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Trump to decide soon on when to release Mideast peace plan says envoy  
Jason Greenblatt, who spent 2 years developing the proposal with White House adviser Jared Kushner, tells the U.N. Security Council the conflict can't be solved using global consensus, international law and U.N. resolutions

Reuters|Published: 07.23.19 , 20:29

U.S. President Donald Trump hopes to **decide soon on when to release** a plan for peace between Israel and the Palestinians that "will not be ambiguous," his Middle East envoy Jason Greenblatt told the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday.

Greenblatt and senior White House adviser Jared Kushner have spent two years developing the plan, made up of political as well as economic components, which they hope will provide a framework for renewed talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

"President Trump has not yet decided when we will release the political portion of the plan, and we hope to make that decision soon," Greenblatt told the 15-member Security Council.

While Greenblatt did not reveal any details of the "60-or-so"-page plan, he said the conflict could not be solved using global consensus, international law and references to U.N. resolutions - sparking strong rebuttals from council members.

"For us, international law is not menu a la carte," Germany's U.N. Ambassador Christoph Heusgen told the council.

"There are other instances where U.S. representatives here insist on international law, insist on the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, for instance on North Korea," Heusgen said.

Several council members, including Russia, Britain, France and Indonesia, echoed Heusgen.

"Security Council resolutions are international law, they merely need to be complied with," Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said.

France would support any peace effort "so long as this aligns with the approach that we have set out together, so long as this adheres to international law, specifically all resolutions of the Security Council," French U.N. Ambassador Nicolas de Riviere said.

The U.S.' Middle East proposal has two major components - a political piece that addresses core issues such as the status of Jerusalem, and an economic portion that aims to strengthen the Palestinian economy.

**Kushner and Greenblatt have not said, however, whether it calls for a two-state solution, a goal of past peace efforts.**

"A comprehensive and lasting peace will not be created by fiat of international law or by these heavily wordsmithed, unclear resolutions," Greenblatt said. "The vision for peace that we plan to present will not be ambiguous, unlike many resolutions that have passed in this chamber."

He said it would provide enough detail for people to see "what compromises will be necessary to achieve a realistic, lasting, comprehensive solution to this conflict."

Greenblatt called on the Palestinians "to put aside blanket rejections of a plan they have not even seen" and show a willingness to engage in talks with Israel. He also urged the Security Council to encourage the parties back to the negotiating table.

Nebenzia suggested a visit by the Security Council to the region was overdue and could be helpful. The United States has long objected to a council visit, which has to be agreed by consensus, diplomats said.

### Boris Johnson wins race to become UK's next prime minister

Claiming victory in two-man race to lead ruling Conservative Party, former London mayor who has pledged to leave the EU with or without a Brexit deal vows to unite the country

News Agencies|Published: 07.23.19 , 14:26

Additional Videos

Brexit hardliner Boris Johnson won the contest to lead Britain's governing Conservative Party on Tuesday and will become the country's next prime minister, tasked with fulfilling his promise to lead the U.K. out of the European Union "come what may."

He defeated his rival Jeremy Hunt overwhelmingly in a vote of Conservative Party members.

He will be installed as prime minister in a formal handover from Theresa May on Wednesday.

The victory is a triumph for 55-year-old Johnson, an ambitious but erratic politician whose political career has veered between periods in high office and spells on the sidelines.

Johnson has vowed that Britain will quit the European Union on the scheduled date of Oct. 31 even if it means leaving without a divorce deal

But he faces a rocky ride from a Parliament determined to prevent him from taking the U.K. out of the 28-nation bloc without a withdrawal agreement.

Several Conservative ministers have already announced they will resign to fight any push for a "no-deal" Brexit, an outcome economists warn would disrupt trade and plunge the U.K. into recession.

In his victory speech from London, Johnson vowed to unite the country.

"Like some slumbering giant we are going to rise and ping off the guy-ropes of self-doubt and negativity with better education, better infrastructure, more police, fantastic full-fibre broadband sprouting in every household," he said. "We are going to unite this amazing country and we are going to take it forward."

