due to the threats received from the United States.

Along with the Petunia, Faxon, and Clavel, the ships are carrying gasoline and other equipment that will restart the fuel production at the El Palito refinery, one of the most important oil processing complexes in the nation.

Gasoline production and distribution reactivated at El Palito refinery after the arrival to Venezuelan territory of chemical additives and fuels from the Iranian vessel "Fortune."

Oil Minister Tareck El Aissami, present at the arrival of the Fortune on behalf of the government of Venezuela, thanked the government of Iran for sending the ships and stated that their berth expresses the countries self-determination.

"We are very fortunate to have Iran in these times," said the Vice President of Economy, at a ceremony at the port, adding: "Deeds like this should be a normal thing, not an expression of resistance to the hegemonic claims of the U.S."

El Palito oil refinery, which had to reduce its operations as a result of the blockade, supplies Venezuela's central-western area through pipes that go all the way to Valencia and then spread to the rest of the country.

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