US to accuse Iran of violating chemical weapons treaty

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The finding is based on recent intelligence, according to the officials who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. (REUTERS/Morteza Nikoubazl/File Photo)

Washington: The Trump administration is poised to accuse Iran of violating an international treaty that bans chemical weapons, two US officials said Friday. The officials said the administration plans to announce next week that Iran is not complying with the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, which outlaws the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.

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The finding is based on recent intelligence, according to the officials who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The determination does not carry immediate US penalties but could be used to file a complaint against Iran at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, The Hague-based 193-member body that oversees the treaty.

Lawmakers were notified of the impending determination on Friday and an announcement is expected as early as Monday, according to the officials.

The finding is part of the administrationâ€™s effort to isolate Iran after withdrawing from the landmark 2015 nuclear deal in May and earlier this month re-imposing all US sanctions that had been eased under the accord.

President Donald Trump and his top national security aides have vowed to impose a â€œmaximum pressureâ€• campaign against Iran to force it to halt destabilizing activities in the Middle East and beyond.

- AP