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Fears that Britain is inching closer to a "no-deal" Brexit weighed on the pound once again Tuesday.

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Before the announcement, the currency was down another 0.3 percent at \$1.2441 and near two-year lows.

May stepped down after Britain's Parliament repeatedly rejected the withdrawal agreement she struck with the 28-nation bloc.

### Britain begins escorting all UK vessels through Hormuz Strait

'Freedom of navigation is crucial for the global trading system and world economy, and we will do all we can to defend it,' says UK government spokesman; about a fifth of the world's oil passes through strait, and shipping companies are already deploying more unarmed security guards as an extra safeguard

Reuters|Published: 07.25.19 , 18:01

Britain has started sending a warship to accompany all British-flagged vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, a change in policy announced on Thursday after the government previously said it did not have resources to do so.

Tensions have spiked between Iran and Britain since last Friday when Iranian commandos seized a British-flagged tanker in the world's most important waterway for oil shipments. That came two weeks after British forces captured an Iranian oil tanker near Gibraltar, accused of violating sanctions on Syria.

HMS Montrose, a British frigate now in the area, carried out the first mission under the new policy on Wednesday evening.

"The Royal Navy has been tasked to accompany British-flagged ships through the Strait of Hormuz, either individually or in groups, should sufficient notice be given of their passage," a government spokesman said.

"Freedom of navigation is crucial for the global trading system and world economy, and we will do all we can to defend it," he added in a statement.

The British government had previously advised British-flagged vessels to avoid the Strait of Hormuz where possible and to notify the navy if they must cross it, but had said it would not be able to escort every ship.

Britain has been seeking to put together a European-led maritime protection mission to ensure safe shipping through the Strait of Hormuz after Iran's seizure of the tanker in what London said was an act of "state piracy".

The change of policy was not the result of a change made by new Prime Minister Boris Johnson, as the government had been working on the plan for a few days, according to an official, who asked not to be named.

#### Uncertain Time

The UK Chamber of Shipping trade association, which previously called for more protection of merchant vessels in the area, welcomed the change.

"This move will provide some much needed safety and reassurance to our shipping community in this uncertain time," said the chief executive, Bob Sanguinetti. "However, we will continue to push for a de-escalation of tensions in the region."

On any given day, about 15 to 30 large British-flagged ships travel in the Gulf, with up to three passing through the Strait of Hormuz between Iran and Oman, where a pair of two-mile-wide shipping lanes provide the only routes in and out of the Gulf.

About a fifth of the world's oil passes through the strait, and shipping companies are already deploying more unarmed security guards as an extra safeguard.

The cost of insuring a ship sailing through the region has risen tenfold as risks have risen, which has also prompted some ship owners to avoid the area entirely.

The United States, Britain and other nations will be meeting in Florida on Thursday to discuss how to protect shipping in the Gulf from Iran.

Washington, which has by far the strongest Western naval contingent in the Gulf, has been calling for its allies to join it in an operation to guard shipping there. But European countries, which disagree with a U.S. decision to impose sanctions on Iran, have been reluctant to sign up to a U.S.-led mission for fear of adding to tension in the region.

France, Italy and Denmark support Britain's idea of an EU-led flotilla in the Gulf, three EU diplomats said on Tuesday. Germany has said it is too early to discuss how Berlin might take part.

Iran says it is the guarantor of security in the strait. It will not allow any disturbance in shipping there, state news agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi as saying on Tuesday.

UK: Europe-led mission will protect vital shipping in Gulf  
Britain's foreign secretary accuses Tehran of 'piracy' over seizure of British-flagged tanker; Iranian naval chief says Iran observes all U.S. ships in Gulf, has archive of their daily movements

Associated Press|Published: 07.23.19 , 11:03

Britain announced plans Monday to develop and deploy a Europe-led "maritime protection mission" to safeguard shipping in the vital Strait of Hormuz in light of Iran's seizure of a British-flagged tanker in the waterway last week.

