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## Seventy-fourth session

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### **Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba**

## **Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba**

### **Report of the Secretary-General**

#### *Summary*

In its resolution [73/8](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session.

The present report reproduces the replies from Governments, as well as from organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to the request of the Secretary-General for information on the matter.

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\* [A/74/50](#).



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## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [73/8](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session.
2. Pursuant to that request, in a note verbale dated 1 March 2019, the Secretary-General invited Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to provide information on the implementation of the resolution. A reminder note verbale was sent on 1 May 2019.
3. The present report reproduces the replies from Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system that had been received as at 13 June 2019. Replies received after that date will be reproduced as addenda to the present report.

## II. Replies received from Governments

### Afghanistan

[Original: English]  
[24 April 2019]

The Government of Afghanistan has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the latter of which, inter alia, reaffirms the freedom of navigation.

In that regard, the Government of Afghanistan voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution, as well as other resolutions on the same matter, and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter.

### Albania

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

The Republic of Albania, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and does not have or apply any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to that resolution.

### Algeria

[Original: Arabic]  
[26 April 2019]

By its near-unanimous adoption of resolution [73/8](#) on the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, the General Assembly has reaffirmed, for the twenty-seventh time in succession, the justness of and the international community’s support for that cause.

Algeria reaffirms its solidarity with Cuba and its people, who have been resisting, for more than half a century, the economic, commercial and financial



embargo imposed by the United States of America, and considers the embargo imposed against Cuba and its people to be in violation of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, and freedom of international trade and navigation.

Algeria once again totally rejects the imposition of unilateral extraterritorial laws and decisions and all unilateral and coercive measures, which hinder the realization of human rights and prevent peoples from achieving prosperity. It also takes this opportunity to reaffirm the urgent need for the full and unconditional lifting of the embargo that has been imposed by the United States against Cuba since 1961 and which, aside from the considerable harm and suffering that it has caused to the people of Cuba, constitutes a major obstacle to the achievement of Cuban people's economic and social development goals.

Algeria appreciates and encourages any well-intentioned efforts to normalize relations between Cuba and the United States, including the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the official visit by President Obama to Havana in 2016 and the abstention by the United States in the vote on General Assembly resolution 71/5 of 26 October 2016, all of which were positive and courageous steps on the path towards the total lifting of the embargo against Cuba. However, the measures announced recently by the Administration of President Donald Trump, including the policy of maintaining the embargo, represent a major setback for relations between those two countries that will have serious consequences for the economic and social situation of the Cuban people and for international law.

In view of the deteriorating situation at the regional and international levels, the demand to end the blockade of Cuba takes on a particular urgency, given the implications it has for establishing security and stability in the region. In that connection, Algeria wishes to draw attention to the principled position that was adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the seventeenth Ministerial Conference of its member States, held in Algiers in May 2014, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. Algeria also draws attention to the positions adopted at the seventeenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Venezuela in September 2016, and at the conference of the ministers for foreign affairs of the Movement, held in Baku in April 2018, calling for an unconditional end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

## **Andorra**

[Original: French]  
[7 March 2019]

The Government of the Principality of Andorra has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 73/8. In that regard, the Government of the Principality of Andorra has always voted in favour of resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

## Angola

[Original: English]

[26 April 2019]

For 27 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States.

Regrettably, over the years there has been no effective implementation of these resolutions, and the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba has yet to be lifted.

Not only is this contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, it has also hindered efforts by the Cuban people to promote their economic and social development and disrupted normal economic, commercial and financial relations with other countries.

We wish to convey our concern that, although this issue has been addressed multiple times in the General Assembly, the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is still in place.

Furthermore, concerned about the adverse effects of such measures on the Cuban people, the Republic of Angola: (a) strongly welcomed the adoption, on 1 November 2018, of General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”; and (b) reaffirms its commitment to respect, preserve and promote the principles of the Charter and the provisions of international law, as they constitute the essence of multilateralism and a collective effort to maintain international peace and security, economic growth and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Republic of Angola considers the embargo imposed against Cuba to be a violation of international law and the Charter, in particular with regard to: (a) the sovereign equality of States; (b) non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs; and (c) the freedom of international trade, which are also enshrined in many international legal instruments.

Owing to these reasons, the Republic of Angola, once again, totally rejects the imposition of extraterritorial laws and all forms of unilateral and coercive measures that hinder the full enjoyment of universal human rights, including the right of development.

The Republic of Angola reiterates, therefore, its unconditional support for the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and takes advantage of this opportunity to strongly appeal to the international community to redouble its efforts to promote constructive dialogue, in order to have the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba completely lifted.

## Antigua and Barbuda

[Original: English]

[25 March 2019]

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda expresses its concern about the continued economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, despite the overwhelming support by Member States for General Assembly resolution 73/8, previous resolutions against the embargo and relevant international treaties.

Further, in accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 73/8, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

## Argentina

[Original: Spanish]  
[5 April 2019]

The Government of the Argentine Republic has fully implemented the provisions of General Assembly resolution 73/8 and previous Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Act No. 24871, enacted on 5 September 1997, establishes the legislative framework governing the scope of application of foreign legislation within Argentina. Article 1 of that Act provides that foreign legislation which, by imposing an economic embargo or restricting investment in a given country, purports to have extraterritorial legal effects in order to bring about a change of government in a country or to affect its right to self-determination shall be absolutely inapplicable and devoid of legal effects. The United States embargo against Cuba is regulated by federal legislation, in particular the Torricelli Act (Cuban Democracy Act) of October 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act) of March 1996.

In addition, Argentina is fully committed to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism. Within that framework, since 1995, Argentina has supported the General Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. It has also voiced opposition to the embargo at every opportunity, both in regional forums and in other international organizations.

The Argentine Government reiterates that it optimistically welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States and urges both Governments to strengthen their dialogue, which will enable all outstanding issues, including the lifting of the embargo, to be resolved.

In line with this position, Argentina supported the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the forty-second annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of 77, held in New York on 27 September 2018. Paragraph 205 reaffirms the call upon the Government of the United States to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Furthermore, at the twenty-sixth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in La Antigua, Guatemala, on 15 and 16 November 2018, Argentina supported the adoption of a special communiqué on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America against Cuba, including the implementation of the Helms-Burton Act. In the special communiqué, the Ibero-American countries reiterated the request to the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo maintained against Cuba and its negative humanitarian impact on the Cuban people and on Cuban nationals living in other countries.

## Armenia

[Original: English]  
[4 April 2019]

Armenia has not promulgated or applied any laws or regulations of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), which could have a devastating influence on the economic and social development of Cuba.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has, on a number of occasions, expressed its opposition to the policy of economic blockades and closed borders, particularly in the light of the continuing blockade of Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

## Australia

[Original: English]  
[10 April 2019]

The Government of Australia reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#). Since 1996, the Government of Australia has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo on Cuba. Australia has no sanctions or measures against Cuba that restrict trade or investment.

## Azerbaijan

[Original: English]  
[22 May 2019]

The Republic of Azerbaijan firmly upholds the norms and principles of international law in its foreign policy.

The Republic of Azerbaijan enjoys friendly diplomatic, economic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba. Azerbaijan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, trade or financial relations between Azerbaijan and Cuba. Azerbaijan will continue to take appropriate measures to strengthen cooperation and develop friendly relations with Cuba.

## Bahamas

[Original: English]  
[16 May 2019]

The Commonwealth of the Bahamas enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

The Bahamas has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the Republic of Cuba.

In this context, the Bahamas recalls and affirms the position of regional and interregional bodies, such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Bahamas remains hopeful for a process towards normal bilateral relations between the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba.

## Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]  
[27 March 2019]

The Kingdom of Bahrain, in keeping with the principle and purposes set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, has consistently supported the General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, and reaffirms its support for resolution 73/8, adopted by the General Assembly on 1 November 2018.

## Bangladesh

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

The Government of Bangladesh has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 73/8. Bangladesh has consistently supported previous resolutions on this item in the Assembly and also voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution.

## Barbados

[Original: English]  
[5 April 2019]

Barbados has consistently voted in favour of the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba since it was first introduced in the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, in 1991.

Barbados reiterates its support for the most recent resolution on the issue, resolution 73/8 adopted by the General Assembly on 1 November 2018, and reaffirms its full implementation at the national level since Barbados has no laws that in any way restrict freedom of trade and navigation with Cuba.

Barbados welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America and encourages both parties to continue dialogue on the lifting of the embargo.

## Belarus

[Original: Russian]  
[16 April 2019]

Belarus regards the imposition of any unilateral coercive measures on sovereign United Nations Member States as unacceptable and self-defeating.

The decades-long commercial, economic and financial embargo against Cuba by the United States of America is a clear example of such unilateral action. The embargo is an obstacle to social and economic transformation, damages the Cuban economy and diminishes the country's ability to expand trade and inter-bank cooperation and to consolidate the private sector. In general terms, it prevents Havana from participating fully in international financial and economic life.

The position of Belarus regarding the complete elimination of the embargo against Cuba remains unchanged. We strongly support the inalienable right of each State to determine its own development path. Any unilateral attempts by certain States to change the domestic political systems of other States using military, political,

economic or other forms of pressure are absolutely unacceptable. We regret the lack of any appreciable progress in addressing this situation.

Belarus reaffirms its support for resolution [73/8](#) and all previous General Assembly resolutions on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

## **Belize**

[Original: English]  
[9 April 2019]

Belize reaffirms its absolute commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including, in particular, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, which also form fundamental principles of international law. In strict observance of the Charter and international law, Belize has consistently supported the resolutions denouncing the embargo against Cuba. Belize rejects the extraterritorial application of laws and measures. The ongoing attempt to isolate Cuba in disregard of the annually adopted resolutions, which enjoy the overwhelming support of States Member of the United Nations, is a flagrant affront to multilateralism and the political will of the international community.

Belize and Cuba maintain a constructive and mutually beneficial partnership which has yielded concrete benefits for all our peoples. Belize's policy of engagement is further enhanced through regional cooperation between the Caribbean Community and Cuba.

## **Benin**

[Original: French]  
[6 May 2019]

On 1 November 2018, Benin took an active part in the adoption of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

In so doing, Benin was faithful to the principles and values to which it is committed, and which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and to the fundamental principles of international law. Benin believes wholeheartedly in international solidarity and joint action to ensure the happiness of all peoples.

Benin has always supported General Assembly resolutions on lifting the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and again voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution, given the conviction of the people of Benin that dialogue is by far the best way to settle disputes and restore trust between States.

The Government of Benin, which has neither promulgated nor applied any law or regulation of the kind referred to in resolution [73/8](#), has consistently called for the unilateral measures imposed against Cuba to be lifted forthwith, to enable that country to pursue its socioeconomic development and participate fully in international trade.

Benin is disappointed by the recent developments in relations between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America, which could undo all that had been achieved in recent years as much to the satisfaction of the international community, relations between the two countries warmed. This turn of events represents a grave set-back in efforts to resolve the issue of the embargo.

Benin therefore calls for continued efforts to normalize diplomatic relations so that the embargo against Cuba, which the international community firmly rejects, might be lifted fully and definitively in the near future.

Benin will continue to promote constructive dialogue so that Cuba and the United States of America might normalize relations between the two countries once and for all, for the happiness and prosperity of the Cuban and American peoples.

## **Bhutan**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

The Royal Government of Bhutan has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 73/8 and has consistently supported the aforementioned resolution in the Assembly and voted in its favour.

## **Bolivia (Plurinational State of)**

[Original: Spanish]  
[29 April 2019]

### **The antecedents of General Assembly resolution 73/8**

On 1 November 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/8 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, given that, following the adoption of Assembly resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8, 69/5, 70/5, 71/5 and 72/4, that embargo remains in force.

### **On paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 73/8**

The Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia has not adopted and will not adopt any laws or measures that are contrary to international law and the spirit of resolution 73/8 and that would infringe on the freedom of trade or navigation, and regrets that other States have resorted to this illegal, genocidal and inhumane practice.

### **The embargo against the Republic of Cuba and the position of the Plurinational State of Bolivia**

Bolivia is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and to international law and multilateralism.

Bolivia has therefore been consistent in its policy of rejecting the economic, commercial and financial embargo and any unilateral measures imposed by the United States on the Republic of Cuba. It reaffirms the need to suspend the genocidal, inhumane and unjust blockade immediately, in accordance with resolution 73/8.

Bolivia strongly condemns the continued use of such unilateral measures, which are contrary to elementary international norms, in a world where multilateralism, good faith and full respect for the sovereignty of States should prevail.

For over half a century, the Government of the United States has imposed against Cuba an economic, commercial and financial embargo that runs counter to international law, in order to cause material shortages, disease and unrest among the Cuban people with the sole aim of overthrowing the Government of Cuba through isolation and economic suffocation.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo is defined by a series of United States laws that have been enacted over several decades, from the declaration of a total embargo on trade with Cuba on 3 February 1962 through Presidential Executive Order No. 3447 to the Torricelli Act (Cuban Democracy Act) of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act) of 1996.

The embargo imposed against Cuba is not only the longest embargo in world history but also the expression of a cruel and inhumane international policy that is devoid of legality and legitimacy and that demonstrates a total disregard for United Nations resolutions and multilateralism.

The Trump Administration has ended the rapprochement that had developed in previous years between the Government of Cuba and the Obama Administration.

The Trump Administration, far from ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo, has maintained the laws, provisions and practices that support that embargo. It has continued to strengthen its political, administrative and repressive mechanisms to ensure more effective and targeted implementation.

For more than half a century, the Government of the United States has shown that it has not the slightest intention of changing its policy towards the Republic of Cuba, much less of complying with the repeated General Assembly resolutions urging it to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

This embargo is a flagrant, systematic and widespread violation of the human rights of the Cuban people. It is a criminal act that clearly amounts to an act of genocide in accordance with article II, paragraph (c), of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, and to an act of economic warfare in accordance with the Declaration concerning the Laws of Naval War, adopted at the Naval Conference of London in 1909.

The extraterritorial character of the embargo remains an area of great concern, since the unilateral sanctions against Cuba affect the sovereign right of States to decide how to establish any type of relations with other States. That is unacceptable and we cannot remain silent on the matter.

The extraterritorial application of the embargo comprises the following measures:

- United States subsidiaries in third countries are banned from carrying out any kind of transaction with companies in Cuba.
- Third-country companies are banned from exporting goods made in Cuba or goods manufactured with any Cuban component to the United States.
- Third-country companies are banned from selling goods or services to Cuba if more than 10 per cent of the technology on which those goods or services are based consists of United States components, even if the owners of those companies are third-country nationals.
- Vessels transporting goods from or to Cuba, regardless of the flag State, are banned from entering United States ports.
- Third-country banks are banned from opening United States dollar-denominated accounts for Cuban natural or legal persons or from conducting financial transactions in United States dollars with Cuban entities or individuals.
- Third-country businesspeople who have investments in or conduct business with Cuba are penalized with the denial of United States visas, which is extended to their family members. They are even subject to legal action in United States



courts if their transactions with Cuba involve property related to claims by United States citizens or Cuban-born individuals who subsequently acquired United States citizenship.

Bolivia considers the application of unilateral coercive measures that affect the well-being of the Government and people of Cuba to be unacceptable, and therefore reiterates its vigorous rejection of laws and measures that run counter to international law and urges the Government of the United States to comply with the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

### **Bilateral relations between Bolivia and Cuba**

The bilateral relationship between Bolivia and Cuba has deepened and strengthened in recent years through cooperation in solidarity in various areas, mainly health, education and sport.

From 2006 to March 2019, more than 70,911,588 medical procedures were carried out.

With the support of Cuba, more than 58,995 children were born, including 885 between January and March 2019, and more than 257,251 surgeries were performed, including 6,425 between January and March 2019.

In addition, more than 48,699 admissions were made to intensive care units, including 684 between January and March 2019, and more than 10,399,301 complementary diagnostic examinations were performed, including 144,204 between January and March 2019.

From 2012 to 2018, following the signature of a cooperation agreement between the Ministries of Health of Bolivia and Cuba, the number of Cuban medical personnel in Bolivia increased from 140 to 750. Currently, the Cuban Medical Brigade is present in all nine departments of Bolivia. In 13 years of Cuban medical collaboration, 8,271 health workers have provided their services to Bolivia. The Brigade is composed mainly of general practitioners, but also of specialists in 32 other areas of medicine.

In education, with the support of Cuba, Bolivia launched the *Yo sí puedo* (Yes I can) literacy campaign, which benefited 824,101 people. As a result, Bolivia was declared free of illiteracy, the third country in Latin America and the Caribbean to achieve that status. From 2009 to 2015, Cuba also supported a post-literacy programme that benefited 54,790 Bolivians.

Cuba has granted scholarships to Bolivian students to study for a degree in physical education and sport.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia wishes to express particular recognition and gratitude for the efforts and cooperation of Cuba in the areas mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

### **On paragraph 4 of resolution 73/8**

The Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia requests the Secretary-General, in accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 73/8, to continue to report on the implementation of the resolution by all Member States. In the resolution, it is suggested that Member States refrain from applying laws and measures relating to an economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on any country, and in particular the genocidal embargo imposed against the Republic of Cuba, as that embargo violates the sovereignty not only of Cuba but of all other States of the international community.

