



## Beau Barnes on U.S. Sanctions on Iran and Compliance with the ICJ

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Is the U.S. violating a 2018 International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling regarding their sanctions on Iran? Kobre & Kim's Beau Barnes, along with Foley Hoag's Joseph Klingler and Human Rights Watch's Tara Sephehri Far, analyzed the ruling and subsequent U.S. policy in an article for the *American Society of International Law*.

In 2018, in response to an application from Iran, the ICJ ordered the U.S. to remove impediments on the "free exportation" of medicines and medical devices to Iran, and to refrain from actions that might aggravate the dispute between the two countries. Although technically the importation of medical supplies is exempted, the broadness of U.S. sanctions overall have caused banks to refuse transfers and other services with Iranian banks, effectively making it impossible for Iranians to import medical supplies.

Barnes and his co-authors argue that the U.S. has not heeded the ICJ's order. Since the ruling, there has been no significant change in U.S. policy, nor has the approval of special licenses allowing medical supplies to be sold to Iran been prioritized. In fact, approvals have fallen, and the U.S. has since placed additional sanctions, clearly violating the order to refrain from aggravating the situation. Banks continue to over-comply with sanctions and medical supplies continue to be difficult to obtain for Iranians, but Barnes and his co-authors conclude, "It remains to be seen whether such a claim of breach will be adjudicated by the Court."

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