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Briefing Parliament on the budding crisis, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt accused Iran of "an act of state piracy" that must be met with a coordinated international reaction.

Iranian naval forces approach the British-flagged Stena Impero (Photo: AFP)  
Iranian naval forces approach the British-flagged Stena Impero (Photo: AFP)

Iranian officials have suggested the Stena Impero was seized and taken to an Iranian port in response to Britain's role in seizing an Iranian oil tanker two weeks earlier off the coast of Gibraltar, a British overseas territory located on the southern tip of Spain.

Hunt announced precious few details of the proposed protection mission but said Britain's European allies will play a major role in keeping shipping lanes open. One-fifth of all global crude exports passes through the narrow strait between Iran and Oman.

The foreign secretary said Iran must understand that its actions will only lead to a bigger Western military footprint in the region.

"It is with a heavy heart that we are announcing this increased international presence in the Gulf, because the focus of our diplomacy has been on de-escalating tensions in the hope that such changes would not be necessary," Hunt said.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt (Photo: Reuters)  
British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt (Photo: Reuters)

Hunt also sought to put distance between Britain and its closest international ally, the United States.

Washington has broken with London on Iran policy as a result of President Donald Trump's rejection of the international accord designed to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Trump pulled the U.S. out of the accord last year and re-imposed harsh sanctions, which have had a severe effect on Iran's economy.

The foreign secretary said the planned European mission was not part of the U.S. policy of exerting "maximum pressure" on Iran.

It was unclear which countries will join the protection force or how quickly it can be put in place.

Hunt said he had consulted with foreign ministers of Oman, the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Spain and Denmark.

Iranian head of Navy Rear Admiral Hossein Khazadi said on Tuesday that Iran observes all U.S. ships in the Gulf region and has an archive of images of their daily movements.

"We observe all enemy ships, particularly (those of) America, point-by-point from their origin until the moment they enter the region," Khazadi said, noting that images were recorded using Iranian drones.

There are no British nationals among the Stena Impero's 23 crew members — most are Indian, as well as Filipino, Russian and Latvian nationals. Iran released new video showing the ship's crew for the first time Monday, an apparent attempt to show they were unharmed.

The Stena Impero crew in Iranian custody  
The Stena Impero crew in Iranian custody

Iran's government spokesman Ali Rabiei said that there are diplomatic solutions to the current crisis, but he also defended Iran's actions.

"When you illegally seize a ship in Gibraltar... we don't deem it as necessary to show tolerance," he said. "Some countries have asked for the immediate release of the British tanker. Well, we ask those countries to make the same request to Britain first."

Britain says it acted lawfully off the Gibraltar coast to prevent illegal oil shipments to Syria that would have violated European Union sanctions. It says Iran broke international maritime law by forcing the Stena Impero to change course and go to Iran.

Iranian oil tanker Grace 1 (Photo: AP)  
Iranian oil tanker Grace 1 (Photo: AP)

However, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the Stena Impero was in violation of "international law on safe passage" in the Strait of Hormuz on the day it was seized.

Speaking Monday during a visit to Nicaragua, he said the British ship had "turned off its signaling" for longer than is allowed and "was passing through the wrong channels."

Britain also says the tanker was in Omani waters at the time, which Iran disputes.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (Photo: Reuters)  
Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (Photo: Reuters)

Friday's seizure of the Stena Impero came amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran. In June, Iran shot down an American drone in the Strait of Hormuz, and Trump came close to retaliating with airstrikes.

As the nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers unravels, the U.S. has expanded its military presence in the region. Iran has in turn begun openly exceeding the uranium enrichment levels set in the accord to try to pressure Europe into alleviating the pain caused by the sanctions.

European nations are working to save the nuclear deal and have tried to come up with ways to keep trading with Iran, but have run smack into Trump's sanctions, which also target Iranian oil exports.