Lastly, the Plurinational State of Bolivia rejects the application of any law or unilateral measure contrary to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and to elementary international norms. It is time for the United States to comply with United Nations resolutions and end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

## **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

[Original: English]  
[7 June 2019]

Bosnia and Herzegovina, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, supported General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution [73/8](#) and is ready to develop cooperation with Cuba at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

## **Botswana**

[Original: English]  
[26 March 2019]

The Republic of Botswana has never promulgated, applied or enforced any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), nor does it intend to. As reflected by its vote on the resolution, Botswana is opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures, and in this regard, supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

## **Brunei Darussalam**

[Original: English]  
[3 April 2019]

Brunei Darussalam reaffirms its support for all General Assembly resolutions calling for the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

Brunei Darussalam is generally opposed to the use of unilateral sanctions, as they negatively affect the economic and social development of Member States. Moreover, such sanctions are contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. For that reason, Brunei Darussalam has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

## **Burkina Faso**

[Original: French]  
[4 April 2019]

The Government of Burkina Faso enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

In accordance with the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, Burkina Faso has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures

of the kind referred to in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of resolution 73/8, adopted on 1 November 2018.

Burkina Faso has always voted in favour of resolutions on the matter and once again totally rejects the imposition of all forms of coercive unilateral measures, which have a negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights and the well-being and prosperity of the peoples concerned. Burkina Faso takes this opportunity to reaffirm the urgent need for the full lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba, which constitutes a major obstacle to achieving the objectives of economic and social development and promoting the values of peaceful cooperation.

Burkina Faso, which believes in the virtues of dialogue and negotiation, urges the two parties to continue working towards a peaceful settlement of the dispute, in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

## **Burundi**

[Original: French]  
[25 March 2019]

The position of the Government of Burundi has always been to oppose the embargo, which is inconsistent with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. Burundi has never applied the embargo and does not intend to apply it in the future.

## **Cabo Verde**

[Original: English]  
[6 March 2019]

The Republic of Cabo Verde, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the National Constitution and in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which promotes solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among countries and nations, has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by United States of America against Cuba”, adopted on 1 November 2018.

## **Cambodia**

[Original: English]  
[3 April 2019]

With reference to General Assembly resolution 73/8, the Royal Government of Cambodia would like to reiterate its strong position, along with the overwhelming majority of the Member States, of urging the United States of America to cease the imposition of unilateral economic measures which have adversely affected the living conditions and the rights of the Cuban people and impeded the efforts of the Government of Cuba to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such unilateral actions constitute a serious breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the multilateral trading system.

The Royal Government of Cambodia therefore emphasizes the urgent need to put an end to such measures and calls for full respect for and implementation of the provisions of the General Assembly resolution.

## Cameroon

[Original: French]

[16 May 2019]

Cameroon is committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of trade, which are enshrined in many international legal instruments.

In the implementation of resolution 73/8 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, as well as previous resolutions on the topic, and in accordance with the above-mentioned principles, Cameroon has never adopted legislative or other measures with a view to strengthening or expanding the embargo imposed on Cuba.

Cameroon has always voted in favour of lifting the embargo and maintains excellent relations of friendship and cooperation with Cuba.

## Canada

[Original: English]

[26 April 2019]

The Government of Canada reconfirms its support of General Assembly resolution 73/8. Canadian law states that no Canadian corporation shall, in respect of trade or commerce between Canada and Cuba, comply with any extraterritorial measure of the kind referred to in the resolution.

Canada considers the extraterritorial application of unilateral Cuba-related measures to be contrary to international law. Canada is deeply disappointed with the decision by the United States not to suspend Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act, commonly known as the Helms-Burton Act. The embargo has a negative impact on the living conditions of the Cuban people, as well as on Canadians conducting legitimate trade and investment in Cuba.

## Central African Republic

[Original: English]

[15 April 2019]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba has caused tremendous harm to the Government and people of Cuba in all spheres of activity. The embargo has long been denounced and the General Assembly has adopted several resolutions against it, the most recent of which was adopted on 1 November 2018.

While everyone was expecting the embargo to be completely lifted after the process towards the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries was announced on 17 December 2014, it should be noted that it remains in place.

Mindful of its commitments to the international community and in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Government of the Central African Republic considers this embargo to be contrary to international law in general, and international humanitarian law in particular. Furthermore, the Government of the Central African Republic will continue to support the Government of Cuba until the embargo has been completely lifted and calls on the United States Government to act in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations regarding international cooperation and solidarity and good-neighbourly relations.

## Chad

[Original: French]  
[17 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Chad notes with concern the reversal in the normalization of relations between the Governments of the United States and Cuba and encourages both parties to resume discussions with a view to relaunching the process of normalization that began several years ago.

While Chad welcomes the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/8 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the embargo is clearly still in place, seriously penalizing the Cuban people and undermining the country's economic development.

While reiterating the calls from Member States and international organizations, including the African Union, for the complete lifting of the embargo, the Chadian Government, referring also to paragraph 30 of resolution 70/1 on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, urges States to refrain from promulgating and applying unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

The Government of the Republic of Chad urges the Governments of the United States of America and Cuba to continue discussions with a view to rekindling the process that began several years ago, for the mutually beneficial development of the peoples of both countries and of the world as a whole.

## Chile

[Original: Spanish]  
[30 April 2019]

Chile wishes to report that it has not approved any measures aimed at restricting normal trade and economic relations between Chile and Cuba.

Chile supports the full and free exercise of the right to trade and to establish business relations in the international arena, with no restrictions other than those corresponding to activities classified as illegal under Chilean law and the restrictions imposed by the international community in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

## Colombia

[Original: Spanish]  
[13 May 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Colombia, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, reiterates that it has neither promulgated nor applied any unilateral laws or measures against Cuba, in keeping with its policy of respect for international law and its commitment to the principles of political independence, self-determination of peoples and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.

Consequently, Colombia promotes the independent development of the internal policies of every nation and believes that any measure that undermines economic and commercial development and the well-being of the population should cease.

## Comoros

[Original: French]  
[25 March 2019]

The Government of the Union of the Comoros reaffirms its commitment to its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and respect for international law. For that reason, it has not promulgated or applied any laws or regulations with extraterritorial effects that could affect the sovereignty of other States.

The Government of the Union of the Comoros regrets that the normalization process has come to a halt, and even been reversed, reflecting the disengagement of the United States Administration from efforts to resolve existing tensions, thereby worsening an already fragile relationship.

Accordingly, the Government of the Union of the Comoros hopes that dialogue between the two countries will be revived and supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba unilaterally. Such a measure would serve the interests of the affected countries and their peoples and would help to promote peace between the two nations.

## Congo

[Original: French]  
[11 April 2019]

Mindful of international law and committed to the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes, the Government of the Republic of the Congo, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/8 of 1 November 2018 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, condemns the embargo and urges both States to engage in constructive dialogue and thereby open the way for friendly bilateral relations based on the principle of equal rights for peoples. That will take pressure off the economy of Cuba and enable that country's development, bringing relief and prosperity to the Cuban people and stimulating interactions at many levels between the peoples of the two States.

The Government of the Republic of the Congo considers it essential to promote an atmosphere of mutual understanding and calm between the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba, which would doubtless contribute to the consolidation of international peace and security.

## Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]  
[29 April 2019]

In connection with General Assembly resolution 73/8, Costa Rica reaffirms its position of strict respect for and compliance with the principles of international law and all the norms set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

Costa Rica has been consistent in its discourse and actions, at both the regional and international levels, on the need to lift the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America, because it believes that, after so many decades, it is the people of Cuba who have suffered the most.

Once again, it is confirmed that the Costa Rican authorities have neither promulgated nor applied any national law, policy or measure with extraterritorial

effects that could impact on the sovereignty of other States or freedom of trade and navigation.

In that vein, it reiterates once again its strong opposition to the current unilateral policy imposed on Cuba through the Helms-Burton Act, which constitutes a real obstacle to international trade. Similarly, the Government of Costa Rica regrets the decision of the Administration of the President of the United States, Donald Trump, which will fully implement for the first time in history, from 2 May 2019, title III of the Act, which will allow citizens of the United States to file lawsuits in their country's courts for the use of property confiscated after the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

Costa Rica is firmly convinced that it is only through dialogue, multilateral mechanisms and international law that differences between countries should be addressed. It therefore reiterates its total rejection of unilateral and extraterritorial measures applied by any State against another through the imposition of its own laws and legal system.

It also stated, in the general debate of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, that: "...Once again, we join the international community in calling for the lifting of the embargo on Cuba, which has lasted for too many years, affecting the capacity of its population to generate development and prosperity."

Similarly, Costa Rica reiterates that any type of political, economic or military sanction imposed on States must result from a decision or recommendation made by the Security Council or General Assembly.

For their part, Costa Rica and Cuba have been strengthening their ties of friendship and cooperation since diplomatic relations were restored on 18 March 2009. It is significant to note that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, made an official visit to Costa Rica on 29 and 30 April 2019, which was the first bilateral visit made by a Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba following the restoration of diplomatic relations.

The official visit is an opportunity to strengthen the links between Costa Rica and Cuba in the different areas of political dialogue, cooperation and economic and cultural exchanges.

In particular, cooperation between the two countries has been developed under the Cooperation Framework Agreement and through bilateral agreements in specific areas of mutual interest, such as foreign trade, culture, sport, education, technical and scientific exchange, health care and the environment.

## **Côte d'Ivoire**

[Original: French]  
[26 April 2019]

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States and freedom of trade and navigation, which form the fundamental principles of international law.

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has never promulgated or applied any law or measure of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and it has no intention of doing so.

True to its ideals of peace and dialogue in relations between States, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its readiness to work with the entire international community to find appropriate solutions to this issue and encourages the parties concerned to focus more on negotiation and dialogue in order to arrive at a

satisfactory settlement of the dispute, all the more so since the United States has opened an embassy in Cuba.

## **Cuba**

[Original: Spanish]

[16 July 2019]

### **Introduction**

From April 2018 to March 2019, the period covered by this report, the tightening of the embargo remained at the heart of the policy of the Government of the United States of America towards Cuba, with increasingly significant effects on the embargo's extraterritorial application. The United States strategy was focused on the intensification of confrontation and hostility through the use of rhetoric and aggressive economic measures against Cuba.

The climate of hostility in bilateral relations was heavily marked by the increased use of aggressive rhetoric by the Government of the United States against Cuba. As part of that escalation, the United States attempted to introduce eight amendments to the draft resolution sponsored by Cuba against the embargo on 1 November 2018 in the General Assembly. The aim of that manoeuvre was to change the nature of the text and fabricate pretexts for continuing and strengthening the genocidal United States policy by resorting to false human rights allegations.

Despite heavy pressure from the United States, the international community rejected that country's proposals and once again expressed overwhelming support for the draft resolution condemning the embargo.

The present report demonstrates that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba continues to hinder the development of the full potential of the Cuban economy and the implementation of the country's national economic and social development plan and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the embargo caused Cuba losses of approximately \$4,343,600,000.

The significant negative impact of the measures recently taken by the United States to tighten the embargo against Cuba is not taken into account in this report, because those measures continued to be applied after the period under review. That information will be included in next year's report.

At current prices, the losses accumulated in almost six decades of application of the United States policy amount to \$138,843,400,000. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the embargo has caused quantifiable losses of more than \$922,630,000,000, a figure that is 1.2 per cent lower than that included in the previous report because of the 1.6 per cent decrease in the price of gold.

Eliminating the cost of the embargo would increase the country's payment capacity and provide an additional, substantial and sustained source of financing that would invigorate the investment programmes linked to the strategic sectors of the national economic and social development plan to 2030. In that way, the necessary conditions would be created to gradually achieve the sustained growth of annual gross domestic product.

In the period under review, the strengthening of the extraterritorial application of the system of sanctions against Cuba was reflected in constant losses to Cuban



companies, banks and embassies, which faced colossal obstacles in their commercial and financial activities in many countries.

The United States Department of State expanded the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba three times; the entities on that list are subject to sanctions in addition to those imposed by the embargo regulations. That measure caused considerable damage to the country's economy by intimidating the international business community. In addition, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the United States Department of the Treasury and the Bureau of Industry and Security of the United States Department of Commerce ordered the elimination, with effect from 5 June 2019, of general licences for group people-to-people educational travel and the denial of licences to non-commercial aircraft and passenger and recreational vessels, including cruise ships, on temporary sojourn, which has severely affected the number of visitors to the country. All these steps were taken with the deliberate, declared aim of causing economic damage and depriving Cuba of financial resources.

An unprecedented demonstration of the tightening of the anti-Cuba policy of the Government of the United States was the decision to allow, under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, legal action to be taken in United States courts as a result of complaints filed by United States citizens or entities against Cuban or third-country businesses or individuals that are involved commercially with properties nationalized in Cuba in the 1960s. This decision ended the practice, followed since 1996 by previous Democratic and Republican Governments of the United States and by President Donald Trump himself in his first two years in office, of suspending the application of Title III every six months.

The Helms-Burton Act is a legal instrument of political coercion that makes provision for economic pressure that violates the sovereignty of Cuba and third countries with the purpose of strangling the Cuban economy and increasing the shortages faced by the population. It is intended to perpetuate the climate of hostility between Cuba and the United States and deny the Cuban nation the right to self-determination. Its regulations run counter to international law, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules established by the World Trade Organization. It has been resoundingly rejected by many members of the international community and representatives of international organizations.

The embargo is a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cubans. Because of their stated purpose and the political, legal and administrative framework on which they are based, these sanctions constitute an act of genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and an act of economic warfare under the conclusions reached at the Naval Conference of London.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that the Government of the United States heed the call to comply with the 27 resolutions adopted by the international community in the General Assembly and unconditionally end its embargo policy against Cuba.

## **I. Continuity and tightening of the embargo policy**

### **1.1 The embargo laws remain in force**

The laws and regulations that support the embargo policy remain in effect and are rigorously enforced by United States government agencies, including the Department of the Treasury, in particular OFAC, and the Department of Commerce.

The main administrative provisions and congressionally adopted laws establishing the embargo policy are the following:

- The Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) of 1917, section 5 (b) of which provides that the President may impose economic sanctions in time of war or any other national emergency, and prohibits trading with the enemy or with allies of the enemy during hostilities. In 1977, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act restricted the powers of the President to impose new sanctions, referring to national emergencies. However, TWEA has remained in effect against Cuba, even though the White House has never declared a national emergency with respect to Cuba. Since then, successive United States Presidents have extended the application of TWEA to Cuba. Under cover of that legislation, the oldest of its kind, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations of the Department of the Treasury were adopted in 1963. They prohibited United States nationals or persons subject to United States jurisdiction from conducting financial transactions with Cuba, froze Cuban assets, and banned the import of goods of Cuban origin into the United States, among other restrictions. Cuba is the only country to which this legislation applies. On 10 September 2018, President Trump renewed the sanctions against Cuba for another year, under the terms of TWEA.
- The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 authorizes the United States President to establish and maintain a total embargo upon trade with Cuba and prohibits the granting of any aid to the Cuban Government. It also provides that United States government funds that are earmarked for international aid and delivered to international agencies cannot be used for programmes involving Cuba. It prohibits the granting to Cuba of any assistance mentioned in that law or any other benefit mentioned in any other law, until such time as the President determines that Cuba has taken action to return to United States citizens and entities no less than 50 per cent of the value of properties nationalized by the Government of Cuba following the triumph of the Revolution, or to provide equitable compensation for such properties.
- In Presidential Proclamation 3447, issued on 3 February 1962, President John F. Kennedy decreed a total embargo on trade between the United States and Cuba, pursuant to section 620 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act.
- Under the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) of the Department of the Treasury (1963), all Cuban assets in the United States are frozen, all financial and commercial transactions are prohibited unless approved under a licence, Cuban exports to the United States are prohibited and any natural or legal person of the United States or a third country is prohibited from conducting transactions in United States dollars with Cuba, among other provisions.
- Section 2401 (b) (1), “National Security Controls”, “Policy toward individual countries”, of the Export Administration Act of 1979 establishes the Commerce Control List, on which the United States President keeps a number of countries on which special export controls may be imposed for reasons of national security. Cuba is included on that list.
- The Export Administration Regulations of 1979 establish the grounds for general controls over items and activities subject to export control, consistent with the sanctions imposed by the Government of the United States; they also establish a general policy of denying exports and re-exports to Cuba.
- The Cuban Democracy Act (“Torricelli Act”) of 1992 prohibits the subsidiaries of United States companies in third countries from trading in goods with Cuba or Cuban nationals. It bans third-country vessels that have visited a Cuban port

from entering United States territory within 180 days without a licence from the Secretary of the Treasury.

- The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996, or Helms-Burton Act, codifies the provisions of the embargo and expands its extraterritorial scope through the imposition of penalties on directors of foreign companies that conduct transactions involving United States property nationalized in Cuba and the possibility of lawsuits in United States courts. The Act also limits the powers of the President of the United States to suspend the embargo even though it stipulates that the President retains the power to authorize transactions with Cuba through the issuance of licences.
- Section 211 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999 prohibits United States courts from recognizing the rights of Cuban companies to trademarks associated with nationalized property.
- The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 authorizes the export of agricultural products to Cuba, on condition that payment is made in cash and in advance, and without United States financing. It prohibits travel to Cuba for tourist activities by United States persons, defining tourist activity as any activity involving travel to, from or within Cuba that is not explicitly authorized under Title 31, Section 515.560, of the Code of Federal Regulations. In other words, it limits travel to the 12 categories authorized when it was enacted.

## 1.2 Principal embargo measures taken since June 2018

In the last year, relations between Cuba and the United States have been marked by the hostile policy pursued by Washington, D.C., against Havana. The staff reduction imposed by the United States at both embassies has been maintained and the Havana field office of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services has been closed, with some of its services transferred to Mexico.

At the same time, the prosecution of Cuban financial transactions in third-country jurisdictions, which has a significant deterrent effect in economic terms, has continued. OFAC and other United States agencies have imposed fines on various third-country companies for violating various sanctions programmes, including CACR. The greatest losses resulting from these sanctions have been in the banking and financial sector. Between June 2018 and April 2019, the Government of the United States imposed nine penalties on companies or banks from third countries and from the United States itself. The total amount of these penalties was \$3,751,449,017.

