

The Feasibility of an American Blockade of Iranian Ports and Iran's Strategic Options

(Translated)

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By blockading the Strait of Hormuz from the outside, the US seeks to tighten its grip on Iran, further reducing its revenue from oil sales to major Asian countries like India and China.

This blockade, undoubtedly a form of piracy, disrupts Iranian exports and leads to fuel shortages in Iranian seaport storage tanks. This forces Iran to divert significant quantities of fuel to its onshore storage facilities. Faced with these economic and energy risks, and fearing disruptions to electricity supplies in Iranian cities, Iran hinted at imposing a naval blockade on the Red Sea by closing the Bab al-Mandab Strait. The aim was to export the economic crisis to the entire world, creating a major global economic crisis that would pressure the US into lifting its blockade. However, despite this hint, the US did not yield to these threats and continued its blockade of Iranian ports, even intensifying and expanding it to include all Iranian ports outside the Strait.

America's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz from the outside was the most severe and effective pressure tactic it employed against Iran. It had a greater impact on Iran than the military actions America undertook in its aggression against the country. This suffocating blockade on the Iranian economy and sovereignty led to a softening of the crisis and a more positive approach to the conditions set by both sides in the conflict for entering into serious negotiations aimed at ending the war. Iran unexpectedly announced the lifting of the blockade on the Strait, restoring it to full access for all commercial vessels. In return, the Jewish entity, under intense American pressure, announced its acceptance of a ten-day ceasefire in Lebanon as a prelude to a permanent cessation of hostilities, despite America's arrogant and condescending denial of any connection between the two issues.

However, even after this breakthrough in the negotiation process, America maintained its blockade of Iranian ports, stating that it would continue until the negotiations concluded and the stated objectives for ending the war were fully achieved. In other words, America maintained the blockade on Iranian ports, while Iran lifted its blockade on Arab ports.

However, Iran considered this a violation of the agreement and consequently closed the Strait of Hormuz again. The commander of the Iranian armed forces stated, "Washington's continued naval blockade and the creation of uncertainty regarding the security of Iranian commercial vessels and oil tankers will constitute a prelude to violating the ceasefire in effect since April 8th."

As for the claim that Iran has other land routes with Türkiye, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Armenia that could compensate for its reliance on Gulf ports, this is incorrect. These land border crossings are not equipped to transport and export the enormous

quantities of Iranian oil. They are merely ordinary border crossings, not designed for oil transport, and are not connected to oil facilities by dedicated pipelines that would provide viable alternatives to maritime routes.

This American embargo has had a profound impact on Iran's political decisions, yielding immediate economic benefits that affect Iran's overall strategic position and tangible geopolitical gains for the United States.

However, this does not mean that Iran has lost the war or that it has no other options to confront this embargo. If Iran wishes to continue its confrontation with the US, it must maintain the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and prevent any oil from leaving any of the Gulf ports. This would undoubtedly cause a major disruption to global energy supplies, further embarrassing the US in its international relations and potentially turning all nations against it, a situation the US cannot afford to sustain.

There is also a second, winning pressure card for Iran that it has yet to use, a card it has long brandished: closing the Bab al-Mandab Strait. This tactic was successfully tested during last year's twelve-day war. However, it seems Iran does not want a prolonged confrontation with the US for the sake of tactical gains, even though enduring and confronting the US is strategically preferable in the long run. Closing the Straits of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab would exacerbate global political and economic problems in every respect, striking at the heart of the global economy, not only in the energy, industrial, and trade sectors, but also in all other areas such as food, medicine, and all aspects of life.

The US can blockade Iranian ports and restrict daily life in Iran, but it cannot withstand the challenge of disrupting maritime navigation between continents for an extended period. It can bombard Iran with all kinds of bombs and missiles, but it cannot occupy and control it by land. It has assassinated many Iranian leaders, but it has not been able to change the regime in Iran.

In conclusion, while the blockade of Iranian ports is beneficial to America and harmful to Iran, it cannot decisively win the war in America's favor. Nor can it prevent Iran's resistance should its leadership choose to endure for years. For Iran, this is an existential matter requiring steadfastness and patience, whereas for America, it is a war of choice, with the incentives to end it outweighing those to continue. Therefore, Iran must not yield to American dictates, and must persist in its resistance and confrontation, until America is forced to withdraw, leaving it with no other option but to retreat, as happened in Vietnam and Afghanistan.

What America could not seize through war should not be obtained through negotiations. The correct course for Iran is to immediately withdraw from negotiations. This is the strongest weapon Iran currently possesses, and then continue its resistance and confrontation until America leaves the Gulf in disgrace and defeat.