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Strait of Hormuz Remains Open for Russian Ships, Kremlin Aide Says

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Russian foreign policy presidential aide Yuri Ushakov. **Maxim Shipenkov / EPA / TASS**

The Strait of Hormuz remains open to Russian ships despite Iran's effective closure of the key waterway in retaliation for U.S.-Israeli attacks, Kremlin foreign policy adviser Yury Ushakov said Thursday.

"For us, Hormuz is open," Ushakov told the state broadcaster Rossia 24.

Iran has denied completely shutting down the Strait, through which around a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas normally passes, stating that it is "closed only to enemies."

Russia, China and India are reported to be among the five "friendly nations" allowed to use the waterway for commercial shipping. China's Foreign Ministry said this week that three Chinese ships recently sailed through the Strait.

Unlike India and China, however, Russia, the world's second-largest oil exporter, does not

rely on energy supplies from the Middle East.

On Friday, the UN Security Council is set to vote on Bahrain's draft resolution mandating a "defensive" force to protect shipping through the Strait of Hormuz from Iranian attacks.

Tehran, describing the proposal as "provocative action," warned that it would only "complicate the situation" in the area.

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