The damage caused by the embargo to Cuban and third-party entities has continued, confirming that this arbitrary policy, which violates international law, remains fully in effect. Examples include the following:

- On 19 July 2018, Panasonic, the manufacturer of Tesla batteries, suspended relations with its Canadian supplier, Sherritt International Corporation, because Sherritt was using cobalt from Cuba. The decision came after Panasonic asked OFAC for guidance on the scope of the United States prohibition of imports of Cuban origin.
- On 9 August 2018, the Ecuadorean bank Banco Pichincha refused to provide payment services to a client that had purchased Cuban medicines. The bank alleged that Cuba was identified by OFAC as a country whose Government was linked to terrorists, drug traffickers or international criminals.

- On 15 August 2018, the German bank Commerzbank and the Italian bank UniCredit blocked a transfer of 7,500 euros to Argentina by the Euskadi-Cuba friendship association to support a Cuban visual health project in that country.
- On 18 October 2018, the Nicaraguan branch of the United States bank Banco Lafise refused to make various transfers from the Nicaraguan land cargo transport company Múltiples Servicios Profesionales (Mulseprosa) to pay for the company's stand at the 2018 Havana International Fair and reserve rooms at the Hotel Parque Central, where the company's representatives had planned to stay while in Cuba. As a result, Mulseprosa did not participate in the fair. The transactions were refused on the orders of the chair of the bank, who was following instructions from the United States.
- On 14 November 2018, the United States Department of State added to the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba 26 companies and subentities with which United States citizens cannot conduct direct financial transactions. Most of the newly added entities were hotels and companies in the tourism sector.
- On 21 November 2018, the British company Adler Manufacturing, which promotes companies and businesses in the United Kingdom through printed products, informed the tourism office of the Cuban embassy in that country of the cancellation of an order made on 25 September 2018. Adler explained that, because its new transport company was the multibillion-dollar United States firm United Parcel Service of America, it could not maintain links with Cuba.
- On 14 February 2019, OFAC imposed a penalty of \$5,512,564 on AppliChem, which has its head office in Darmstadt, Germany, for 304 apparent violations of CACR. AppliChem, which manufactures laboratory substances and chemical products for industrial use and operates as a subsidiary of the United States company Illinois Tool Works, had sold its products to Cuba between May 2012 and February 2016 in violation of the embargo laws, according to OFAC.
- On 25 February 2019, a Cuban delegation composed of representatives of the information technology and advanced telematic services company Empresa de Tecnologías de la Información y Servicios Telemáticos Avanzados, the University of Information Sciences, the national software company Empresa Nacional de Software, the mobile telecommunications company Empresa de Telecomunicaciones Móviles, the Cuban telecommunications company Sociedad Cubana para las Telecomunicaciones, and the Chamber of Commerce as coordinator, was excluded from the 2019 Mobile World Congress, held in Barcelona, Spain. The Congress is considered one of the most important world events in mobile telephony and is organized by the Global System for Mobile Association (GSMA), which is controlled by or in the interests of the United States and of which Cuba is a member through its Ministry of Communications. When the online accreditation of the Cuban delegation was attempted, a message appeared stating that Cuba, Syria and Iran were prohibited from attending the Congress under United States government regulations.
- On 11 March 2019, with effect from 12 March 2019, the United States Department of State announced the addition to the List of Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba of four new subentities (Gaviota Hoteles Cuba, Hoteles Habaguanex, Hoteles Playa Gaviota and Marinas Gaviota Cuba) and one entity belonging to Gaviota (Fiesta Club Adults Only, of the Blau Marina Varadero Resort).
- On 5 April 2019, OFAC included in its Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List 34 vessels owned by the Venezuelan oil company

Petróleos de Venezuela, as well as two other foreign companies (Ballito Bay Shipping, which has its head office in Liberia, and ProPer In Management, based in Greece) that OFAC alleges ship crude oil from Venezuela to Cuba. According to the Department of the Treasury, the sanctions include the freezing of those of the entities' financial assets that are held under United States jurisdiction and the prohibition of financial transactions with the entities and vessels included in the list.

- On 11 April 2019, OFAC imposed a penalty on Acteon Group and its subsidiary 2H Offshore, both of which have their head office in the United Kingdom, for violations of CACR. The amount payable by the companies is \$227,500. Acteon Group must pay another \$213,866 for additional violations of the embargo laws against Cuba.
- On 17 April 2019, the United States Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, announced that, as of 2 May 2019, complaints against natural or legal persons who “traffic” in properties nationalized by the Government of Cuba at the beginning of the Revolution would be admissible in United States courts under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. On the same day, the National Security Adviser, John Bolton, announced additional measures against Cuba to limit remittances from the United States, further restrict travel to Cuba for non-family reasons and end the use of “U-turn” financial transactions, which allow Cubans to make international transfers. With the intention of putting pressure on companies from third countries, intimidating them and forcing them to leave Cuba, Bolton warned that, with immediate effect, Title IV of the Helms-Burton Act, which prohibits the entry into the United States of executives and owners of entities that “traffic” in nationalized properties, and the family members of such persons, would be more rigorously applied.
- On 23 April 2019, the United States Department of State announced another update of the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba, with the inclusion of five other entities (Aerogaviota, Hotel Santa Isabel, Diving Center-Marina Gaviota, Meliá Marina Varadero Apartamentos and Hotel El Caney Varadero) with effect from 24 April 2019; that was the third update of the arbitrary list since its establishment in November 2017.
- In May 2019, the International Air Transport Association, referring to the embargo regulations, revoked the access of the Mexican, French and Italian offices of the travel agency Havanatur and the airline Cubana de Aviación to the mechanism for paying for and reserving airline tickets. That decision had a significant financial and operational impact on Cuban entities.
- On 4 June 2019, OFAC announced that, with effect from 5 June 2019, general licences for group people-to-people educational travel would be eliminated and licences for non-commercial aircraft and passenger and recreational vessels on temporary sojourn, including cruise ships, would be denied. OFAC also stipulated that United States nationals travelling to Cuba for reasons that fell into any of the 12 categories authorized under the Obama Administration could not conduct direct financial transactions with companies included in the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba. These measures further strengthen the embargo against Cuba and cause great damage to the country's economic development, especially in the area of tourism.
- On 3 July 2019, OFAC included the Cuban company Cubametales in the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, citing the entity's involvement in the import of oil from Venezuela.

### 1.3 Application of the Helms-Burton Act

The Helms-Burton Act, which entered into force in 1996, codifies the embargo against Cuba and strengthens its extraterritorial reach. In addition to pursuing the imposition, in Cuba, of a Government directly subordinated to the interests of Washington, D.C., the Act is intended to internationalize the embargo through coercive measures designed to interrupt third countries' trade and investment relations with Cuba.

In January 2019, the United States Department of State announced its decision to suspend for only 45 days the possibility of legal action in United States courts against entities that "trafficked" in property nationalized by the revolutionary Government of Cuba in the 1960s. Similar suspensions were announced on 4 March and 3 April 2019, through highly threatening Department of State media notes that contained pretexts and information intended to distort the facts.

The possibility of taking the beneficiaries of the alleged "trafficking" to court had been consistently suspended every six months since 1996 by all Democratic and Republican Governments of the United States, including the Government of President Donald Trump in his first two years in office. As a result of pressure exerted by a small anti-Cuban group that occupies key positions in the current Government and is indifferent to the widespread rejection of the embargo in the United States and elsewhere, the suspension was allowed to expire.

The definition of trafficking in the Act is extremely broad and includes the transfer, distribution, dispensation, purchase, receipt, investment and leasing of nationalized property. The complaints authorized under Title III since May 2019 have therefore strengthened the application and extraterritorial effects of the embargo.

With the aim of strangling the Cuban economy and increasing shortages among the population, the Helms-Burton Act was conceived as a mechanism for the Government of the United States to exert brutal and illegal pressure against not only Cuba but also third countries and their Governments and companies. The purposes of the Act are illegitimate and run counter to international law, including the rules of the multilateral trading system and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which appears to be intended to allow demands for compensation or authorize complaints related to "United States" property nationalized in Cuba, is in fact designed to combat foreign investment and the economic development of the island.

The decision of the United States Department of State on 17 April 2019 to allow legal action under Title III ignored the position of members of Congress, including Republicans, and of the business sector, various organizations and United States public opinion, which support mutually beneficial economic and trade relations with Cuba. The behaviour of the current Government of the United States is an affront to the international community, which for 27 consecutive years has almost unanimously condemned the United States embargo against Cuba, including the Helms-Burton Act. The decision disregards successive General Assembly resolutions and the declarations of the European Union – Latin America and Caribbean Summit, the African Union, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other organizations that have demanded an end to the embargo against Cuba.

The decision of the Department of State allows legal action under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act not only by persons who were United States citizens when the property was nationalized but also by any person who is now a United States citizen,

including representatives or proxies of the Batista dictatorship that ruled Cuba until 1959, even if they were murderers and torturers in the service of that regime or if they stole and embezzled public monies and other resources of the Cuban people.

Since the decision was taken, Cuban economic activities, particularly those related to foreign trade operations and foreign investments, have been severely affected. The deterrent and intimidating effects of the decision, together with the fear caused by the other embargo regulations and laws, hinder the development of commercial links between Cuba and the rest of the world. No Cuban citizen or sector of the Cuban economy escapes the effects of this unilateral policy, which hampers the development that any country has the sovereign right to pursue.

The following are concrete examples of the effects of Title III:

- On 2 May 2019, the Havana Docks Corporation filed a complaint against the cruise company Carnival in the Miami Division of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, alleging “trafficking” involving the Havana Cruise Port Terminal.
- On the same day, Javier García-Bengochea filed a complaint against Carnival in the same court. In the complaint, García-Bengochea alleges that Carnival “traffics” in property claimed by him in the Port of Santiago de Cuba.
- Also on 2 May 2019, the United States company ExxonMobil filed a complaint against the Cuban entities Unión Cuba-Petróleo and Corporación Cimex in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. In its brief, ExxonMobil states that it has not authorized the Cuban companies to refine crude oil using its property, or to produce, transport, make available for sale or engage in any commercial activity involving any petroleum products made using that property.
- On 21 May 2019, Marisela Mata and Bibiana Hernández filed a complaint in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act against four Cuban entities for trafficking in the Hotel San Carlos in Cienfuegos. The defendants are Grupo Hotelero Gran Caribe, Corporación de Turismo y Comercio Internacional Cubanacán, Grupo de Turismo Gaviota and Corporación Cimex.
- On 18 June 2019, Marisela Mata and Bibiana Hernández filed a class action complaint in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida against the German hotel group Trivago. The plaintiffs argued that Trivago had provided online services for the Hotel Meliá San Carlos in Cienfuegos, an act that constituted trafficking under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.
- On 24 June 2019, four complaints were filed in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. The complaints were filed against the Cuban entities Gran Caribe, Cubanacán and Grupo de Turismo Gaviota, the German entity Trivago and the Netherlands entity Booking.com. The plaintiffs claimed to be the original owners of Cayo Coco and Varadero.

Under Act No. 80, on the reaffirmation of Cuban dignity and sovereignty, approved by the National Assembly of People’s Power in December 1996, United States laws are not applicable and have no legal value or effect on Cuban territory. The Act reaffirms the willingness of the Government of Cuba to seek adequate and fair compensation for the property expropriated from natural and legal persons who at that time held United States citizenship or nationality. It also offers full guarantees to foreign investors in Cuba, and its article 5 establishes that the Government can adopt the additional provisions, measures and facilities necessary for the complete

protection of current and potential foreign investments in Cuba and the defence of legitimate interests related to those investments against actions resulting from the Helms-Burton Act.

In addition, the Constitution of the Republic provides that the State will promote and guarantee foreign investment as an important aspect of the country's economic development, on the basis of the protection and rational use of human and natural resources and respect for national sovereignty and independence.

Because of the serious extraterritorial nature of the Helms-Burton Act, in particular its Title III, and the unacceptable precedent it sets in violating international law, various countries and groups of countries have adopted laws or other provisions to protect their citizens and entities.

## **II. The embargo violates the rights of the Cuban people**

### **2.1 Social impact**

Since the beginning of the embargo against Cuba, the health and food sectors have been priority targets of attacks by Governments of the United States. Ploys intended to cause hunger and disease and thereby undermine popular support for the Revolution have figured constantly in the plans and programmes of the dirty war against Cuba.

Despite the destructive strategy of the Government of the United States, the humanist policy of the Cuban Revolution has achieved social results comparable to those of developed countries. The health sector, for example, has always been given a high priority since the Revolution. In both the 1976 Constitution and the current Constitution, ensuring the people's welfare is established as a fundamental duty. In article 72 of the current Constitution, public health is enshrined as a universal right and the State's responsibility to guarantee access to free, high-quality care, protection and recovery services is established.

However, the damage caused in the area of health by the sanctions against Cuba is unquestionable. This hostile policy hinders the acquisition of technologies, raw materials, reagents, diagnostic tools, equipment, spare parts, and drugs for the treatment of serious diseases, including cancer. Because these items must be obtained on distant markets, often through intermediaries, their prices have increased.

The lack of the right medicine or technology to treat a disease has, in some cases, cost lives. The family of patient JCHC, medical history No. 68100309926, who died on 15 June 2018 at the Hermanos Ameijeiras Clinical Surgical Hospital of spongiform cardiomyopathy and terminal heart failure, will never be able to forgive the fact that, if his circulation had been supported by a device called Impella, made by the United States company Abiomed, JCHC could have survived. Because of the restrictions of the embargo against Cuba, Abiomed did not grant repeated requests to buy this specialized piece of equipment, designed to assist the circulation of patients suffering from cardiogenic shock and terminal heart failure.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Cuban health sector lost \$104,148,178, because of the embargo, \$6,123,498 more than the previous year.

In the period under review, MediCuba, the Cuban company that imports and exports medical products, made requests to purchase items needed for the Cuban health system from 57 United States companies. Of those companies, 50 have not responded and 3 have stated that, because of the embargo regulations, they are not authorized to sell any medicine or equipment to Cuba. The requests made by MediCuba include the following:



- The United States company Promega Corporation, which manufactures enzymes and other products for biotechnology and molecular biology, was contacted with the aim of purchasing reagents and items used to diagnose genetic diseases. On 16 January 2019, Promega stated that, under the trade sanctions of the United States Department of the Treasury, companies based in the United States were prohibited from selling products or providing technology or services to Cuba.
- The United States company Bruker was contacted regarding the purchase of a spectrophotometer, which is used in laboratories to quantify substances and microorganisms. In response to the request, Bruker replied that it cannot do business with Cuba.
- The United States company Stryker was contacted regarding the purchase of expandable endoprostheses, which are used in surgery to spare or save upper and lower limbs and which were needed by the National Institute of Oncology and Radiobiology. The company, however, has not yet responded. Since the Institute cannot obtain these prostheses, the quality of which is higher than others in functional terms, it has resorted to using fixed prostheses in patients who in fact require expandable ones.
- Various United States companies were contacted regarding the purchase of new cancer treatments. However, no response has been received to date. The following are some examples:
  - Crizotinib, a lung cancer treatment, palbociclib, for the treatment of hormone-sensitive metastatic breast cancer, and sunitinib, the only drug that effectively treats advanced or metastatic kidney cancer, were requested from Pfizer. At the Hermanos Ameijeiras Hospital, advanced renal cancer is diagnosed in 20 cases each year on average, and those patients do not have access to the most effective therapeutic option.
  - An anti-PD-1 antibody for the treatment of metastatic melanoma, lung cancer, Hodgkin's lymphoma and other cancers was requested from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Company.
  - The Oncotype DX breast cancer test, which identifies recurrence risk in patients in the early stages of breast cancer, and the Oncotype DX colon cancer test, which identifies recurrence risk in patients with stage II or III colon cancer, were requested from Genomic Health.
- Percutaneous prosthetic aortic valves – minimally invasive implants that would, each year, benefit about 60 patients over the age of 70 with degenerative aortic valve disease – were requested from the United States company Boston Scientific. The acquisition of these valves would reduce the number of deaths in Cuba, where cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death. However, Boston Scientific, a world leader in the production of the valves, has not responded to our request.
- The United States company Zimmer Biomet was contacted regarding the purchase of hip, knee and dental prostheses. The company, however, responded that, because of the embargo, it is not authorized to do business with Cuba.

Other examples of the damage resulting from the embargo in the health sector during the reporting period include the following:

- On 20 November 2018, the German company Eckert and Ziegler refused to provide MediCuba with a radioactive source that was needed for the quality control of radionucleotides in cancer diagnosis, and for which a contract had initially been concluded. The company said that it would not do business with Cuba because of the United States restrictions against the island.

- On 26 February 2019, various providers informed MediCuba that they could not deliver pulmonary ventilators for which contracts had been concluded, because the manufacturers, Imtmedical and Acutronic, had been purchased by Vyair Medical, a company with its head office in Illinois, United States. Pulmonary ventilators are of great importance to the Cuban health system, as they are used to assist patients mechanically when spontaneous breathing is inadequate to sustain life.
- The Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, an organization in the United Kingdom, rejected a request from the Pedro Kourí Institute of Tropical Medicine for project funds. The Federation said that, because of the sanctions imposed against Cuba by the United States, it could not make financial transactions to Cuban entities.
- In the period under review, Cuban health professionals were unable to participate in meetings, scientific events and academic exchanges in the United States because their visa applications were rejected, or not issued until after the events.

Article 77 of the Cuban Constitution establishes that everyone has the right to healthy and adequate nutrition and that the State creates conditions conducive to improving the food security of the entire population.

According to the Global Food Policy Report 2018, Cuba is one of the 14 countries that have most consistently reduced hunger and malnutrition levels over a number of years. Moreover, Cuba is one of the countries to have made the biggest advances in its food policies, on the basis of equality, and is closer to reaching the targets contained in Goal 2 of the 2030 Agenda.

