

Greece/Iran relations hit hurdle with oil sanctions

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Relations between Greece and Iran could run into problems as a result of a sanctions-related shipping case in Greek waters that involved the US, Russia and Iran.

Greek police said this week that they would be sending Iranian oil from seized Russian-flagged tanker **Pegas** (IMO 9256860) to the US at the request of the US judiciary. Iran's Foreign Ministry in response summoned the chief of Greece's diplomatic mission for talks on Wednesday, claiming that the decision amounted to "international robbery".

The Pegas, an Iranian-flagged tanker crewed by Russians, was then renamed the Lana, bound for Turkey. It was apprehended at Greece's Karystos anchorage last month and found to be carrying 115,000 tons of Iranian oil.

The oil was seized by the US, not because of the sanctions against Russia, but because of those against Iran. The US Department of Justice chartered a tanker from the Greek Dynacom to emptying the Lana of its cargo of Iranian oil, which will subsequently be shipped to the US.

2003-built, Iran-flagged, 61,991 gt Lana is owned and managed by Transmorflot Inc of Akhty, Russia (Equasis information). As of May 25th, the vessel was at anchorage in Karystos, Aegean Sea.