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WAR IN IRAN

TRUMP: US WILL ESCORT SHIPS STRANDED IN STRAIT



SHIR TOREM, REUTERS

Israeli artillery units stand on the Israeli side of the border with Lebanon on Sunday.

‘Humanitarian gesture’ meant to aid neutral countries

PARISA HAFEZI AND JACOB BOGAGE
Reuters

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Sunday that the United States would begin an effort Monday morning to free up ships stranded in the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump, in a social media post, gave few details about the operation, including whether the U.S. Navy would be involved. He described the effort as a “humanitarian gesture” meant only to aid neutral countries that were not involved in the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

“For the good of Iran, the Middle East, and the United States, we have told these countries that we will guide their Ships safely out of these restricted Waterways, so that they can freely and ably get on with their business,” Trump wrote in the post.

The White House and the Pentagon did not immediately respond to requests for additional information.

Also on Sunday, Iran said it received a U.S. response to its latest offer for peace talks, a day after Trump said he would

probably reject the Iranian proposal because “they have not paid a big enough price.”

Iranian state media reported that Washington conveyed its response to Iran’s 14-point proposal via Pakistan, and that Tehran was reviewing it. There was no immediate confirmation from Washington or Islamabad of the U.S. response.

“At this stage, we do not have nuclear negotiations,” state media quoted Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei as saying, an apparent reference to Iran’s proposal to set aside talks on nuclear issues until after the war ends and the foes agree to lift opposing blockades of Gulf shipping.

On Saturday, Trump said that he had yet to review the exact wording of the Iranian peace proposal, but that he was likely to reject it.

“I will soon be reviewing the plan that Iran has just sent to us, but can’t imagine that it would be acceptable in that they have not yet paid a big enough price for what they have done to Humanity, and the World, over the last 47 years,” he wrote

on social media.

The United States and Israel suspended their bombing campaign against Iran four weeks ago, and U.S. and Iranian officials held one round of talks. But attempts to set up further meetings have so far failed.

Iran handed over its latest proposal Thursday, and a senior Iranian official confirmed Saturday that Tehran envisions ending the war and resolving the shipping standoff first, while leaving talks on Iran’s nuclear program for later.

Though Trump initially said Friday that he was not satisfied with the Iranian proposal, he said Saturday he was still looking at it.

“They told me about the concept of the deal. They’re going to give me the exact wording now,” he told reporters. Asked if he might restart strikes on Iran, Trump replied: “I don’t want to say that. I mean, I can’t tell that to a reporter. If they misbehave, if they do something bad, right now we’ll see. But it’s a possibility that could happen.”

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Lawmakers propose ban on Chinese vehicle imports

Bipartisan push comes before Trump’s meeting with Chinese president

GRANT SCHWAB
Detroit News

WASHINGTON — Two senators on Capitol Hill are teaming up for a bipartisan push to keep Chinese cars and trucks out of the United States.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Elissa Slotkin of Michigan and Republican U.S. Sen. Bernie Moreno of Ohio introduced a bill last week to solidify barriers to China building its U.S. automotive presence.

Their proposal would ban the import, manufacture and sale of internet-connected vehicles, software and hardware

linked to China or other adversaries.

“As Europe, Mexico and others allow their markets to be overrun by Chinese predators, the U.S. must act before it’s too late,” Moreno, a former auto dealer, said in a statement.

“The answer is simple: Chinese vehicles can never be allowed into the U.S. market — the fate of the American auto industry and countless autoworkers depends on it.”

The bill introduction comes about two weeks before President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly signaled openness to allowing Chinese automakers to manufacture in the United States, prepares for a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

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GRANT SCHWAB, DETROIT NEWS

Ohio Republican Sen. Bernie Moreno, right, answers questions from Alliance for Automotive Innovation President and CEO John Bozzella at The Merge automotive policy conference on Dec. 2 in Washington, D.C.