Despite the fact that the Cuban State devotes substantial resources and efforts to food and agriculture, that sector has not been spared the effects of the embargo, sustaining losses of some \$412,230,614.

Food companies in Cuba import approximately 70 per cent of their raw materials from other markets, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the Dominican Republic, India, Italy, Mexico and Spain. To date, the embargo has made it impossible to make purchases on the United States market, which is very attractive from the point of view of prices and proximity, in addition to having varied supplies of raw materials, commodities and equipment needed to modernize production lines.

The impact of the embargo on the food sector stems also from the fact that Cuban products cannot be traded on the United States market. The Havana Club rum manufacturer, one of the most prestigious liquor producers in the world, has lost \$41.36 million as a result of the embargo.

Education, sport and culture are also highly sensitive sectors that have been severely affected by the embargo.

Article 73 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba stipulates that Cubans have an inalienable right to education. To guarantee this right, the State invests 23.7 per cent of its budget on this sector.

The educational achievements that have resulted from the Cuban Revolution and the resulting benefits for other peoples worldwide are internationally recognized. A preliminary analysis has shown that our country has met all the targets for Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda. However, despite the efforts made by the State, the quality of the educational services has been adversely affected by the regulations imposed by the Government of the United States under the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

The main losses reported in this sector are the result of increased freight charges for the transportation of products purchased on distant markets, limited access to scientific information and the computer tools needed for the production of educational multimedia, and obstacles to the receipt of payment for professional services provided abroad.

The following are examples of the damage caused to the educational sector during the period under review:

- The University of Sancti Spíritus was unable to purchase 20 Parkins SMART Braille machines and hearing aids needed for training undergraduate and postgraduate students studying to teach special education. Both technologies are produced in the United States. Although the Government of Cuba prioritizes care for persons with special needs, as a result of the restrictions imposed under the embargo, persons with disabilities have had more restricted access to many appliances that would improve their quality of life and strengthen their inclusion and participation in society.
- During the period under review, two international conferences (webinars) of the Erasmus+ Regional Network for the Promotion of the Internationalization of Higher Education in Latin America have been held to train specialists working to improve the internationalization of higher education. However, because of the regulations imposed under the embargo, Cuban civil servants were unable to participate in the online events because they could not access the web page [rial.adobeconnect.com/defaulteventtemplate](https://rial.adobeconnect.com/defaulteventtemplate).
- On 23 January 2019, the bank Société Générale in Paris blocked a bank transfer to Cuba of 7,474 euros to pay for the professional services of Cuban professors in Equatorial Guinea.
- Three educational programmes that had been planned for the start of 2019 by the Enrique José Varona University of Pedagogical Sciences and three universities from the United States (the University of Minnesota, the City University of New York and the Autonomous University of Social Movements in Chicago) were cancelled. The University of Pedagogical Sciences lost \$11,000 in revenue on account of this.

One of the major achievements of the Cuban Revolution has been in the development of sports. Article 74 of the Constitution states that people have the right to physical education, sport and recreation as essential elements of their quality of life. Despite the efforts made by the State and Government of Cuba to promote sporting activity, this sector has not been spared the damage caused by the United States embargo policy.

The following are salient examples during the period under review:

- In Cuba, the purchase of sports equipment, whose use is mandatory under the official regulations of international federations, has been limited because it is produced by United States companies such as Louisville Sporting Goods, Wilson, X Bats, Rawlings and Easton. These products have had to be purchased in third countries at a considerably higher price. If Cuba had direct access to the United States market, those products could be purchased approximately 30 per cent more cheaply.
- The twenty-second Terry Fox Run in Cuba could not be held this year, after the Board of Directors of the Terry Fox Foundation sent a letter stating that the foundation could not help to organize the event and to continue supporting cancer research in our country. Consequently, the foundation did not send the National Institute of Oncology and Radiobiology funds earmarked for the

development of a project that was due to be completed this year on anti-tumour evaluation of combined chemotherapy and immunotherapy in experimental cancer models.

- The Caribbean Professional Baseball Confederation did not manage to reach an agreement with the United States Government on the establishment of a legal channel for paying our country prize money. The Cuban team that took part in the Caribbean Baseball Series, which was held in Panama from 4 to 10 February 2019, was unable to collect its cash prize of \$72,000 for coming second in the tournament. The same thing happened to several Cuban baseball players, who were unable to receive their prize money of \$5,000 each.
- The financial persecution of banking entities in third countries by the United States Government has made it impossible for Cubadeportes to receive payment for technical assistance provided abroad and the commercialization of activities in Cuba.

The development of culture in all its manifestations is a priority for the Cuban State. Article 79 of the current Constitution of the Republic establishes that everyone has the right to participate in the cultural and artistic life of the nation. Nevertheless, culture continues to be one of the areas most affected by the implementation of the United States embargo policy against Cuba.

The harm done to the cultural sector during the period under review includes the following:

- Of 37 artistic groups that would have been able to promote their work in the United States, only 24 obtained permission to enter the country, which represents a decrease of 13 projects compared with the previous year. It is, however, worth highlighting the positive promotional effect of the Artes de Cuba festival held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., which was attended by 104 musicians.
- Although a number of United States companies have expressed their interest in negotiating with the Cuban record label, Bis Music, they have refused to send their legal documents for establishing the corresponding contracts, for fear of the restrictions under the embargo. Losses of over \$100,000 have been incurred as a result of this.
- A number of labels in Colombia, Peru and France rejected coordinated business activities with the national record label of Cuba, Empresa de Grabaciones y Ediciones Musicales (EGREM), fearing that they would not be able to make transfers to Cuba to pay for services. Some \$200,000 in revenue was lost as a result of this.
- Entrepreneurs who typically promoted groups from the EGREM catalogue in the United States and other countries refused to continue this work in 2018 owing to the tightening of the embargo.
- As a result of that tightening, the third meeting of publishers, distributors and literary agents from Cuba and the United States could not be held as scheduled during the 2019 Havana International Book Fair. It was also impossible for Cubans to participate in exhibitions and publishing and literary events, as well as book fairs in the United States.
- The embargo severely affects professional training in the arts (at the primary, secondary and higher levels) by imposing limits on the purchase of necessary items, such as musical instruments and accessories for the visual arts, ballet and dance. Nevertheless, the Cuban State does not deny any child who has the relevant aptitude and vocation the opportunity to receive this education free of

charge. This requires an extraordinary effort, bearing in mind that the cost of a student's basic education for one academic year for any type of art ranges from \$15,000 to \$16,000. For example, on average, the Cuban State pays \$17,610 to ensure that each ballet student has a leotard for their course. If access could be provided to the United States market for the purchase of this clothing, Cuba would save more than half the amount that it spends on the leotards on other markets.

## 2.2 Impact on economic development

The embargo remains the main obstacle to the implementation of both the national plan for economic and social development for the period to 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. In the period under review, the damage caused by the embargo in the manufacturing and service sectors was estimated at \$79 million, an increase of 28 per cent over the previous period.

Eliminating the cost of the embargo would increase the country's payment capacity and, in the medium term, provide a substantial and sustained source of official financing, which in turn would invigorate the investment programmes linked to the strategic sectors of the national economic and social development plan. That would bring the achievement of the objectives set for 2030 within easier reach. In less than five years, the country's infrastructure would be significantly improved, bringing about, for example, the transformation of the national energy grid, with more than 24 per cent of power generated by renewable energy sources.

The availability of such funds would, qualitatively and quantitatively, have a positive impact on the country's financial exposure abroad by boosting the confidence of external investors and creditors and substantially increasing its capacity to access financial and capital markets.

The biopharmaceutical industry, a key strategic sector of the country's economy, loses millions of dollars every year in the research, development, production and marketing of its products owing to the embargo. The measures taken by the United States against Cuba not only limit academic and scientific exchange, but also deprive the people of the United States of the benefits of innovative biotechnological and pharmaceutical products developed in Cuba, which show great promise for human health.

Examples of the impact of the embargo on this sector include the following:

- The Centro de Ingeniería Genética y Biotecnología (Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology) reports that income was foregone owing to the non-export to the United States of the drug heberprot-P, the only one of its kind in the world for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers. If 5 per cent of the patients in the United States who develop an advanced diabetic foot ulcer took the medication, its exports to that country in 2018 would have been worth around \$103 million.
- The import-export company FarmaCuba has reported difficulties, owing to the embargo, in obtaining raw materials to manufacture medicines. Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, production at the pharmaceutical company Farmacéutica 8 de Marzo periodically ground to a halt because raw materials could not always be sourced when required. Production shortfalls amounted to around 2,000 units of oral suspension and 61,184 capsules.
- A pharmaceutical manufacturer in one Asian country reported being unable to make a shipment to Cuba of phenytoin 250mg/5ml solution for injection because banks in the Asian country, fearing United States sanctions, refused to process

any transaction connected with the island. That made it necessary to find another supplier in Latin America on less favourable terms.

The Laboratorio Farmacéutico Oriente, a subsidiary of BioCubaFarma, reported the following losses:

- Losses incurred in obtaining vitamin A for use in the manufacture of the vitamin complex Nutriforté: The supplier's bank refused to accept the corresponding payment from Cuba, which was thus forced to pay more through third parties. This had an impact on the production of 78,694,200 tablets.
- Impact on the large-scale production of parenteral serums owing to a lack of packaging material: The Colombian supplier Proenfar was contracted to deliver those items. However, because that firm has a United States shareholder, the transaction could not be completed, affecting the production of 1,995,300 bags of serum.
- Impact on the delivery of printed aluminium foil for nicotinamide in March 2019 and potential impact on dipirona and alprazolam in September and October 2019: the supplier Devexport was purchased by a new manufacturer that refuses to sell printed aluminium foil to Cuba because of the embargo regulations.

The measures announced by President Donald Trump against Cuba since 2017 continue to be rigorously applied and significantly affect tourism, a strategic sector in the economic and social development of our country. Nonetheless, in August 2018, the United States Department of State lowered its travel advisory level for Cuba from level 3 (reconsider travel) to level 2 (exercise increased caution).

From April 2018 to March 2019, the United States embargo cost Cuban tourism about \$1.383 billion in key areas connected with travel, services and logistical operations and support. Without the embargo, it is estimated that 35 per cent of the total number of visitors to Cuba a year could come from the United States, which would make that country the main market for travellers to Cuba.

The following are just a few examples:

- The decision by the Government of the United States to eliminate general licences for people-to-people group educational trips has further restricted the flow of United States visitors to the island. The previous ban on people-to-people travel on an individual basis, which obliged travellers from the United States to visit Cuba under the sponsorship of a United States organization, already discouraged tourism from that country. The new measure completely removes the option of travel under that category.
- Although the number of cruise ship arrivals rose during the period under review, arrivals by air of United States visitors fell by 28.6 per cent, meaning 103,161 fewer visitors than in 2017 and adversely affecting revenue. The policy, adopted from 5 June 2019 by the Government of the United States, of denying licences to non-commercial aircraft and recreational and passenger vessels, including cruise ships, staying temporarily in Cuba further hampers travel to Cuba by United States tourists and cuts into the country's tourist revenue.
- The travel agency Cubatur lost \$497,800 as a result of bank service charges, exchange rate variations and the use of banking alternatives such as payment gateways.
- Havanatur, faced losses arising from the refusal of correspondent banks to process payments to customers, the closure of bank accounts in third countries, the withholding of funds and the cancellation of credit-card processing services.

The embargo has also adversely affected the information and communications technology sector, including telecommunications. This policy is the main obstacle to the flow of information and broader access for Cubans to the Internet and information technologies, in that it hinders connectivity and makes it more expensive, restricts access to platforms and technologies and uses cyberspace to undermine the political and judicial system in Cuba.

The economic damage done to the communications system between April 2018 and March 2019 is estimated at more than \$55 million. The telecommunications company Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba continues to be the hardest-hit institution, accounting for some 98 per cent of total losses.

For the period under review, this is illustrated most clearly by the following:

- Training for communications sector professionals has suffered as courses offered by the Chilean company Algoritmo could not be paid for. As a result, five courses that were planned for 2018 and needed in order to establish and develop better-quality services have been delayed.
- The embargo policy affects free access from within Cuba to Internet content and infringes the right to the freedoms expressed and accepted by authors producing software under a General Public Licence. Access to services or to downloadable information is denied once systems recognize that a link is being accessed from an Internet Protocol (IP) address in the Cuban domain, .cu.
- Cuba is denied access to official information from cutting-edge technology sites, making self-learning and distance training difficult. That is the case with Cisco, VMware, Google Code, Google Web Designer and Google PageSpeed Insights.
- Specialists from the radio and television company Radiocuba have been unable to attend the annual conference convened by satellite service provider Marlink, which has been held twice in New Orleans.
- Restrictions under the embargo prevent the sending of international money orders. As a result, no agreement for the delivery of money orders has been signed with the designated United States operator.
- The Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba was a member of the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) until December 2017, when it was informed by letter from the General Counsel of the GSM Association that its membership of that organization had been suspended. The General Counsel referred to the obligation to comply with United States law regarding trade sanctions for those entities providing services to Cuban companies. The company will thus be able to participate only in public events held outside the United States.
- The embargo impedes access to leading, high-performance infocommunications brands and equipment that are distributed by or under patent of United States companies, including landline telephones, mobile telephones, antennas and computer systems.

The transport sector has also been particularly affected by regulations under the embargo. Total losses in this sector during the period under review exceeded \$170 million, an increase of more than \$69 million over the previous period.

For the period under review, this is illustrated most clearly by the following:

- The Netherlands company Damen, which is the main supplier of Caterpillar and Cummins parts to the Damex shipyards in Santiago de Cuba, was prohibited by Caterpillar's Netherlands supplier from selling Cuba the supplies necessary for

the repair and maintenance of vessels of the pilotage company Empresa Prácticos de Cuba.

- The airline Cubana de Aviación is unable to use the services of the Airline Tariff Publishing Company, which publishes the airfares of more than 500 airlines and has its main facilities at Washington Dulles International Airport, Washington, D.C. Because of the embargo restrictions, Cuba is forced to pay an additional \$1,300 per month to upload its airfares to the distribution system.
- The Spanish airline Air Europa refrained from signing a code share agreement and from fulfilling its contractual commitments to Cubana de Aviación, given that the Boeing aircraft it operates are manufactured in the United States.

In the period under review, the damage caused by the embargo to Cuban industry exceeded \$49 million. Together, the amount lost could have been used to purchase raw materials that are needed by our industries and include calcium carbide for producing acetylene, mixtures for manufacturing tyres and semi-extensible paper for making multilayer bags. This is illustrated most clearly by the following:

- The chemical business company Grupo Empresarial de la Industria Química was unable to acquire spare parts and replacement machinery for air compressors, Lefi pumps and equipment made by Burton Corblin and Garo, given that those companies have United States shareholders. This seriously undermined chlorine production in Cuba. Similarly, it was not possible to rent intermodal containers for medical oxygen manufactured in the United States because suppliers feared being penalized by OFAC.
- The Grupo de la Electrónica produces, and provides services related to, electrical and electronic goods, information technology solutions, and telecommunications equipment and parts. The embargo's deterrent nature has meant that this firm has been unable to conclude agreements with a range of suppliers. That makes dealing with import companies arduous and expensive and shuts off access to key technology and materials needed for production. As a result, Cuba has had to look elsewhere for those items and higher freight charges have led to an increase in national production costs of almost \$2 million.

Because of the embargo, the construction sector continues to face serious difficulties in acquiring more efficient and lightweight building technologies that consume fewer basic materials and less energy. In the period under review, it was not possible to acquire the D55 boring machines needed for the construction materials industry through Atlas Copco, a company based in an Asian country. Owing to the embargo, the parent company prohibited the sale of those products to Cuba.

Embargo regulations have also hamstrung export activity in this sector. By way of example, it has been impossible to conclude a contract with ABS Trade and Commerce to export 300,000 tonnes of Algaba stone, as the company has been unable to find a vessel willing to ship the goods from Cuba to the country of destination.

As for energy and mining, companies in the sector lost \$78,336,424, an increase of more than \$18 million over the previous year.

For the period under review, this is illustrated most clearly by the following:

- The Moa Nickel joint venture suffered losses in the production of 40 tonnes of nickel and cobalt sulphides for export because the main manufacturers of key parts needed in the production process pulled out owing to the embargo. That in turn has driven up the cost of maintenance and led to time lost in finding alternative suppliers, delivery delays and higher import costs. MS Sales, a mechanical hardware distributor, shut down its Cuban operations when it was absorbed by a United States company, and Voestalpine, a key supplier of



electrodes, did the same because of the country risk associated with the embargo, breaking contracts that had already been signed in the process.

- The Unión Eléctrica de Cuba power company has extremely limited access to spare parts for its Bazán engines, manufactured by the Spanish company Navantia, which, fearing the consequences of the embargo, has refused to carry out commercial transactions with Cuba. For that reason, the parts can be purchased only through a single supplier at twice market prices.
- After being taken over by a United States group, the British company CompAir cut all ties with projects using its technology in Cuba for centralized compressed air stations. Spare parts for the equipment that was initially installed are therefore unobtainable and, as a result, the equipment has had to be modified using other technologies, at a cost in excess of what had been planned for.
- In September and November 2018, two contracts were signed with General Electric International for additional supplies for the turbine in the Antonio Guiteras thermal power plant and to modernize the Pico Santa Martha power plant, respectively. However, on 5 February 2019, the Centennial Bank of the United States gave notice that, because Title III of the Helms-Burton Act had been activated, financing for those two contracts would not be granted.

### **III. Impact on the external sector of the Cuban economy**

#### **3.1 Impact on foreign trade**

The total losses resulting from the United States embargo on the foreign trade of Cuba between April 2018 and March 2019 amounted to \$2,896,581,555, with the consequent adverse knock-on effects that are hindering and distorting foreign trade.

