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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Chevron set to trade Venezuelan oil if U.S. relaxes sanctions

HOUSTON/WASHINGTON, March 14 (Reuters) - Chevron Corp. is preparing to take operating control of its joint ventures in Venezuela if Washington relaxes sanctions on Caracas to boost crude supplies after banning Russia's oil imports, according to three people familiar with the situation.

The U.S. oil major has begun assembling a trading team to market oil from Venezuela, two of the people said. If U.S. approvals are received, Chevron aims to expand its role in the four joint ventures it shares with state-run company PDVSA, they added.

Chevron has asked the U.S. government for a license broad enough to have a greater say at its joint ventures in Venezuela, a first step to recovering crude output and exports, and to control where oil is sent, the three people said. Since 2020, Chevron has delegated most decision making to state-run PDVSA.

U.S. officials have made clear, however, that any new authorization will depend on whether Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro takes further political steps, two sources said, such as releasing more jailed Americans and setting a firm date for resuming negotiations with the Venezuelan opposition.

Chevron's proposed moves could revitalize Venezuela's oil output and exports after years of underinvestment and sanctions shrank it to about 755,000 barrels per day (bpd) last month from 2.3 million bpd in 2016. Chevron's joint ventures with PDVSA had produced about 200,000 bpd before U.S. sanctions and lack of financing cut their output.

LOGISTICS TEAM

A date has not been set for issuing the authorization. But Chevron has begun preparations for employees to get Venezuelan visas in Aruba, ready to head to Caracas if the U.S. Treasury eases restrictions, the people said.

Last week, U.S. President Joe Biden banned U.S. imports of Russian oil, adding to an array of sanctions after Russia invaded Ukraine, an action Moscow has called a "special military operation."

Chevron aims to begin moving Venezuelan oil to refineries as soon as next month. Last week's U.S. ban on Russian imports allows oil under existing contracts to ar-



rive in the country through April 22.

"Since Venezuelan barrels were banned in the United States in 2019, and Colombia and Mexico reduced key exports to the United States, Russian barrels have been feeding the Gulf refiners", said one person involved in the talks.

Chevron had vastly reduced its presence in Venezuela after Washington tightened sanctions on Venezuela in 2020. For years, Chevron and other PDVSA venture partners have requested more operating oversight.

The United States is drafting a new license that would allow Chevron to assume a more active role in Venezuela, a person familiar with the matter said. Washington is considering similar oil-for-debt authorizations for Spain's Repsol (REP.MC) and Italy's Eni SpA. They collectively are owed billions of dollars by their Venezuela joint ventures.

Chevron declined to comment, but reiterated in a statement its operations in Venezuela comply with U.S. sanctions and remain "a constructive presence in

Venezuela."

PDVSA and Venezuela's oil ministry did not reply to requests for comment.

A State Department spokesperson said the U.S. government "does not preview sanctions actions" but added: "We have made clear that we would review some sanctions policies if the Venezuelan parties made meaningful progress in the Venezuelan-led negotiations in Mexico toward a democratic solution."

The U.S. Treasury Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

POLITICAL TALKS

This month, Washington quietly restarted diplomatic engagement with Venezuela, a close ally of Russia. Last week, Maduro released two jailed Americans, and Washington has insisted others also be freed. Maduro has expressed a willingness to resume a dialogue with the opposition after he suspended talks in Mexico in October.

U.S. officials want a firm commitment to discussing free elections.

On Sunday, U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan told NBC any sanctions relief for Venezuela must be tied to "concrete steps" by Maduro.

The Biden administration had not previously made Venezuela a foreign policy priority. That changed when Middle East and U.S. shale producers would not boost their crude supplies when the White House asked them to do so after the Ukraine invasion.

Congressional Republicans and even some of Biden's fellow Democrats such as U.S. Senator Bob Menendez have opposed any deal that would benefit the socialist president. Washington condemned Maduro's 2018 re-election as a sham.

The United States imported 670,000 barrels per day (bpd) of Russian oil and fuel last year. One of the few countries in a position to replace those imports is Venezuela. Before sanctions, its oil went mainly to U.S. Gulf Coast refiners.



美南電視 15.3

每周一至五每晚7點專題節目

每晚7點播出
專題節目

每天一至五下午6:30播出《美南新聞聯播》

- 每周一晚7點：主持人：黃梅子，《生活》節目（《生活故事會》、《丁師傅私房菜》和《修車師姐》三個單元輪流播出）
- 每周二晚7點：主持人：陳鐵梅，《美南時事通》
- 每周三晚7點，主持人：王潔，《美南時事通》、《美南名人堂》
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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

03/14/2022



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Feelings Of A Late Spring

The Chinese author Zhu Ziqing once wrote in his article, "Spring" that he looked forward to the "east wind" coming. The footsteps of spring were approaching and the grass sneaks out of the earth. In the tender green garden I looked at a large area full of light wind and the grass is soft.