In the newly released video on Monday, the Stena Impero crew is seen dressed in red uniforms and seated around a table onboard as an unidentified Iranian man is heard thanking them for their cooperation. A cameraman is heard telling them not to look at the camera.



It wasn't clear if the crew was under duress to take part in the filming.

Other choreographed shots show a man checking on the ship, the crew sharing a laugh and talking next to a coffee machine inside the ship. The crew's chefs are seen preparing food.

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Another video released by Iran's state broadcaster shows Iran's flag hoisted on the ship's bridge.

Meanwhile, officials in Gibraltar say the ship's crew has been kept on board the vessel since its seizure July 4. Four Indian crewmembers, including the ship's captain, were arrested, but not charged, and were then bailed. The crew is comprised of Indian, Pakistani and Ukrainian nationals.

Iran's president hints at quid pro quo for seized U.K. ship

Rouhani says Iran does not 'seek the continuation of tension with some European countries,' and 'will receive a proportional response from Iran' if they are 'committed to international frameworks and give up their wrong actions, including what they did in Gibraltar'

Associated Press|Published: 07.24.19 , 16:47

TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani suggested on Wednesday that Iran might release a U.K.-flagged ship if Britain takes similar steps to release an Iranian oil tanker seized by the British Royal Navy off Gibraltar earlier this month.

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His remarks could create an opening to reduce tensions as Boris Johnson becomes prime minister. It's unclear how the new government will respond to Rouhani's suggestion or the impasse with Iran.

President Hassan Rouhani speaks in a cabinet meeting in Tehran on July 24, 2019

President Hassan Rouhani speaks in a cabinet meeting in Tehran on July 24, 2019

"We do not seek the continuation of tension with some European countries," Rouhani said in comments carried on his website.

"Should they be committed to international frameworks and give up their wrong actions, including what they did in Gibraltar, they will receive a proportional response from Iran."

Britain this week announced plans to develop and deploy a Europe-led "maritime protection mission" to safeguard shipping in the area after Iran's Revolutionary Guard seized the Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz on Friday.

Rouhani said that while Iran does not seek a military conflict, it will not allow threats to its security in the important waterway. He described the Iranian seizure of the ship as "professional and brave."

Iranian officials have alleged the ship was seized after it violated international maritime law by turning off its signaling for longer than is allowed and passing through the wrong channels.

Iranian naval forces approach the British-flagged Stena Impero  
Iranian naval forces approach the British-flagged Stena Impero

However, Iranian officials have also suggested the ship was seized in response to Britain's role in impounding an Iranian supertanker two weeks earlier off the coast of Gibraltar, a British overseas territory.

The U.K. says the tanker was suspected of violating sanctions on oil shipments to Syria.

Both sides have called the interception of one another's ships "hostile acts" and "piracy."

The Grace 1 oil tanker was seized off the coast of Gibraltar two weeks ago (Photo: AP)  
The Grace 1 oil tanker was seized off the coast of Gibraltar two weeks ago (Photo: AP)

Stena Bulk, the owner of the ship being held by Iran, said it made first contact Tuesday evening with the crew of 23 since its seizure five days ago.

The company said the ship's master advised "that everyone was safe with good cooperation with the Iranian personnel onboard."

The crew are mostly Indian, but also include Filipino, Russian and Latvian nationals.

Iranian state TV aired video of the crew onboard the vessel off Iran's port of Bandar Abbas earlier this week.

The crew of the Stena Impero in Iranian custody  
The crew of the Stena Impero in Iranian custody

A spate of incidents in past weeks has threatened security in the Strait of Hormuz, which lies between Iran and Oman. Tensions have also soared following President Donald Trump's decision last year to withdraw from the nuclear deal and impose maximal sanctions on Iran.

One-fifth of global crude passes through the Strait of Hormuz, making it an internationally important chokepoint for global energy supplies from Gulf exporters.