Aside from the quantifiable losses, the deterrent and intimidating effect of the embargo policy on the business sector in the United States and third countries is patent. The policy has a still greater impact on banking and financial institutions that refuse to work with Cuban entities and on investment in the country.

With regard to foreign trade, the greatest losses incurred have been in terms of income foregone, totalling \$2,343,135,842, from the non-export of goods and services. A significant part of that figure is accounted for by the fall in the number of travellers from the United States during the period under review, a trend that has continued since 2017 as a result of the media campaign against travel to our country and the manipulation of alleged health incidents involving United States diplomats in Cuba.

Losses caused by geographical shifts in trade are estimated at \$1,020.2 million, an increase of 18 per cent over the previous period.

Losses incurred as a result of the total lack of access to the United States market are estimated at \$163,108,659. The worst affected sectors were health, energy and mining, telecommunications and computer technology, agriculture, construction and industry, which together accounted for 74.4 per cent (\$121,423,969) of those losses.

Restrictions under the embargo make it impossible to export to the United States Cuban brands that are registered in that market. That includes Cubita coffee, Caney and Varadero rum, and charcoal. Similarly, the sale of those brands of rum is severely limited on the European market: the chains through which they are marketed do not allow them to be sold together with brands from the United States. That has led to a drop in demand from customers who import and distribute them in Europe.

The impossibility of accessing the United States market also prevents the sale in the United States of other Cuban goods, such as sugar and honey. The losses

attributable to the exclusion of Cuban sugar from the United States sugar quota system alone were in excess of \$29 million.

On the other hand, the fact that food products may be imported from the United States has not meant an end to discriminatory commercial, financial and logistical practices that reduce the revenue made from such imports, in spite of efforts by the United States farming sector to foster trade relations with Cuba. The irregular nature of this trade precludes any form of financing, which means that our food trading company, the Empresa Comercializadora de Alimentos (Alimport), must rely on markets on which credit is available but which are farther away and involve higher freight rates. Owing to the increased country risk rating resulting from the embargo, lenders apply interest rates that are about 5 per cent higher than average. Moreover, because payments cannot be made to third parties abroad in United States dollars, repayment currencies need to be purchased, with the consequent exchange rate losses.

For example, the Cuban company AT Comercial reported losses as a result of being unable to obtain, on the United States market, certain food products that therefore had to be purchased at higher prices through intermediaries in more distant countries.

In the period under review, the ban on use of the United States dollar cost \$85,139,436, while the additional cost of credit resulting from the heightened country risk rating amounted to \$47,290,204. These indicators were influenced by the lack of access to bank or soft loans. Cuban companies are forced to work with commercial credit granted by the suppliers themselves on poor financial terms.

Losses arising from the use of commercial intermediaries and the resulting increase in the cost of goods amounted to \$173,210,916, an increase of 189 per cent over the previous period.

Another variable that still seriously affects our economy is the additional freight and insurance costs that must be paid because of the geographical shift in trade to more distant regions. In that respect, losses are estimated at \$72,160,602.

The following table shows the effects of the embargo on Cuban foreign trade between April 2018 and March 2019:

<i>Losses resulting from:</i>	<i>USD</i>
Inability to access the United States market	163 108 659.16
Use of intermediaries/increase in the cost of goods	173 210 916.43
Increase in shipping and insurance costs	72 160 602.95
Income not earned from exports	2 343 135 842.95
Country risk/increase in cost of financing	47 290 204.71
Prohibition on the use of the United States dollar	85 139 436.80
Other losses <sup>a</sup>	12 535 892.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 896 581 555.72</b>

<sup>a</sup> Additional costs related to operations through third-country banks, bank fees, payment methods, retained payments, breach of contracts and disputes, among others.

### 3.2 Impact on finance

Losses resulting from the imposition of the United States embargo against Cuba have continued to increase, and their intentional nature is particularly clear in the banking and financial sectors. This has posed considerable challenges that have hindered the normal and proper functioning of those sectors and increased the costs

associated with banking and commercial operations. The period under review has been marked by the tendency of foreign financial and banking institutions to refuse to conduct operations with Cuban banks, as well as by the closing of accounts and the cancellation of keys established by the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) for the exchange of financial information.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Cuban banking system suffered losses as a result of reported incidents involving 140 foreign banks. During this period, an additional 12 foreign banking institutions joined the policy to refuse services, referring to the United States embargo on Cuba. This undermines the normal functioning and operations of Cuban banking institutions, which are forced to work in an environment of constant tension, uncertainty and adversity to ensure that their financial flows are secure.

During the period under review, monetary and financial losses were estimated at \$725.8 million, 35 per cent more than in the previous period.

The following are the main difficulties faced by Cuban banking institutions during the period under review:

*Tightening of the embargo measures associated with information technology services*

- Difficulties remain in accessing new SWIFT technologies because most companies that provide the related software and technology are from the United States.
- Several foreign banks requested Cuban banks to cancel relationship management application (RMA) keys through SWIFT. The keys are authorizations exchanged with correspondent banks to filter and impose restrictions on the messages received and the type of messages sent.

*Restrictions on the use of the United States dollar in foreign commercial and financial transactions*

- Restrictions on the use of the United States dollar in foreign commercial and financial transactions by Cuban entities remain in place, resulting in substantial losses owing to exchange rate variations between the United States dollar and the currencies of third countries in which collections and payments are made.

*Refusal to provide banking services*

- Eight foreign banks, of which seven were from Europe and one was from Asia, requested the closure of accounts.
- Fifteen entities, of which nine were Asian, three were European, two were Latin American and one was from Oceania, refused to transfer funds from or to Cuba and to provide other banking services. For example:
  - A Latin American bank informed its Cuban counterpart, through SWIFT messages, that as of January 2019 it would be unable to participate in letter of credit transactions and international transfers involving entities included in the United States Department of State List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba.
- The refusal to process banking documents means that alternative banks that are willing to do business with Cuba need to be found so that suppliers can be paid and payments can be received in foreign currency. For Cuba, this means that the necessary resources are unavailable when required to meet its obligations and purchase essential products, while creating uncertainty regarding the destination of funds.

- Two European banks retained funds belonging to Cuban institutions.
- SWIFT messaging keys, which are used as authorizations exchanged with correspondent banks, were cancelled by 24 foreign banks, of which 15 were European, 3 were Latin American, 2 were Asian, 2 were from Oceania, 1 was North American and 1 was African. For example:
  - A Latin American bank stated that it was not in a position to exchange information, even though it had previously requested the exchange of keys via SWIFT.
- A total of 16 institutions, of which 15 were Asian and 1 was European, refused to process or provide advice regarding operations related to letters of credit. In most cases, such refusals cause unnecessary delays because the Cuban company has to contact its supplier to locate another bank to process the documents.
- Banking transactions were returned by 63 entities, including 37 from Europe, 13 from Asia, 8 from Latin America, 3 from North America, 1 from Africa and 1 from Oceania. For example:
  - One European banking institution returned a transfer to a Cuban bank owing to the compliance policies of the beneficiary's bank, even though the Cuban bank had provided additional information as had been requested.
- Eight banks, of which three were Asian, three were European and two were Latin American, cancelled banking operations and correspondent banking agreements. For example:
  - One Latin American bank notified its Cuban counterpart that it would cancel transactions with Cuba on the grounds that Cuba was subject to sanctions by OFAC and that people or institutions that hired or provided financial assistance to those included on the sanctions list ran the risk of being treated as drug traffickers, international criminals or terrorists.
  - One European banking institution requested the cancellation of operations with Cuba owing to the various international embargoes and sanctions imposed by the United States, which forced the Cuban bank to look for alternative banks in Europe.
  - Two Latin American banks stated that they would not carry out new transactions with Cuba. This situation limits payments to suppliers and the receipt of resources derived from Cuban exports, and affects clients including Cubana de Aviación, FarmaCuba, Cubadeportes and Cuban importers.
- A total of four banking institutions, of which two were Asian, one was European and one was North American, requested Cuban banks to provide additional documents or meet different requirements in order to conduct banking operations. For instance:
  - One European bank merged with another and, in order to formalize the account of a Cuban bank in its books, sought through SWIFT to impose some unusual and unprecedented requirements, such as that the Cuban bank should ensure that the payments made did not involve clients with connections to the military – either the armed forces or the police – or to goods originating in the United States.
  - One European banking institution requested additional and unusual information, such as confirmation that goods would not be used for military purposes, from a Cuban bank in order to conduct transfer

operations, alleging that such information was required in accordance with the institution's regulations.

- Cuban entities face extremely onerous conditions in obtaining external financing.
- Cuban banking and business entities must pay high interest rates that are above those established by the market for similar operations in other countries. This is the result of surcharges arising from the country risk classification applied to Cuba, which is the main element in determining the feasibility and costs of financial operations, costs that have increased as a result of the current embargo.

*Difficulties have been encountered in the dispatch and receipt of bank documents through courier agencies*

- A Cuban bank received from the courier company DHL Express Cuba a list of countries to which the courier's parcel service was limited as a result of the restrictions imposed by OFAC, and a message that stated that clients would be responsible for shipments after they had received a notification from the postal agent. If such clients insisted on making a shipment, DHL would not be held responsible for what happened to it, given that the clients had lost that right once they had received the notification. Any country that sent Worldwide Parcel Express or Document Express shipments to Cuba would also be required to sign a letter of indemnity at the client's discretion.
- Another shipping and parcel agency, The People Network of the United Kingdom, told a Cuban bank that it could no longer offer the bank its services. The refusal was linked to the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba, published by the United States Department of State. The shipment consisted of documents related to a payment owed to a Cuban exporting company.
- A North American bank notified a Cuban bank that it would not agree to sign documents that were required by DHL Express and that established that, if a fine was imposed for processing a shipment of documents to Cuba, the North American bank must cover it.

As a result of these challenges, documents, including bills of lading, are sent as copies by email, whereas in fact it is the originals that should be received directly through DHL. This situation creates difficulties for Cuban importers, which are forced to look for alternative means of receiving documents. In addition, such transmission does not offer the same guarantees and security as when documents are sent through banking channels.

#### **IV. The embargo violates international law. Extraterritorial application**

The extraterritorial nature of the embargo continues to be a hallmark of the aggressive policy of the Government of the United States against Cuba. This system of sanctions seriously harms our country, but it also affects the interests and sovereign rights of third countries, in violation of international law, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of free trade.

During the period under review, the application of the embargo was tightened. That included the decision by the United States Government to allow, under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the possibility of taking legal action in United States courts against entities that "traffic" in property that was nationalized in Cuba in the 1960s. This provision attacks freedom of trade and reinforces the extraterritorial nature of the sanctions against Cuba, while damaging the island's economic and commercial relations with the international community.

The Helms-Burton Act, which violates principles such as the self-determination of peoples, freedom of trade, sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, is absolutely inapplicable in Cuba. Pursuant to Act No. 80, on the reaffirmation of Cuban dignity and sovereignty, approved by the National Assembly of People's Power in December 1996, the Helms-Burton Act is illegal and devoid of legal value or effect in Cuba.

The enactment of the Helms-Burton Act led to the approval of "antidote laws" designed by third parties such as Mexico, Canada and the European Union, to protect themselves against possible losses resulting from the implementation of this policy.

The European Union adopted a "blocking statute" that prohibits the enforcement in its territory of United States court judgments related to Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. The Government of Canada amended the Foreign Extraterritorial Measures Act, stipulating that "any judgment given under the law of the United States entitled Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 shall not be recognized or enforceable in any manner in Canada". Mexico has an Act on the protection of trade and investment against foreign laws that violate international law.

#### **4.1 Impact on Cuban entities**

During the reporting period, the impact of the embargo on commercial relations between Cuban companies and third countries continued to worsen as a result of the closure of bank accounts, the inability to carry out transactions for the payment or collection of funds for services and the cancellation of commercial contracts. Some examples are set out below:

- On 1 June 2018, the Luxembourg subsidiary of the Netherlands bank ING refused to carry out a transaction from the Luxembourg company e-Time Corp and the Cuban firm Cubaexport owing to the United States embargo on Cuba.
- On 12 June 2018, the New Zealand subsidiary of the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group sent a letter to the Travel Agents' Association of New Zealand, informing it that transactions and dealings related (directly or indirectly) to countries subject to United States sanctions, including Cuba, were now prohibited.
- On 2 August 2018, the Brazilian subsidiary of the United States company FedEx cancelled its services to the Cuban Embassy and Consulates in Brazil, on the basis of instructions received from its parent company in the United States as a result of the sanctions imposed by OFAC against Cuba.
- On 15 August 2018, Banco Santander Río in Argentina did not carry out a transfer of \$250,000 (ordered for the equivalent amount in euros) that had been requested by Havanatur to the Cuban bank Banco Financiero Internacional.
- On 16 August 2018, the Dominican banks Banreservas and Banco BHD-León closed accounts belonging to the office of Cubana de Aviación in the Dominican Republic because Cuba was subject to United States sanctions.
- On 21 August 2018, the Panamanian bank Multibank closed the dollar current account of Cubana de Aviación in Panama City.
- On 28 August 2018, the Santa Lucia subsidiary of the United States company FedEx closed the account of the Cuban Embassy in Saint Lucia as a result of the embargo regulations.
- On 30 September 2018, the Bahamas subsidiary of the United States company FedEx closed the account of the Cuban Embassy in the Bahamas on instructions from its legal department in the United States.

- On 1 October 2018, the Suriname subsidiary of the Netherlands bank De Surinaamsche Bank refused to continue making dollar transactions with the Cuban Embassy in that country because of the embargo regulations.
- On 2 October 2018, the Hilton Fukuoka Sea Hawk Hotel in Japan cancelled a reservation made by the Cuban Embassy in that country on instructions from its head office in the United States and alleged that it could not provide its services owing to the United States sanctions against Cuba.
- On 16 October 2018, the Jamaican subsidiary of the United States company FedEx froze the delivery of two passport shipments from the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C., to the Cuban diplomatic mission in Kingston owing to the United States sanctions against Cuba.
- On 30 October 2018, the Panamanian bank Multibank sought, through an affidavit sent to the Cuban Embassy in Panama, to dissociate itself from Cuba. The note needed to be signed by the Cuban Ambassador in Panama, in his capacity as the legal representative of Cuba, and referred to the embargo regulations.
- On 29 November 2018, the private equity bank Halyk Bank, which had merged with Kazkommertsbank in Kazakhstan, sent a letter to the Cuban Embassy in that country following the temporary freezing of the Embassy's accounts, an unannounced numbering change and the charging of a high bank fee. The letter stated that the decision had been made as a result of the embargo regulations.
- On 17 December 2018, the subsidiary of the United States company FedEx in Saint Kitts and Nevis informed the Cuban Embassy in Saint Kitts and Nevis that it was suspending the parcel services that it had previously offered.
- Also on 17 December 2018, the Malaysian bank Maybank notified the Cuban citizen Miguel Morales that it would be closing his account after receiving instructions on the basis of the embargo regulations.
- On 4 January 2019, the National Bank of Canada informed Intercopex, a Canadian company based in Toronto, of new DHL requirements related to countries subject to sanctions, including Cuba, that prevented the shipping of documents to Cuba. As a result of the withholding of services by DHL, the National Bank of Canada informed all Cuban banks of the situation.
- On 16 January 2019, the supplier Devexport notified the Cuban importer Cexni that it would be unable to carry out deliveries under contract 80063 for the purchase of 143 tons of sodium cyanide briquettes for the production of doré gold. It explained that the authorities in the country of manufacture had banned shipments to Cuba in 2019 to avoid sanctions imposed by the United States Department of the Treasury on its companies for trading with the island.
- In February 2019, MediCuba received several notifications from suppliers with which it had signed contracts, informing it that Multibank had announced the closure of Cuban accounts. This created challenges in collecting payments and carrying out commercial operations, which meant that the country had to look for alternatives and replace the contracts that had already been signed.
- In April 2019, directors of the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation informed the Cuban Embassy in Japan of the decision taken by three of its companies to cancel their participation in a joint project with the Cuban oil company Unión Cuba-Petróleo on a geochemical study for a high-risk potential project involving one or more concessions in shallow water and on land. They alleged that the decision had been taken owing to the business that the companies were conducting in the United States.

## **4.2 Impact on the banking and financial sector**

- On 5 October 2018, OFAC fined the bank JPMorgan Chase \$5,263,171 for entering into transactions and providing unauthorized services to clients that had been included in the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List from 2008 to 2012.
- On 19 November 2018, the banking and financial entity Société Générale, based in Paris, agreed to pay a total of \$1,340,231,916 to OFAC, the United States Attorney's Office of the Southern District of New York, the New York County District Attorney's Office, the United States Federal Reserve and the New York State Department of Financial Services for violation of CACR, the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations and the Sudanese Sanctions Regulations. According to OFAC, Société Générale processed 796 transactions involving Cuba in an amount totalling more than \$5.5 billion between 11 July 2007 and 26 October 2010. The fine is the second highest that has been imposed on a financial institution for its transactions with Cuba.
- On 1 April 2019, Multibank closed an unknown number of bank accounts belonging to Panamanian and foreign companies that trade or maintain relations with Cuba, including the account of the office of the Panama correspondent of the Prensa Latina news agency.
- On 9 April 2019, OFAC imposed a penalty on Standard Chartered, a banking and financial institution based in the United Kingdom, for apparent violations of CACR and the sanctions programmes applicable to Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan and Myanmar. In order to avoid a lawsuit, the British company agreed to pay \$639,023,750 to OFAC and \$2,715,100,479 to other United States government and state institutions.
- On 15 April 2019, OFAC imposed penalties on the European subsidiaries of UniCredit in Germany, Austria and Italy for violations of CACR and other sanctions programmes applicable to Myanmar, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Iran and Libya. As a result, and in order to avoid civil litigation, UniCredit Bank, UniCredit Bank Austria and UniCredit agreed to pay \$553,380,759, \$20,326,340 and \$37,316,322 respectively to OFAC and other United States government and state institutions.

