

Trump reiterates to Macron the US will not drop Iran sanctions



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President Trump on Thursday spoke with French President Emmanuel Macron and reiterated to him that the United States would not relieve Iran of economic sanctions.

The two leaders also agreed it was imperative to “curb Iran’s actions threatening freedom of navigation and commerce in the Persian Gulf,” the White House said late Thursday.

“President Trump reiterated that dropping sanctions against Iran is not going to happen at this time,” the White House said.

Meanwhile, Iran said Thursday that it had further breached its commitments under the 2015 nuclear agreement following the U.S. withdrawal last year, and would no longer abide by the limits on research and development.

Macron has sought to broker a meeting between Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in order to end the confrontation between the U.S. and Iran since Trump’s withdrawal from the agreement to curb Iran’s nuclear program, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Trump signaled at the Group of Seven (G-7) summit in Biarritz, France, in August that he would be open to such a meeting under the right circumstances. However, Rouhani has said he would not agree to a meeting until U.S. sanctions are lifted on Iran.

Trump this week left the door open to a possible meeting at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly.

“Sure. Anything’s possible. They would like to be able to solve their problems. They’ve got a big problem. They’re getting killed financially,” Trump told

reporters, adding that he appreciated Macron's efforts but that the U.S. would handle negotiations with Iran on its own terms.

The Trump administration withdrew from the Obama-era deal between six countries and Iran, which Trump and Republicans had long criticized, last year despite objections from U.S. allies. The administration has further tightened sanctions on Iran and tensions have risen particularly over the past several weeks, as Iran breached key limits of the deal for the first time and threatened further breaches.

The U.S. imposed additional sanctions on Iran this week and also announced efforts to disrupt the financial apparatus of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC).

Earlier this week, reports surfaced that Iran had proposed offering Iran \$15 billion in credit lines to return to compliance with the deal, though the Trump administration signaled it would not be on board with such a plan.

On Thursday, Trump and Macron also discussed France's digital services tax and agreed it was "imperative" to come to an agreement on it, the White House said late Thursday.

The call between the two leaders came just under two weeks after Trump and Macron met in person at the G-7 where the same issues were among the topics discussed.

Macron signaled in a closing news conference in Biarritz that they had reached an agreement on the digital services tax, which Trump has criticized as unfairly targeting U.S. technology companies.

Source:

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