In past weeks, Iran has shot down a U.S. spy drone, U.S. officials say military cyberforces struck Iranian computer systems that handle missile and rocket launchers, and six oil tankers have been sabotaged near the strait.

Iranian officials on Wednesday reiterated their denial that any Iranian drones were intercepted, after the U.S. military said Tuesday that it took aim at two of them last week.

The amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (Photo: Reuters)  
The amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (Photo: Reuters)

U.S. Central Command said one Iranian drone crashed into the sea after the USS Boxer took "defensive action" against it last Thursday. It said the Boxer also "engaged" a second Iranian drone at the same time, but could not confirm it was destroyed.

Iran's defense minister, Gen. Amir Hatami, told reporters Wednesday that "if someone claims he should provide evidence," adding that "none of our drones have been intercepted."

Despite a U.K. government advisory that British-flagged ships avoid the Strait of Hormuz, a large British-flagged vessel transited the corridor and arrived at a port in Qatar on Wednesday.

Maritime publication Lloyd's List identified the vessel as the BW Elm and reported that a British warship, likely the HMS Montrose, closely shadowed the large liquefied petroleum gas carrier but that the Royal Navy did not provide a direct escort.

The Ministry of Defence declined to specifically comment on the transit and referred to recent comments made by Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, in which he confirmed the HMS Montrose has accompanied more than 30 ships over the last ten days through the strait.

In a statement to the AP, the ship's owner BW LPG declined to comment on specifics, but noted protection by the navy.

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"BW LPG is grateful for the UK and international community for their naval presence in the area providing security to merchant vessels transiting through the Straits of Hormuz," the company said, adding that it is operating "at our highest security protocol."

Jared Kushner to finalize Palestinian economic plan on Middle East tour

Palestinians poured scorn on the Trump administration's \$50 billion investment plan to help achieve Middle East peace, but U.S. Gulf Arab allies said the economic initiative had promise if a political settlement is reached

Reuters|Published: 07.22.19 , 08:14

White House senior adviser Jared Kushner will lead a U.S. delegation on a tour of the Middle East to finalize details of his proposed \$50 billion economic development plan for the Palestinians, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon, an administration official said on Sunday.

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Kushner, Middle East envoy Jason Greenblatt, State Department official Brian Hook and Kushner aide Avi Berkowitz are expected to make stops in Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, the official said.

#### Additional Videos

Presidential aid Jared Kushner in Bahrain June 2019 (Photo: Reuters)

Presidential aid Jared Kushner in Bahrain June 2019 (Photo: Reuters)

They leave late this month and return to Washington in early August.

The official said the purpose of the trip is to "continue on the momentum that was created at the workshop in Bahrain and finalize the economic portion of the plan."

They will also discuss the possibility of locating the development fund in Bahrain, the official said.

Kushner, U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law and the plan's main architect, sought to build support for his ambitious economic proposals for the Palestinian territories at an international meeting in Bahrain in June.

Palestinians poured scorn on the Trump administration's \$50 billion investment plan to help achieve Middle East peace, but U.S. Gulf Arab allies said the economic initiative had promise if a political settlement is reached.

#### Additional Videos

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Photo: Associated Press)

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Photo: Associated Press)

Kushner and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin last week discussed creation of the fund with World Bank President David Malpass, the official said. The World Bank has a role in managing the fund.

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The delegation was not expected to discuss Trump's long-awaited political plan for the Middle East, and when it will be released remains unclear.

<https://www.goes.noaa.gov/regional.html>

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Change monthly / annual chart on electronics page from 2016 to 2019

Take out dead fish photos in  
Beach page..

Looking at some of the strange critters that wash onto the beach on occasion. I am told this is a Toad Fish. I have never seen nor heard of this before, but there it is, top to bottom and nearly a foot long. Other things to see are starfish, jellyfish, skates and rays, turtles, horseshoe crabs, storks, pelicans, and even bald eagles.

Family page—unwrap the 20 home videos around girls on pc. Last line beside photo is **reel, about 12 minutes**