## **V. Universal rejection of the embargo**

### **5.1 Opposition within the United States**

Despite the marked deterioration imposed by the current United States Government in its relations with Cuba, many sectors of United States society have expressed their opposition to the embargo against the island.

Representatives of the agricultural, cultural, academic and business sectors have not only rejected the policy, which violates international law, but have also been active in their attempts to politically influence the executive and legislative branches at the state and federal levels. Groups such as Engage Cuba have expanded their reach and diversified by establishing new state councils in the United States.

The establishment of certain agreements and business deals has revealed the interest of these sectors in favouring healthy and mutually beneficial bilateral ties. The willingness of many Americans to contribute to the improvement of relations and the lifting of the embargo against Cuba has been confirmed.



The following are some examples of the opposition to the embargo within the United States:

- On 5 April 2018, the Republican Senator for Arkansas, John Boozman, Chair of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee's Subcommittee on Commodities, Risk Management and Trade, published an article entitled "Time to expand U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba" on the "Washington DC 100" website of the public relations firm Story Partners. Boozman criticized the prohibition of private financing for United States agricultural exports to Cuba and referred positively to the bill to expand agricultural exports, introduced in the Senate by him and the then Democratic Senator for North Dakota, Heidi Heitkamp.
- On 19 April 2018, the Florida Democratic Congresswoman Kathy Castor wrote on Twitter that her hope for the future in Cuba and the United States was that Governments would listen to the people of both nations who want change, commitment and greater freedom. The legislator added that it was vital for both sides to engage and talk in a complicated and modern world, stressing: "We are neighbours after all".
- On 19 April 2018, the President of Cuba Educational Travel, Collin Laverty, issued a statement in which he questioned President Donald Trump's policy of maintaining the embargo against, distancing the United States from and displaying hostility towards Cuba. He said that Trump was sidelining the American people and their institutions and that in the absence of an intelligent United States policy it was essential that the peoples of both countries continue to strengthen ties. Laverty said that his organization would continue to work tirelessly to unite the two countries, while hoping for an improvement in bilateral relations.
- On 23 April 2018, Republican Congressmen Roger Marshall (Kansas), Rick Crawford (Arkansas) and Tom Emmer (Minnesota) published an article for the agricultural digital publication *Feedstuffs* entitled "One simple fix could open a \$2b market for U.S. farmers". The article called on the Administration of Donald Trump to maximize gains for United States farmers and showed the Congressmen's commitment to supporting the private sector in Cuba by using their authority to open their country's doors wider to Cuban agribusiness. They argued that if the United States could sell its goods to Cuba, agricultural sales from Arkansas to the island could reach \$52 million; those from Kansas could surpass \$55 million, with a 25 per cent boost in wheat sales; and Minnesota could see sales increase to \$50 million.
- On 4 June 2018, the then Republican Senator for Arizona, Jeff Flake, said at a press conference in Havana that he had never been in favour of the embargo and called for the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States. He added that he was pleased to see a rise in the number of United States citizens travelling to Cuba in the period 2014–2016 and that, despite the setbacks, his visit was intended to ensure that Americans knew that it was safe to travel to Cuba.
- On 7 June 2018, a Congressional round table on trade relations with Cuba was held with the participation of United States legislators and executives from the lobby group Engage Cuba. Senator for Arkansas John Boozman noted that American agricultural producers were in a situation in which almost all commodity prices were low, so that opening bilateral trade with Cuba would be beneficial for all. Minnesota Representative Tom Emmer also referred to the possibilities for fostering bilateral agricultural and economic ties and the need to open more export markets. He added that the embargo was a failed policy and

he would therefore continue to press for it to be lifted. Representative Rick Crawford of Arkansas said that opening trade with Cuba would improve the relationship between the two countries.

- On 7 June 2018, the lobbying group Engage Cuba stated in a message on Twitter that it was time to put politics aside and do the right thing by building congressional support for trade between Cuba and the United States.
- On 10 June 2018, the eighteenth state council of Engage Cuba was created in Pennsylvania with the participation of a bipartisan group of state officials and business and agricultural leaders. During the ceremony, James Williams, President of Engage Cuba, urged Congress to lift restrictions on Cuba, which were detrimental to both Pennsylvanians and Cubans.
- On 11 June 2018, Representatives of the Pennsylvania State Congress and associates of Engage Cuba's executive committee urged the United States Congress to lift the restrictions on Cuba, which were detrimental to the residents of that state and Cubans alike.
- On 13 June 2018, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) of the United States demanded that Donald Trump's Government lift the embargo and normalize bilateral trade relations.
- On 13 June 2018, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry approved an amendment to the 2018 Farm Bill. The amendment, which was favourable to Cuba, was proposed by Senator Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota and Senator John Boozman of Arkansas, and sought to promote funding to increase access to the Cuban market for agricultural products grown in the United States.
- On 13 June 2018, the then Democratic Senator for North Dakota, Heidi Heitkamp, said in a press release: "In North Dakota, we know how critical trade is to farmers and ranchers. The loosening of the embargo on Cuba was a major step in creating demand for United States agricultural imports on the island, but we can do much more to support profitable agricultural trade with Cuba". She added that North Dakota farmers viewed Cuba as a natural market for their homegrown products, including beans, peas and lentils, while noting that the bipartisan amendment gave the United States Department of Agriculture the ability to build reliable trade partnerships between North Dakota producers and Cuban buyers at no extra cost to the taxpayer.
- On 14 June 2018, NASDA sent a letter to President Donald Trump, the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States, demanding an end to the embargo against Cuba.
- On 20 June 2018, William M. LeoGrande, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at the American University Department of Government, gave his testimony during a United States House of Representatives hearing. He acknowledged that the sanctions imposed on Cuba for decades had been unsuccessful and that there was no reason not to engage with Cuba. He agreed that United States farmers should be able to obtain financing for sales of agricultural products to Cuba and that restrictions on travel to the country should be lifted. He added that companies from the United States should be able to trade with and invest in Cuba.
- On 28 June 2018, the then Democratic Senator for Missouri, Claire McCaskill, said during an interview with news radio network Brownfield Ag News for America that she supported increased trade with Cuba.

- On 28 June 2018, the United States Senate approved the 2018 Farm Bill, which includes a provision to authorize the use of United States trade promotion funds to increase access to Cuba. The provision, introduced by the then Senator for North Dakota, Heidi Heitkamp, was adopted by a voice vote in the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.
- On 2 July 2018, Greg Rothman, a Member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, in an article entitled “Pennsylvania farmers need a fair shake in Cuba”, published on the PennLive website, highlighted the possibilities of trade between Cuba and that state, especially in milk exports, given the shared history with the island. He also urged state legislators to advocate for the embargo on Cuba to be lifted.
- On 24 July 2018, the City Council of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, approved a proclamation in support of relations between the United States and Cuba and called for an end to the embargo against Cuba.
- On 5 September 2018, a bipartisan group of more than 60 agricultural associations, businesses and officials from 17 states urged the leadership of the House and Senate committees on agriculture to include a provision in the 2018 Farm Bill that would expand agricultural trade with Cuba and remove restrictions on private financing for United States food exports.
- On 27 September 2018, Jeff Witte, President of NASDA, said that his association fully supported improved agricultural trade and cooperation with Cuba and that the embargo should be lifted.
- On 9 October 2018, *Southwest Farm Press* published an online article in which Paul Johnson, then Co-Chair of the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba, pointed out that Cuba represents a potential \$2 billion market for United States farmers and that agricultural trade and scientific cooperation in this area would have advantages for both countries.
- On 31 October 2018, following the meeting of the General Assembly that addressed the Cuban draft resolution, representatives of United States civil society and Cuba solidarity groups supported the international community’s call to end the United States embargo. A gathering took place in front of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations in New York with the participation of Gail Walker, Executive Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, which organizes the Pastors for Peace project; Ike Nahem, coordinator of the Cuba solidarity movement in New York; and Martin Koppel, a leader of the United States Socialist Workers Party.
- On 21 December 2018, the Republican Senator John Boozman of Arkansas stressed that the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, with an amendment related to Cuba, represented a major victory for Americans who had consistently worked to widen access to the Cuban market.
- On 23 January 2019, the Saint Paul City Council unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the federal Government to lift the embargo against Cuba.
- On 23 January 2019, Carla Riehle, a member of the Minnesota Cuba Committee, said that no other country, including countries with an appalling human-rights record, had been punished as severely by the United States as Cuba had been.
- On 4 February 2019, Rick Crawford, a Republican Representative for Arkansas, said that the chances of passing the Cuba trade bill that he had introduced in the House of Representatives had increased tremendously and that the bill was widely supported. Outside Florida, United States support for the lifting of the

embargo was “probably upwards of 70 per cent”, adding, “I think that we just have to continue to press”.

- On 7 February 2019, Jim McGovern, a Democratic Representative for Massachusetts, told the House of Representatives that allowing Title III of the Helms-Burton Act to take effect would penalize United States companies for doing business worldwide, open a new front in the trade war, clog the courts with lawsuits, make it impossible to negotiate compensation for United States claims in Cuba and, ultimately, hurt Americans who sought compensation for property they had lost.
- On 8 February 2019, Amy Klobuchar, the Democratic Senator for Minnesota, introduced legislation, subsequently referred to the United States Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, calling for the embargo against Cuba to be lifted. The bill was co-sponsored by Senators Patrick Leahy of Vermont and Michael B. Enzi of Wyoming.
- On 22 February 2019, the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba sent a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. Signed by over 100 agricultural commodity organizations, the letter made clear their desire to keep trade with Cuba open and their interest in expanding exports to that country.
- On 4 March 2019, the President of Engage Cuba, James Williams, issued a statement in response to the decision by the United States Department of State to suspend the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act for a mere 30 days. He stated: “This is a continuation of the same embargo policy that has failed for nearly 60 years. ... Continuing this failed policy undermines American interests and helps our adversaries.”
- On 4 March 2019, Ricardo Herrero, Executive Director of the Cuba Study Group, issued a statement in response to the announcement by the Department of State that it would partially enforce Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. Herrero pointed out that “if 60 years of a failed embargo policy have taught us anything, it is that change in Cuba will not come as a result of unilateral economic aggression directed from Washington, D.C. and Miami. It is regrettable that the President’s advisors insisted on ignoring this lesson. We call on President Trump to follow the instincts he exhibited early in his 2016 campaign and actively pursue a policy of constructive engagement with Cuba that puts the interests of the United States and the Cuban people first.”
- On 4 March 2019, the Washington Office on Latin America issued a press release criticizing the Trump Administration’s decision to suspend the application of Title III for a limited period. “Trump’s foreign policy seems aimed at punishing Cuba when it’s in our own best interests to be normalizing this relationship. At a time when Cuba is undergoing an important process of gradual internal reform, the U.S. government shouldn’t be upping hostilities”, the statement read.
- On 5 March 2019, members of the organization Cuban Americans for Engagement issued a press release in which they opposed the United States Government’s decision to initiate the partial suspension of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which they regarded as a gesture of interference that undermined the sovereignty of the countries pursuing trade relations with Cuba.

## **5.2 Opposition by the international community**

The rejection by various members of the international community of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States

Government against Cuba is growing and palpable, as evidenced by the following examples:

- On 13 September 2018, at the thirty-ninth regular session of the Human Rights Council, the negative impact of the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba was denounced and a call was issued for its full elimination. On that occasion, 23 developing countries spoke in the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.
- In their Ministerial Declaration of 27 September 2018, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of 77 and China rejected once again the application of the embargo against Cuba and the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries. The text was approved at the 42nd annual meeting of the Group, held during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly in New York.
- During the general debate of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, held between 25 September and 1 October 2018, dignitaries from 33 countries, including 16 Heads of State and Government, denounced the illegal continuation of the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba and called for it to be lifted immediately.
- At the proposal of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, the thirteenth Congress of South African Trade Unions, held from 17 to 20 September 2018 in South Africa, adopted a resolution rejecting the embargo and demanding the return to Cuba of the territory illegally occupied by the United States naval base at Guantánamo Bay.
- On 4 October 2018, the France-Caribbean interparliamentary friendship group in the French Senate addressed a letter to Michael R. Pence, Vice-President of the United States, demanding an end to the embargo against Cuba.
- On 15 October 2018, the Sandinista deputies in the National Assembly of Nicaragua and the Central American Parliament issued a statement rejecting the United States embargo against Cuba.
- On 15 October 2018, a document signed by Jean-François Ferrari of the National Assembly of Seychelles condemned the embargo against Cuba as unjust, unnecessary and contrary to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.
- On 24 October 2018, then Senator Vanessa Grazziotin, leader of the Communist Party of Brazil in the Congress of Brazil, issued a statement condemning the embargo against Cuba. According to the statement, the embargo remained the main obstacle to the development of the Cuban economy and constituted a serious challenge to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- On 1 November 2018, the General Assembly adopted, for the twenty-seventh time in succession, the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", with 189 Member States voting in favour. At the same time, the international community rejected by a large majority the eight amendments introduced by the United States delegation with the aim of distorting the resolution by inserting content that would provide a pretext for the criminal anti-Cuban policy to continue.
- During the debate on and adoption of the resolution, 46 speakers expressed the view that the United States must lift its embargo against Cuba. These included seven representatives of regional and subregional coordination groups and

organizations: the Group of 77 and China, the Group of African States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Caribbean Community and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

- On 8 November 2018, the National Assembly of South Africa, led by its Speaker, Baleka Mbete, passed a motion rejecting the embargo against Cuba.
- On 28 November 2018, the Latin American Council of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System, at its ministerial session in Caracas, forcefully demanded an end to the embargo.
- On 28 November 2018, an event was held in the European Parliament on the initiative of the Confederation of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, to proclaim solidarity with Cuba and condemn the illegal embargo. At the event, two panels discussed the social and economic consequences of the illegal United States sanctions against Cuba in the new Latin American political landscape and actions against the illegal extraterritorial effects of United States sanctions in European countries. The international law researcher and member of the bureau of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, Fabio Marcelli, substantiated the reasons why the embargo should be referred to as a blockade and called for the genuine implementation of Regulation (EC) No. 2271/96, adopted in November 1996 by the Council of the European Union to protect its natural and legal persons from the extraterritorial application of the embargo.
- On 11 February 2019, during the thirty-second session of the Assembly of the African Union, a resolution entitled “The lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America” was adopted, condemning the inhumane and illegal policy.
- On 15 March 2019, at a meeting of the Authority of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the tightening of the embargo through the threat to activate Title III of the Helms-Burton Act was denounced. Similarly, it was stated that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government against Cuba undermines the stability, peace and security of the Caribbean region.
- On 29 March 2019, at the eighth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the States and Territories of the Association of Caribbean States, held in Nicaragua, the Managua Declaration was adopted. The Declaration reiterated the rejection of the use of unilateral coercive measures and renewed the call for the United States Government to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, repeal the Helms-Burton Act and cease the extraterritorial application thereof.
- At the fifth Yalta International Economic Forum, held in April 2019, Mariya Zakharova, spokeswoman for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reiterated her country’s unequivocal condemnation of the use of unilateral sanctions against Cuba by the United States. She condemned the current United States Government’s revival and full application of the Monroe Doctrine, intended to crush the sovereignty and independence of States.
- On 26 April 2019, Horace Dalley, Member of the Parliament of Jamaica, Shadow Minister of Labour and Social Security, Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the People’s National Party and chair of its committee on international relations, affirmed his party’s unconditional support for the Cuban people’s struggle to bring about the lifting of the embargo. Title III of the Helms-Burton Act dangerously reinforced the extraterritorial component of the embargo and

constituted an attack on international law and on the sovereignty of Cuba and other countries.

- In Brazil, various political forces denounced the embargo and demanded an end to the illegal and inhuman policy that is holding back the development of Cuba. Those entities include the Workers' Party, the Parliamentary Front of the Legislative Assembly of Rio de Janeiro and the Communist Party of Brazil. Similar statements were made by such social movements and trade unions as the Brazilian Workers' Union, the Landless Movement, the Brazilian Council for Peace, the Union of Brazilian Women, the World Council for Peace, the Network of Intellectuals and Artists in Defence of Humanity, the Paulista Movement of Solidarity with Cuba, the Friends of Cuba Collective of Journalists and Communications Professionals, the José Martí Cultural Association of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, the José Martí Cultural Association of the Baixada Santista Metropolitan Area of the State of São Paulo, the José Martí Cultural Association of the Greater ABC Region of the State of São Paulo, the Carioca Committee for Solidarity with Cuba of the State of Rio de Janeiro and the José Martí Cultural Association of the State of Espírito Santo.
- Anatoly Glaz, Head of the Department of Information and Digital Diplomacy and Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, issued strong statements condemning the tightening of the embargo against Cuba. He also recalled that the majority of the States Members of the United Nations consistently opposed the measures in support of the economic, commercial and financial embargo and, in particular, condemned the introduction of new unilateral coercive measures against Cuba.
- Keiji Furuya, President of the Japan-Cuba Parliamentary Friendship League, in a working meeting with the Cuban Ambassador to Japan, reiterated the support of that organization for the Cuban demand for an end to the embargo and reaffirmed the organization's grave concern at the embargo's extraterritorial nature, which violated the laws of third States, including Japan.

