

# US deploys warships to Strait of Hormuz, announces Iran blockade

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U.S. Central Command announced Sunday that American warships will begin blockading all maritime traffic entering or exiting Iranian ports on Monday at 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time. The guided-missile destroyers USS Michael Murphy and USS Frank E. Petersen Jr. entered the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday.

The blockade follows 21 hours of negotiations in Islamabad between Vice President JD Vance and Iranian Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf—the highest-level face-to-face meeting between American and Iranian officials since the 1979 revolution. Iran refused to accept US demands that would effectively reduce it to a colonial protectorate: the dismantlement of all nuclear enrichment facilities, the handover of nearly 1,000 pounds of enriched uranium, the withdrawal of support for Hezbollah and Hamas and the unconditional reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. Vance called the US proposal “our final and best offer” and left without scheduling further talks.

US President Donald Trump announced the blockade on Truth Social Sunday, declaring: “Effective immediately, the United States Navy, the Finest in the World, will begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz.” He called Iran’s control of the waterway “WORLD EXTORTION” and ordered the Navy to “seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to Iran.”

Trump added: “Any Iranian who fires at us, or at peaceful vessels, will be BLOWN TO HELL!” He concluded: “Our Military will finish up the little that is left of Iran!”

In a Fox News interview Sunday, Trump threatened to destroy Iran’s remaining civilian infrastructure. “The only thing left, really, is their water, which would be very devastating to hit,” he said. “I would hate to do

it, but it’s their water, their desalination plants, their electric generating plants, which are very easy to hit.”

On April 1, Trump delivered a prime-time address vowing to send Iran “back to the Stone Ages” and threatened to destroy “each and every one of their electric generating plants.” On Easter Sunday, he posted a profanity-laced threat signed “Praise be to Allah.” By April 7, Trump announced a two-week ceasefire brokered by Pakistan. The ceasefire lasted five days.

Oil surged above \$100 a barrel on the blockade announcement. Dow futures dropped 517 points. Gasoline stands at \$4.13 a gallon nationally, up 38 percent since February 28, with five states above \$5. More than 600 vessels remain trapped in the Gulf. Goldman Sachs has called the closure of the Strait “the largest oil supply shock in recorded history” and raised the probability of a US recession to 30 percent. The Philippines has declared a national energy emergency. A third of global fertilizer supply normally passes through the Strait; urea prices have jumped 32 percent in a single week.

The Strait is 21 miles wide at its narrowest point. The shipping lane is two miles wide in each direction. The Iranian coastline flanking the waterway is lined with anti-ship missile batteries, coastal artillery and drone launch sites. Iran possesses an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 naval mines and has claimed to have “lost track” of where they were planted. More than 60 percent of its fast-attack boats remain intact.

US warships operating at close range inside this waterway are exposed to missile and drone attacks from the Iranian coast and from the islands Iran controls within the Strait. Any exchange of fire—a warning shot, a mine strike, a drone hit on a destroyer—would produce significant American military casualties and create the

conditions for a massive further escalation of the war. Thirteen US service members have been killed since February 28. The loss of a warship, or a mass-casualty event involving sailors, would transform the political dynamics of the conflict overnight.

Over the past six weeks, leading figures in the US political establishment have called for a ground invasion of Iran, including the seizure of Kharg Island, through which 90 percent of Iran's oil exports are processed. Marines from three Marine Expeditionary Units and a combat brigade from the 82nd Airborne Division have arrived or are en route to the Persian Gulf. More than 50,000 US service members are deployed across the region.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards warned Sunday that any military vessel approaching the Strait "under any title or pretext" would be considered a ceasefire violation and would meet with a "severe response." Mohsen Rezaei, a senior adviser to Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, said Iran had "large, untouched levers" to counter any blockade.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote on X Sunday that Iran had "engaged with US in good faith to end the war. But when just inches away from 'Islamabad MoU'"—a memorandum of understanding that would have formalized the ceasefire terms—"we encountered maximalism, shifting goalposts, and blockade."

Five days ago, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced that the United States and Iran "along with their allies have agreed to an immediate ceasefire everywhere, including Lebanon and elsewhere, effective immediately." He invited delegations to Islamabad on April 10 to negotiate a permanent settlement.

Each ceasefire Trump has announced in this conflict has preceded further military action. After the June 2025 ceasefire that halted Operation Midnight Hammer, the US resumed and expanded the war eight months later with the full-scale assault that began on February 28. The strategic objectives of the United States have not changed. Washington launched this war to impose direct control over the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz and to eliminate Iran as an obstacle to American global hegemony. The blockade is the next phase of that project.

The Democratic Party, while criticizing the way Trump is waging the war, agrees with its basic aims.

Senator Tim Kaine told ABC's *This Week* on Sunday: "They are a regional threat. The regime is bad actors for sure. We need to make sure that Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon," while criticizing Trump's waging of the war without congressional authorization.

The *New York Times* editorial board, speaking for the same political orientation, called Trump's conduct "glaring incompetence" Sunday and urged him to "involve Congress and seek help from America's allies."



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