

# US Accused of Stealing Syrian Oil as Sanctions Waiver Aims to Divide Country

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*Washington has been accused of continuing its theft of Syrian oil as some 70 tankers were reported to have left the country via the illegal al-Waleed crossing into neighbouring Iraq.*

The convoy was spotted leaving Syria’s northern Hasakah province accompanied by 15 lorries loaded with military equipment and six armoured vehicles on Friday, local sources reported.

It comes just a day after 46 US vehicles were seen using the same border crossing with the Syrian government warning Washington against the plunder of its resources.

Oil and wheat are regularly taken out of the country and sold abroad, depriving millions of Syrians of much-needed supplies as they suffer the effect of crippling US sanctions.

Tens of thousands of barrels of Syrian oil are believed to have been shipped out of the country into Iraq by US forces.

In a further development last week US acting assistant secretary of state **Victoria Nuland** announced a partial waiver from the Caesar Act restrictions for areas that are not under government control.

“The United States intends in the next few days to issue a general license to facilitate private economic investment activity in non-regime-held areas liberated from Isis in Syria,” she said following a meeting in Morocco.

The exemptions will apply to areas under the control of Turkish-backed jihadist groups along with those governed by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

Ms Nuland claims that the general licence, which excludes oil, will enable US companies to

invest in agriculture, health, education and other areas to bring much-needed investment to help reconstruction.

The news has been welcomed by a number of Western liberal academics and supporters of the so-called Autonomous Area of North-East Syria which had lobbied for the exemptions.

But critics said it was a clear attempt by the US to annex northern Syria and divide the country.

Journalist Vanessa Beeley said Ms Nuland and Washington were “deliberately enflaming local grievances and enabling ISIS recruitment and expansion.”

She accused the US of genocide by “withholding means of sustaining life to innocent civilians in order to coerce an entire nation into submission,” which she described as economic terrorism.

Syrian **President Bashar al-Assad** has consistently asked US occupying forces to leave the country and has vowed to regain all territory currently held by foreign forces.

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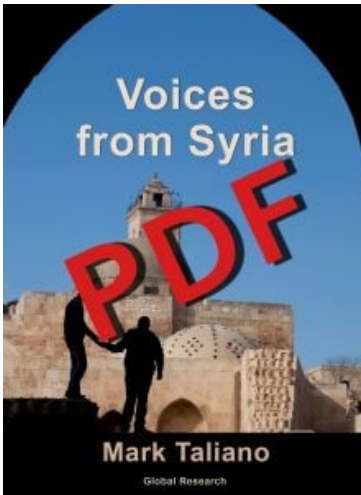
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*Featured image: U.S. Battalion in eastern Syria in 2019 Photo: Creative Commons / U.S. Army Reserve*

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