Following the announcement by the Government of Donald Trump concerning the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, an unprecedented step that tightens the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, numerous international actors have voiced their opposition:

- The High Representative for Foreign Affairs of the European Union, Federica Mogherini, declared in a statement that her regional bloc deplored the tightening of the embargo against Cuba through the activation by the United States of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act as contrary to international law. The European Union considered the extraterritorial application of unilateral restrictive measures to be illegal and would consider all options at its disposal to address the consequences, including in relation to its rights as a member of the World Trade Organization and through the application of Regulation (EC) No. 2271/96 of the Council of the European Union.
- Lu Kang, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, declared his country's opposition to the unilateral measures imposed by the United States to tighten the embargo, measures that constituted the main obstacle to the socioeconomic development and well-being of Cuba.
- During her visit to Cuba in April 2019, María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, affirmed that unilateral sanctions violated the principles of international law and that the support provided by the international community to Cuba in its battle against the

embargo was evidence of the almost unanimous rejection of that policy and of the need to respect the country's right to development.

- The Government of the United Kingdom said that the United States decision to allow its citizens to bring lawsuits against foreign companies operating in Cuba for “trafficking” in nationalized property was extraterritorial and illegal. In a statement issued on 18 April 2019, the British Government said that it would continue to work alongside its European Union counterparts to protect the interests of their companies.
- On 6 May 2019, Idriss Jazairy, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, condemned the United States embargo against Cuba. The use of economic sanctions for political purposes violated human rights and the norms of international behaviour, and the extraterritorial application of unilateral sanctions was clearly contrary to international law.
- The Group of Argentine Graduates Trained in Cuba issued a public statement repudiating the intention of the United States to apply Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and to tighten the economic, commercial and financial embargo that attempted to stifle and hold back Cuba's development. The United States should abide by the General Assembly resolutions that called for the immediate lifting of the embargo.
- The Chamber of Deputies of the Plurinational Legislative Assembly of Bolivia issued a statement forcefully and categorically rejecting the implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which tightened the economic, commercial and financial embargo of the United States against Cuba and violated the rights and harmonious development that the Cuban people deserved.
- At its fiftieth General Assembly, the Belgian association Les Amis de Cuba condemned the United States Government's policy of aggression against the island and added its voice to the chorus of protests from around the world decrying the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which could affect companies from European or other countries operating in the Caribbean nation and once again demonstrated the extraterritorial scope of the embargo. The organization also called upon the Government of Belgium and the European Union to implement all available mechanisms in support of their citizens and companies and to oppose all legal proceedings opened in the United States.
- The Ecuadorian Coordinating Committee for Peace, Sovereignty, Integration and Non-Interference – which brings together such social organizations as the Network of Intellectuals and Artists in Defence of Humanity, the Citizens' Revolution Movement, the Latin American Network of Women Transforming the Economy, the Ecuadorian Federation of Indians and the LGBT-Ecuador South-South Dialogue – described the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act as serious and repudiated the White House's tightening of sanctions against entities and countries that maintain commercial, economic and financial relations with Cuba, with a view to isolating the country. Those interventionist practices had been decried repeatedly by such blocs as the European Union, the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.
- The Ecuadorian Coordinating Committee also joined the international rejection of the United States Government's decision to enforce Title III of the Helms-Burton Act against Cuba. The Act was a legal abomination designed to hinder the growing economic and commercial relations between Cuba and the rest of the world, and therefore violated international law and the rules governing trade and investment.



- In a press release addressed to the Cuban Ambassador to Iran, Hadi Khansari, President of the Iran-Cuba Friendship Association, condemned the threats and pressures against the Caribbean island by the United States and described the embargo as the harshest and most severe set of sanctions in contemporary history.
- The Reverend Jim Winkler, head of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, issued a declaration of principles in which he called for an end to the embargo and the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States. He opposed the imposition by Donald Trump's Administration of new restrictions on travel between Cuba and the United States and the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, a measure intended to diminish the quality of life of the Cuban people.
- The Argentine Movement for Solidarity with Cuba rejected the decision of the United States Government to activate Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which tightened the economic, commercial and financial embargo that had been imposed on Cuba for almost six decades. In a statement, the group said that the entry into force of Title III would affect not only the island, but also companies from third countries with significant investments in such sectors as tourism, mining and energy. Those new acts of aggression revealed that the empire was becoming desperate in the face of continental resistance, led by the Cuban example, to its recolonization plan.
- Le Thi Thu Hang, spokeswoman for the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reiterated her country's historic support for Cuba and its opposition to the United States embargo, at a time when the Trump Administration was intensifying its efforts to strangle the Cuban economy.
- The Foreign Ministers of the countries of the Caribbean Community, gathered at the twenty-second meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations, held on 13 and 14 May 2019 in Grenada, issued a statement reiterating the steadfast support of the Community for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba.
- Theresa Clair Clarice Charles, Ambassador of Grenada to Cuba and head of the Caribbean diplomatic corps in Cuba, said that the United States embargo against the island was a heartless, cruel and evil imposition that sought to crush the resistance of a people that had fought against colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism. Despite the difficulties created by the embargo, Cuba had not hesitated to contribute to the development of poor, vulnerable third-world countries.
- Mukhtar Yerman, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security of the Mazhilis (Lower Chamber of the Parliament) of Kazakhstan, reiterated to the Cuban Ambassador to the Eurasian country that Kazakhstan would continue to support Cuba in the face of the tightening embargo and the escalating aggression of the United States Government. Kazakhstan was in favour of peace, respectful dialogue, the sovereign equality of States and security in international relations, as well as non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples.
- The Saint Vincent and the Grenadines/Cuba Friendship Society issued a strongly worded statement condemning the most recent sanctions imposed by the United States against Cuba.
- The Government of Mexico, in a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, rejected the decision of the Trump Administration to apply the Helms-

Burton Act in its entirety to Cuba. Although the measure might affect foreign companies doing business in and with Cuba, the Mexican Government would protect Mexican companies that had business interests relating to the island.

- In May 2019, the Russian Duma adopted a resolution condemning the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, an anti-Cuban law that constituted a clear affront to the sovereignty not only of Cuba, but also of States that cooperated actively with Cuba.
- On 22 May 2019, the Council of Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, at its 109th session, adopted a declaration condemning the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, emphasizing that the embargo constituted the main obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Cuba and demanding that the embargo be lifted immediately and unconditionally. The Council also denounced the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and the extraterritorial effects thereof.
- On 14 June 2019, at the sixth meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community and Cuba, a statement was adopted rejecting the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and denouncing the new measures taken to tighten the embargo, including the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

### **Conclusions**

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government against Cuba for nearly six decades is the most unjust, severe and prolonged system of unilateral sanctions applied against any country. It is, in its essence and its aims, a unilateral act of aggression and an ongoing threat to the stability of our country. From April 2018 to March 2019, the policy continued to escalate, and its extraterritorial application was reinforced.

During that period, the embargo caused Cuba losses of approximately \$4,343,600,000. The significant negative impact of the measures recently taken by the United States to tighten the embargo against Cuba is not taken into account in this report, because those measures continued to be applied after the period under review. That information will be included in next year's report.

At current prices, the losses accumulated in almost six decades of application of the United States policy are \$138,843,400,000. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the embargo has caused quantifiable losses of more than \$922,630,000,000, a figure that is 1.2 per cent lower than that included in the previous report because of the 1.6 per cent decrease in the price of gold.

This policy imposed by the United States Government is the main obstacle to the development of the Cuban economy and the full enjoyment of all the human rights of the Cuban people, and it poses a serious challenge to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The human damage caused by these sanctions is incalculable. No Cuban family or sector has been spared their impact. Over 77 per cent of the Cuban population was born and raised under the economic siege imposed by Washington.

During the period under review, financial persecution in the jurisdictions of various countries continued to intensify. Limitations were imposed on the Cuban banking system by 140 foreign banks. In addition, OFAC and other State agencies in the United States imposed fines on various third-country companies for violating sanctions programmes, including CACR.

The restrictions on travel to Cuba, announced by the United States Departments of the Treasury and Commerce in June 2019, reflected the intention of the current United States Government to continue to pursue its policy of tightening the embargo. These regulatory changes are not only contrary to the opinion of a majority of Americans, who favour trade relations with Cuba, but also directly attack the emerging private sector in Cuba. The purpose remains to asphyxiate the Cuban economy and impose additional obstacles to its development.

The continued application of the Helms-Burton Act by the Government of the United States is an indisputable sign of the escalation of that Government's aggression against Cuba. The purpose of the Act is to damage the country's economy and, in so doing, to overthrow the Cuban Revolution. This same aspiration can be traced back through 12 different United States Governments, which resorted to using a variety of tools and mechanisms in an attempt to impose on Cuba a Government of their liking, recover their hegemony over the island and integrate it into their geopolitical strategy.

The Helms-Burton Act violates such norms and principles of international law as the self-determination of peoples, sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Furthermore, it violates the principle of peaceful coexistence among nations.

The embargo remains an absurd, obsolete, illegal and morally unsustainable policy that has not succeeded and will not succeed in its purpose of crushing the patriotic resolve of the Cuban people to preserve its sovereignty and independence. Cuba will continue its sovereign and tireless effort to pursue the objectives of justice, equity and solidarity, which are at the root of the Cuban model.

The United States has arrogantly and contemptuously ignored not only the 27 General Assembly resolutions condemning the embargo but also the many and varied voices, inside and outside that country, that are calling for an end to this unjust policy.

Under these particularly complex circumstances, Cuba and its people are confident that they can continue to count on the support of the international community in their legitimate demand for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government.

## **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

[Original: English]  
[12 March 2019]

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea extends its strongest commitment and full support in favour of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", in compliance with the constant principled position of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 that object to any form of unilateral sanctions.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea condemns the United States embargo against Cuba as an infringement upon sovereignty and a crime against humanity and human rights in violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

It is a unanimous demand of the United Nations Member States to end the anachronistic and unjust United States embargo against Cuba that hinders the economic and social development of Cuba and its fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals in a peaceful environment.

On 27 consecutive occasions, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, resolutions calling for the lifting of the United States blockade against Cuba at the earliest date, and it shows steady faith and continued support of the international community for the people of Cuba, who are struggling for justice and world peace.

The United States, in violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, has imposed a pernicious unilateral embargo against Cuba which harms the country's economy and its State and non-State sectors in all aspects. The economic loss of Cuba because of the United States embargo is estimated to have reached the amount of tens of trillions of dollars up to now.

Despite the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2015, the unjust policy of the blockade against Cuba that has existed for 57 years still remains in full force.

On 8 November 2017, that policy was strengthened with the adoption by the United States Departments of State, the Treasury and Commerce of new provisions and regulations to implement the measures announced by the Administration of President Donald Trump, included in the directive entitled "National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba".

In addition, on 4 March 2019, the United States Department of State announced a decision to allow, as of 19 March 2019 and pursuant to Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, legal actions in the United States courts only against Cuban companies included in the "List of Restricted Cuban Entities" elaborated by that Government.

The extraterritorial Helms-Burton Act, which further expands its sanctions' impact to other countries engaged in economic and commercial relations with Cuba, also hampers joint efforts of the countries in the region aspiring to peaceful and sustainable development.

All the facts above clearly show that the scheme of the United States to force the people of Cuba to give in and thus to induce a "regime change" through an inveterate economic embargo has never changed.

The adoption of the resolution calling for an end to the economic blockade of the United States against Cuba by an overwhelming majority at the General Assembly for several decades is a reflection of the consensus of the international community that shows off its support and solidarity towards the righteous struggle of Cuba.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expresses once again its strong support for and solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba, who are struggling to safeguard the dignity and sovereignty of their country and to achieve unity and cooperation in the region against the unilateral sanctions of the United States against Cuba.

## **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

[Original: French]  
[22 May 2019]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the importance that the Secretary-General continues to attach to the issue of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, despite the many General Assembly resolutions calling for it to be lifted.

The steps taken by the United States to lift certain sanctions, in particular the restrictions on travel for family reasons and on remittances, the authorization for the development of communications services between the two countries and the reopening of the embassies of Cuba in Washington, D.C., and of the United States in Havana, are greatly welcomed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a path towards full resolution of the issue.

However, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo realigns itself with the will of the international community, expressed on several occasions, in particular through the adoption, on 1 November 2018, of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) by 189 States, and supports any new initiative to engage Cuba and the United States in a constructive and fruitful dialogue to completely end the embargo.

## **Dominica**

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

The Commonwealth of Dominica has neither promulgated nor applied any law or measure that in any way hinders the freedom of trade and navigation with the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica has embraced and will continue to embrace the Republic of Cuba as a fellow member of the United Nations, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Bolivarian Alliance for the People of our America-Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP) and a sister nation of the Caribbean. For over 37 years, the Governments and peoples of both nations have enjoyed strong cultural and political ties and solidarity in a number of areas of cooperation, especially in education, health and sports.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica unreservedly opposes the extraterritorial enforcement of national legislation that demonstrates disregard for and undermines the sovereignty of other States without the authorization of the United Nations. Such unilateral actions are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and customs and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica views with grave concern the decision to fully apply Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and its resulting negative consequences and reiterates the call for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, which has done much damage to the Cuban people over the past 60 years. This is a call for the return to the well-established reliance on dialogue and diplomacy as core strategies for the resolution of outstanding issues between members of the international community.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica urges that due consideration be given to the call by States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and by the vast majority of the international community for an end to the embargo and for dialogue and compromise to be given pride of place in the relations between our two hemispheric neighbours.

## **Dominican Republic**

[Original: Spanish]  
[10 April 2019]

The Government of the Dominican Republic has reiterated in various international and regional forums that its international relations are governed by the

norms and principles of the self-determination of peoples and the sovereignty of States, which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in public international law. Consequently, it will not promulgate, promote or apply any provisions that involve intervening in the internal affairs of other States.

## **Djibouti**

[Original: English]  
[15 March 2019]

The Republic of Djibouti wishes to reaffirm its fundamental commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law.

Furthermore, the Republic of Djibouti voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8, and thus has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to the resolution and, as such, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

## **Ecuador**

[Original: Spanish]  
[12 April 2019]

Ecuador has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8. Moreover, it fulfils its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

Ecuador traditionally supports the resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and participates in the debate to advocate for an end to the unjust embargo which seriously affects the economic and social development of the Cuban people, and which conflicts with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Ecuador maintains close relations with Cuba, and its trade with that country has increased in recent years, by 2 per cent between 2017 and 2018.

On 7 March 2001, Partial Scope Economic Complementarity Agreement No. 46 entered into force. This Agreement was concluded by the Republic of Ecuador and the Republic of Cuba within the framework of the Latin American Integration Association and is aimed at strengthening reciprocal trade through the granting of tariff and non-tariff preferences.

## **Egypt**

[Original: English]  
[25 March 2019]

The Arab Republic of Egypt has voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8, in line with its consistent position that unilateral sanctions imposed outside the framework of the United Nations are not a course of action that Egypt can condone.

The embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba constitutes a clear violation of the principles of multilateralism and is in breach of the principles of the

Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as of the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and mutual trust.

The unjust and unjustifiable embargo causes undue economic and social hardship on the Cuban people. It also affects the vital sectors of the Cuban economy. The embargo is an anachronism from a bygone era that must be lifted. The embargo has an extended effect on companies and citizens from third countries. The extraterritorial effects violate the sovereign rights of many Member States. Egypt is deeply concerned over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo, which is an added argument in favour of its prompt elimination.

Egypt welcomed the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2016 and the voting record on General Assembly resolution 71/5, with no Member State voting against it, and recognized the advances made in some areas with regard to the regulations issued by the United States. Egypt is hopeful that such steps will pave the way towards the normalization of all aspects of bilateral relations between the two countries.

However, while such advances constituted a step in the right direction, they remain insufficient, as the imposition of the blockade has remained unchanged and the laws and regulations underpinning it continue to be in force and implemented with utmost severity.

Egypt believes that many steps and brave decisions still need to be taken by the United States towards the immediate lifting of the embargo imposed against Cuba, to allow for the full normalization of relations between the two countries.

Egypt believes that the embargo continues to be a counterproductive and morally insupportable policy, which has not served the purpose of breaking the Cuban people's determination to control their own future. And, in spite of all the detrimental repercussions and adverse impacts of the embargo, the Government of Cuba has made enormous efforts in meeting the needs of its people.

What has been proved through over 57 years of embargo against Cuba is that, in this globalized world, the Cuban people can still survive thanks to their perseverance and hope.

Egypt hopes that dialogue between the two countries, based on mutual respect and on observance of the principles of international law and of the Charter, will lead to the immediate lifting of the embargo and the normalization of bilateral relations between the two countries in all their aspects.

In this new context, Egypt once again urges the United States to comply immediately and fully with all 27 General Assembly resolutions, which were adopted by the overwhelming majority of the international community, and to put an end to the unjustified embargo, which should never have existed and must cease once and for all.

## **El Salvador**

[Original: Spanish]  
[15 March 2019]

The Republic of El Salvador, which is committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and is fully aware of the need to eliminate the unilateral application of coercive economic, commercial and financial measures by one State against another that affect the development of the latter's people, reaffirms its strong support for calls to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

It is well known that the embargo affects the Cuban economy and its State and non-State sectors, as well as areas of vital importance to the Cuban social system, such as health, education, food, sports and culture. El Salvador therefore considers the embargo to be a deplorable action that seriously affects the progress and development of Cuba and shows disrespect for the dignity and sovereignty of that nation.

It is also well known that the mechanisms to implement and tighten the embargo against Cuba constitute grave violations of the principles governing economic, commercial, monetary and financial relations, as well as numerous United Nations resolutions.

The Republic of Cuba continues to be prevented from freely exporting and importing goods and services to or from the United States and is unable to have direct banking relations with that country or receive United States investment in other sectors of the economy. The tightening of the embargo is further reflected in the imposition of fines running into the millions of dollars on banks and financial institutions that maintain links with Cuba, as well as in the bias against international financial transactions that include Cuba.

It should be noted that, despite all the unilateral measures, Cuba, with perseverance and determination, has managed to overcome the obstacles and adversities facing it. In this light, El Salvador welcomes the efforts the country has been making to open and strengthen its economy and to improve its production processes.