On the weekend, we visited a friend's farm covering more than 350 acres in Beaumont, Texas. In the city

where we spent our college days, we got on a four-wheel drive cart and drove across the endless farm land. There were cattle and donkeys all over this beautiful farm. The scene represents the successful story of Mr. and Mrs. Liu. A half century ago they came to this land looking for a new life. After getting their higher education, they contributed their whole life to America. They went through all kinds of hardships and now they have become "big landlords



" in east Texas. This achievement represents a great success story of an Asian American.

When I woke up this morning I heard that former President Obama is now also infected with Covid-19. According to Pfizer, we may need to get a fourth shot of the vaccine. The pandemic is entering its third year now in America. We have lost millions of lives which is the greatest

tragedy in our history.

Today we are welcoming spring and have set the clock forward one hour. Spring finally has come. Because our flowers have bloomed in our front yard, it is the best gift for our family.

While there is still fierce fighting in Ukraine, many students are enjoying their spring break now. We really are very lucky these days.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Patrick Oware and his dog Baxer, the Flat-Coated Retriever, pose after winning the best in show during the final day of the Crufts Dog Show in Birmingham, Britain. REUTERS/Molly Darlington



People and medics help a wounded resident of a house destroyed by shelling as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Kyiv, Ukraine. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich



Ariana DeBose poses with her award for Best Actress in Supporting Role for "West Side Story" at the 75th British Academy of Film and Television Awards (BAFTA) at the Royal Albert Hall in London. REUTERS/Peter Nicholls



A general view of the cauldron and fireworks during the closing ceremony of the Beijing Winter Paralympic Games. REUTERS/Peter Cziborra



Rescuers work to get a woman out of a residential building that was struck, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Kyiv, Ukraine. State Emergency Service of Ukraine/via REUTERS



A kitchen is seen through a window of a residential building that was hit by a shell, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in the Obolon district in Kyiv, Ukraine. REUTERS/Thomas Peter

Secretary Of State Blinken: U.S. Gives 'Green Light' For NATO Countries To Send Fighter Jets To Ukraine

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



(March 6/Military Times) Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday said the United States would approve of NATO allies sending fighter jets to Ukraine.

"That gets the green light," said Blinken on CBS' "Face the Nation."

"In fact, we're talking with our Polish friends right now about what we might be able to do to backfill their needs if in fact they choose to provide these fighter jets to the Ukrainians," Blinken said.

@SecBlinken

The U.S. has given the "green light" to NATO countries if they choose to provide fighter jets to Ukraine, one day after President Zelensky made a



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

plea to members of Congress to provide them during a Saturday Zoom call. https://cbsn.ws/3hGpnoG

Blinken said the countries are in close contact about the proposal for the U.S. to provide fighter jets to Poland if Poland sends jets to Ukraine, confirming a Wall Street Journal report released earlier Sunday.

Earlier Sunday, Poland's prime minister's office tweeted Poland would not send fighter jets to Ukraine.

On Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked U.S. lawmakers to help provide more warplanes for his military. (Courtesy militarytimes.com)

Related

Ukraine Receives More Armed Drones Amid Russian Invasion



The Bayraktar TB2 is a medium-altitude, long-range tactical UAV drone system. (Photo: Bayhaluk via Wikimedia Commons)

Ukraine received a fresh shipment of Turkish-made Bakar Bayraktar TB2 armed drones earlier this week, according to a Facebook post from Ukraine's defense minister. "New [drones] have already arrived in Ukraine and are on combat duty," said Oleksiy Reznikov on Wednesday.

Janes, a defense intelligence and analysis firm, reported that rumors of the delivery had previously circulated after Turkish Air Force transports were spotted flying from Ankara to an airport in southeast Poland near the Ukraine border.

The drones have been a significant morale-booster for Ukraine throughout the early days of the Russian invasion in addition to their limited tactical successes, explained drone warfare expert Samuel Bendett in a Tuesday interview with Military Times.



Before the invasion, Ukraine officials said they had approximately 20 Bayraktar TB2s. The country also had entered deals with Tur-

key to purchase more and ultimately produce key components for a new, larger Bayraktar drone on Ukrainian soil.

According to Stijn Mitzer, an open-source intelligence analyst tracking equipment destruction in the war, the TB2s have accounted for 33 Russian vehicle losses, including two logistics trains. That's less than 10% of Russia's total estimated vehicle losses to date, though, per Mitzer.

It's impossible to independently verify the extent of losses, and officials from each side have wildly varying statistics, but Mitzer documents a unique photo for each vehicle loss, meaning that his totals are likely an undercount.

Yet what Bendett calls the "mythology of the Bayraktar" has persisted because Russia has thus far failed to properly use its air defense systems as designed in their force structure, in addition to the Russian air force's apparent failure to neutralize Ukraine's own air force and air defense.

"[In Ukraine], Russia doesn't seem to display the very tactics, techniques and procedures that it's practiced for years and sought to perfect in Syria...[to provide] adequate cover to its ground forces," Bendett said.

"The fact that there may be surviving [Bayraktars] somewhere is an embarrassment [to Russia]," the CNA think tank analyst added. "Clearly."



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and members of his staff.

The delivery is also a potential signifier of a shift in support from Turkey to Ukraine, despite President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's silence on the invasion. Turkey has also blocked Russian warships from entering the Black Sea to join the fight, in line with an international treaty allowing Turkey to do so during times of war.

Erdogan's son-in-law and one of Baykar's top executives, Selçuk Bayraktar, denounced Russia's "unlawful invasion" in a Feb. 25 tweet.

And Selçuk's brother Haluk Bayraktar, the company's CEO, posted an old photo of him with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday. He expressed his support for the defenders, saying, "May the victory go to the brave people who passionately defend

their homeland from invaders."

It's not clear, though, how many drones came in the new delivery, nor is it clear whether such deliveries will continue as the war drags on. (Courtesy militarytimes.com)

Related

Ukraine's Drone Strikes Reveal Russian Planning Failures, Expert Says



Ukraine's military took receipt of Bayraktar TB2 drones and more than 420 additional items of materiel in March 2019. (Ministry of Defense of Ukraine)

Amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a small portion of the defenders' arsenal has had a disproportionate effect — Ukraine's handful of Bayraktar TB2 armed drones.

Videos of their exploits have millions of views. They've destroyed surface-to-air missile launchers and logistics trains. They've inspired songs and are a common refrain in videos taunting the Russian invaders.

Despite their small number — around 20, according to pre-war comments made to Al-Monitor — the drones have been heavily utilized, according to Ukrainian officials. Russia, on the other hand, claims it has shot down some of the drones.

According to Stijn Mitzer, an open-source intelligence analyst, the small Turkish-made drones have destroyed at least 32 Russian vehicles since war broke out last week, though it's impossible to independently confirm the total number of vehicles they've destroyed.

An expert on Russian drone warfare, Samuel Bendett of the CNA think tank, explained to Military Times that even the drones' limited successes show that Russia is failing to implement its own air defense strategies. He added that Russia studied the lessons learned by Armenia in last year's war with Azerbaijan, which saw the latter nation decimate Armenian positions and vehicles with Bayraktar drones and loitering munitions.



Perhaps the "biggest lesson" of that conflict, Bendett said, was that slow, low fly-

ing drones like the Bayraktar are effective against outdated air defense systems. Russian planners were confident that their force structure, which prioritizes modernized, layered air defense, would be able to prevent such a massacre — but "we're not seeing... what Russians have advertised," Bendett said.

Russian units are usually arrayed in battalion tactical groups, BTGs, with layered air defense and anti-drone capacity, said Bendett. But the forward elements of Russian forces have failed to operate as BTGs in Ukraine, frequently leaving behind their air defense assets "in inexplicable fashion," he added. "[In Ukraine], Russia doesn't seem to display the very tactics, techniques and procedures that it's practiced for years and sought to perfect in Syria...[to provide] adequate cover to its ground forces," he said.

Bendett also pointed towards "the mythology of the Bayraktar" and how "Ukraine is winning the information war."

"For all the Russian military talk about winning information war, they seem to be losing, and the videos of Bayraktars striking what appears to be Russian targets is feeding into that [Ukrainian] information campaign," he said.



Bendett believes that the days of Bayraktar strikes are limited, though, should Russia reorganize its advance.

"If the Russian military reorganizes — if it sends in the BTGs, if it sends in adequate air defense capability, if it sends in its [electronic warfare] forces...it would become increasingly more difficult for Bayraktars to operate in an uncontested fashion," said the drone expert. "They were definitely aware of the threat. They definitely practiced against the threat."

And even should the Russians recover and counter the drone threat, he noted, "they were supposed to eliminate a lot of Ukrainian air defense capability from the...first hours of the campaign." That includes the air bases where the drones are stored, fueled and equipped.

A portion of that responsibility, according to other experts and U.S. officials who spoke with Reuters, lies with the conspicuous absence of the Russian Air Force over the skies of Ukraine.

"The fact that there may be surviving [Bayraktars] somewhere is an embarrassment [to Russia]," said Bendett. "Clearly." (Courtesy militarytimes.com)

"Give Peace A Chance"

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