El Salvador believes that, in order for the international community to advance firmly towards development, there must be an end to unilateral measures, including the embargo against Cuba, not only in accordance with international law but also because the embargo has caused incalculable harm to the Cuban people.

Lastly, El Salvador recognizes the growing strength of the international community's call to lift the embargo, and once more joins this call and reiterates the urgent need to bring an end to it.

## **Equatorial Guinea**

[Original: Spanish]  
[10 April 2019]

Through its various statements on the necessity of ending the embargo against Cuba, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has consistently indicated and insistently focused on the urgent need to end the economic embargo and isolation to which Cuba had been subjected for many years.

It is very evident today that there has been a notable and worrying setback, with the strengthening of a policy that exacerbates the embargo and economic isolation by the Government of the United States of America. Its attitude stands in contrast to the positive initiative of then-President Barack Obama to restore diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba, as well as the consequent reopening of the respective diplomatic offices of both countries.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea calls for the resumption of that positive trend which sparked great optimism in the international community, and for the previous initiative to be supported and consolidated with actions, steps and decisions by the Government of the United States that will lead to a complete and irreversible lifting of the embargo against Cuba, in all aspects: economic, commercial and financial.



We are convinced that such measures would allow Cuba to reach its full development potential in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **Eritrea**

[Original: English]

[24 April 2019]

The Government of the State of Eritrea has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 73/8.

Eritrea remains strongly opposed to the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which is inconsistent with the principles of international law and undermines the efforts of Cuba and its people to achieve all the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Eritrea joins other States in calling upon the United States to immediately repeal or invalidate all laws or measures that continue to adversely impact the livelihoods of the Cuban people and Cuban nationals living in other countries.

## **Eswatini**

[Original: English]

[7 May 2019]

The Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini continues to applaud the major steps taken by the Government of the United States of America in 2016 in working towards cementing a policy shift intended to normalize relations between the United States and Cuba, in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Kingdom of Eswatini fully supports any such effort and engagement by the United States and Cuba. It is the Kingdom's prayer that the United States consider the appeal by the international community to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo, thus ensuring that Cuba enjoys all the freedoms, rights and privileges enjoyed by all sovereign nation States, without any hindrance.

## **Ethiopia**

[Original: English]

[10 May 2019]

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia views the continued imposition of an economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba as a violation of the principles of multilateralism and as a breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The unilateral measures of the United States directed against Cuba have caused social and economic problems in Cuba, negatively affecting the living conditions of the Cuban people. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia therefore wishes to see the embargo lifted in order for the people and Government of Cuba to enjoy their rights in accordance with the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia believes that constructive dialogue is necessary to foster mutual trust and understanding among the nations of the world.

## European Union

[Original: English]

[30 April 2019]

The European Union and its member States believe the unilateral measures of the United States against Cuba should be ended. The economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed by the United States contributes to the economic problems in Cuba, negatively affecting the living standards of the Cuban people and having consequences in the humanitarian field as well. In addition, the measures directed against Cuba negatively affect the interests of the European Union and violate commonly accepted rules of international trade. The introduction by the United States Administration of new restrictions and the ban on individual self-directed travel from the United States, in particular, not only curtails the possibility for engagement with the Cuban people, but is also having a negative impact on Cuba's nascent private sector.

The European Union and its member States have been clearly expressing their opposition to the extraterritorial application of the United States embargo, such as that contained in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

In November 1996, the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted a regulation and a joint action to protect the interests of natural or legal persons resident in the European Union against the extraterritorial application of the Helms-Burton legislation, which prohibits compliance with that legislation and allows for the recovery of any damages derived therefrom. Moreover, on 18 May 1998, at the European Union-United States Summit in London, a package was agreed covering waivers to Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act; a commitment by the United States Administration to resist future extraterritorial legislation of that kind; and an understanding with respect to disciplines for the strengthening of investment protection.

Against this backdrop, the European Union regrets the United States Government's recent decision to activate Title III. The activation of Title III violates the European Union-United States agreements of 1998. The European Union recalls that it has delivered, and is continuing to deliver, on its commitments under the agreements and calls on the United States to do the same and to reintroduce a full waiver of Title III. The European Union and its member States will consider all instruments and options at its disposal to protect European Union investments and the economic activities of European Union nationals and companies operating in Cuba.

The European Union is convinced that closer engagement with Cuba at all levels, including civil society, is the correct approach to contributing to the country's modernization and positive change. With the European Union-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement, the European Union offers Cuba a consistent and reliable partnership to support it as the country seeks economic and social reforms, sustainable development and common solutions to global challenges, while continuing to promote democracy and respect for human rights.

## Fiji

[Original: English]

[20 May 2019]

The Government of Fiji reaffirms its support for resolution [73/8](#), in which the General Assembly called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Government of Fiji reiterates its position that all States should refrain from imposing economic sanctions of the nature referred to in the resolution, thereby conforming to the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of Fiji wishes to reaffirm that Fiji has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Fiji. On the contrary, Fiji is intent on developing cooperative relations with all countries and, in this regard, fully supports the call for lifting the embargo against Cuba.

## **Gabon**

[Original: French]  
[24 April 2019]

The Government of Gabon reiterates its commitment to peace and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Gabon voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and previous resolutions in accordance with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of that instrument, which are based on cooperation among States and the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

Gabon remains concerned about the maintenance of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and its adverse effects on the Cuban people, including Cuban nationals living in other countries.

Gabon expresses its strong hope that the United Nations resolutions echoing the collective call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba will be respected and implemented, thus allowing Cuba to participate in and benefit from international trade.

Gabon also calls on the international community to continue its efforts to ensure that relations between the two countries are normalized.

## **Gambia**

[Original: English]  
[23 April 2019]

The Government of the Gambia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#). Accordingly, the Gambia is opposed to the continued enactment or application of such laws, acts or measures against Cuba that impede the free flow of international trade and navigation. The embargo against Cuba contravenes the fundamental principles of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, violating the sovereign equality of States and the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other Member States. The embargo has no legitimate or moral justification, given the fact that it continues to undermine the essential rights to economic emancipation and to development of the Cuban people; it must come to an immediate end.

As a responsible member of the international community, the Gambia therefore joins other Member States in calling for the immediate repeal or invalidation of such laws, measures or policies that impede the free flow of international trade and navigation, as they are contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law.

It is our fervent desire that the relevant United Nations resolutions echoing collective concerns on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba will be respected and implemented.

## **Georgia**

[Original: English]  
[6 May 2019]

Georgia reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution [73/8](#). Georgia has not promulgated or applied laws or taken measures against Cuba that would prohibit or restrict economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Georgia.

## **Ghana**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Ghana, in furtherance of its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the established principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in internal affairs, joins the overwhelming majority of Member States in expressing concern about the persistent economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The continued imposition of the embargo against Cuba constitutes an infringement on the right to development of the Cuban people and undermines their national as well as collective efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Consequently, Ghana has consistently advocated and supported General Assembly resolutions calling for the unconditional lifting of the embargo.

Furthermore, the Government of Ghana, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter, continues to refrain from promulgating or enforcing laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

In that context, and in solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba, Ghana reiterates the clarion call for compliance with all relevant General Assembly resolutions and for the full and immediate ending of the embargo.

## **Grenada**

[Original: English]  
[17 April 2019]

Grenada, as a sovereign, independent State with the firm conviction of the sovereign equality of States, continues to recognize, uphold and adhere to the principles of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States.

Consequently, Grenada reiterates that it neither promulgates, applies nor condones laws and measures that encroach on or undermine the sovereign rights of any State or laws that restrict and hinder international trade and/or navigation by any State, and issues another clarion call for the removal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Government and people of Cuba by the United States of America.

Grenada continues to perceive the unfettered adverse effects of said embargo as an impediment to the goal of human development. The embargo not only undermines

the fundamental principles of humanity but remains counterproductive in its application and contravenes the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States; in this case, the Republic of Cuba.

With this comprehension and conviction, Grenada unreservedly supports General Assembly resolution 73/8, which calls for conformity with obligations premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and speaks to the necessity of ending said embargo.

## Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]  
[29 April 2019]

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/8, the Republic of Guatemala wishes to report that it has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures contrary to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations or to the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Guatemala rejects any unilateral measures that run counter to the principles of free trade and international law and urges those countries that continue to maintain such provisions in their domestic legislation to take the necessary steps to repeal or rescind them.

Consequently, there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Guatemala and Cuba.

## Guinea

[Original: French]  
[24 April 2019]

As in the past, the Government of the Republic of Guinea regrets the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

Over time, it has been recognized that this embargo constitutes a real obstacle to the socioeconomic development of Cuba and causes serious humanitarian consequences for the Cuban people, as well as significant financial loss.

The Government of Guinea urges the Governments of Cuba and the United States to continue dialogue, based on mutual understanding and reciprocal respect for each other's sovereignty, with a view to the immediate lifting of the embargo in accordance with the numerous relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including the most recent, resolution 73/8, which was adopted on 1 November 2018.

Finally, the Government of Guinea asks all States to work, in accordance with their international obligations, towards the implementation of the annual resolution in which the General Assembly, since 1992, has called for an end to the embargo imposed on the Cuban people.

## Guinea-Bissau

[Original: French]  
[18 April 2019]

Guinea-Bissau reaffirms that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of national laws are contrary to the need to promote dialogue and to uphold the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of Guinea-Bissau has not endorsed any resolutions against Cuba and has adopted no internal mechanisms for their implementation, as they are unilateral and contrary to the norms of international law, in particular with regard to freedom of trade and navigation.

Guinea-Bissau regrets that the embargo, which has been in place for more than 58 years, continues to cause the Cuban people significant harm in all major sectors of the Cuban economy, such as public health, nutrition and agriculture, as well as banking, trade, investment and tourism.

In addition, this decades-long embargo has prevented progress and socioeconomic development and, for as long as it lasts, will continue to obstruct the efforts of Cuba to achieve sustainable development.

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau therefore acknowledges the importance attached by the Secretary-General to this issue and calls for the full implementation of resolution 73/8.

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau also calls upon the international community to continue its efforts to assist Cuba and the United States in reaching an agreement through constructive dialogue, with a view to improving ties relations between the two States.

## **Guyana**

[Original: English]  
[4 April 2019]

The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana has consistently demonstrated its unwavering respect for, and adherence to, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including those stated in General Assembly resolution 73/8.

Accordingly, the Cooperative Republic of Guyana has not enacted any legislation or adopted any policies or practices the extraterritorial effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States. Further, the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana is in full compliance with and remains fully supportive of General Assembly resolution 73/8.

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana, as a matter of principle, has maintained a consistent position of firm opposition to the economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reiterates the call for an end to that policy, which is inimical to the development efforts of Cuba and contrary to the spirit of the Charter.

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana encourages constructive dialogue between the United States of America and Cuba as a means of building trust and ultimately leading to a complete normalization of relations between the two countries.

The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana recalls the earlier steps taken by the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Cuba to remove impediments to friendly relations between the two countries and notes that progress is possible when the parties engage in constructive dialogue. Noting with deep regret that these efforts at normalizing relations were not sustained, the Government of Guyana implores the Government of the United States of America to engage the Government of Cuba with a view to finding a sustainable path forward in the interest of the wellbeing of the Cuban people. The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana remains hopeful that the two Governments will work towards a permanent resolution of this long-standing issue.

## Haiti

[Original: French]  
[15 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Haiti has never promulgated any laws, legal provisions or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 73/8, adopted by the General Assembly on 1 November 2018.

Haiti reaffirms its commitment and adherence to the purposes and principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, and the right of States and their nationals to enjoy freely the benefits of navigation and trade. There is a need for States to act in accordance with those principles of international law by renouncing unilateral measures that can affect the social, economic and financial structures of other States.

On the basis of those principles, the Government of Haiti has always supported the efforts undertaken by its sister republic of Cuba regarding the urgent necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo, which has affected that country for many years, within the United Nations and at various Summits of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The Government of the Republic of Haiti therefore welcomes the progress made in bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba and hopes that such progress may lead the new United States Administration to lift the economic and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

## Honduras

[Original: Spanish]  
[30 April 2019]

In accordance with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, Honduras has not promulgated or applied any unilateral economic or commercial laws or measures against other States that might affect the free flow of international trade.

## Iceland

[Original: English]  
[27 March 2019]

The Government of Iceland reaffirms its position in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8. Iceland neither promulgates nor applies any laws or measures referred to in resolution 73/8. Iceland does not apply trade or economic legislation against Cuba that restricts or discourages trade with or investment in Cuba. Iceland opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures to a third country.

## India

[Original: English]  
[25 March 2019]

India has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8 and, as such, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

India has consistently opposed any unilateral measure by countries that impinge on the sovereignty of another country. These include any attempt to extend the application of a country's laws extraterritorially to other sovereign nations.

India recalls the Final Documents adopted by the Seventeenth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held on Margarita Island, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) from 17 to 18 September 2016 on this subject and the Santa Cruz Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77, as well as other high-level decisions of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and urges the international community to adopt all necessary measures to protect the sovereign rights of all countries.

## **Indonesia**

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia reiterates its strongest opposition to unilateral coercive measures with extraterritorial effect against the sovereignty of other States and reiterates the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation. In that regard, Indonesia also continues to reject additional measures aimed at further strengthening the unilateral embargo against Cuba.

The Government of Indonesia reaffirms that the prolonged imposition of the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States against Cuba violates the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, which are enshrined in many international legal instruments, including the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States.

The unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, which has lasted for almost six decades, continues to constitute one of the main obstacles for Cuba to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and meeting targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, the embargo is not in line with the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, which urges States to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral, economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development.

The Government of Indonesia expresses its serious concern that the blockade has significant and damaging consequences for the economic and social welfare of the people of Cuba, particularly women, children and older persons. The blockade policy has also violated the rights of Cuban people to have access to basic needs including food, healthcare and education.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia underlines the importance of enhanced dialogue with a view to ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba and towards normalization of bilateral relations.

## **Iran (Islamic Republic of)**

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its strong opposition to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, as well as to the extraterritorial application of United States domestic laws and the adoption of



discriminatory trade practices. Hence, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not applied nor promulgated any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8.

Moreover, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its serious dismay at the continued economic, commercial and financial sanctions against Cuba, despite the annual adoption of a General Assembly resolution calling for the lifting of, and putting an end to, the embargo against Cuba by the Government of the United States of America.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its conviction that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba runs counter to the principles of international law governing relations among States and contradicts the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for promoting solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among nations.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, which has lasted for decades, continues to adversely affect the living conditions and human rights of the Cuban people and will hamper the efforts of the Government of Cuba to achieve sustainable development. Such measures serve no purpose other than inflicting tremendous hardship and suffering on the people of Cuba, especially women and children. The embargo has seriously jeopardized the legitimate rights and interests of Cuba and other States, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation, and therefore has to be immediately lifted, as requested in all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

The adoption of the General Assembly resolution, with such a wide range of support and over so many years, clearly indicates the strong objection of the international community to unilateral economic coercive measures in general, and the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba in particular. It is also a sign of sympathy with the aspiration of the Government and people of Cuba to put an end to this unlawful and inhumane embargo.

As the international community is facing major challenges, such as food insecurity and malnutrition, environmental degradation, increased poverty and unemployment, the imposition of the embargo seems unjustifiable more than ever and deserves stronger objections at the international level.

The Islamic Republic of Iran urges the States Members of the United Nations to adopt all necessary measures to put an end to this inhumane embargo against the people and Government of Cuba and to protect the sovereign right of all other countries to expand trade and economic relations with Cuba.

The Islamic Republic of Iran remains opposed to the application of unilateral economic and trade measures by the United States against other countries that blocks the flow of people, trade and finance, as well as to the extraterritorial application and effects of such national legislation on the sovereignty of other States. Such unilateral coercive measures are contrary to the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, which has long been subject to economic coercive measures, shares the concern of the Government and people of Cuba and therefore emphasizes the urgent need to put an end to such measures and to fully implement General Assembly resolution 73/8.

## Iraq

[Original: Arabic]  
[8 April 2019]

In keeping with its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions and its respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of trade and navigation for all States, Iraq supports all the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Iraq declares its solidarity with Cuba and its full support for the right of the Cuban people to self-determination and its sovereign right to benefit from the use of its land and waters without any economic restrictions.

Iraq rejects illegal economic measures that affect vulnerable groups, in particular children, women, the elderly and the sick, hinder development and impede efforts to eradicate poverty in Cuba.

Iraq welcomes any diplomatic mediation efforts to encourage the United States and Cuba to engage in negotiations and dialogue that lead to the ending of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, and it welcomes all efforts to normalize relations between the two countries and enable Cubans to again engage freely in trade and economic activity, in keeping with the efforts of the United Nations to achieve sustainable development for all peoples, without exception.

## Jamaica

[Original: English]  
[24 April 2019]

The Government of Jamaica stands resolutely with the Government of the Republic of Cuba and its people against the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America.

This stance is based on Jamaica's long-standing adherence to the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, enshrined in international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

In 2018, Jamaica was among the 189 Member States of the United Nations that supported General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), thereby highlighting the fact that the overwhelming majority of the international community is opposed to the illegal application of unilateral coercive measures and extraterritorial laws, not authorized by international law and the Security Council.

It is a well-established fact that such measures have been found to have a negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms of citizens, albeit they are generally intended to target States on the premise of human rights violations.

Jamaica holds firmly to the belief that the economic, commercial and financial blockade constitutes the principal obstacle for the development of the Cuban economy and hinders the implementation of the country's national plan for economic and social development as well as the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The embargo creates obstacles to Cuba's trade with United States companies as well as their subsidiaries in third-party countries and with other countries. Unilateral

coercive measures that are not applied in accordance with international law and the Charter undermine the ability of States to maintain vibrant trade and commercial relations and thus access resources and technologies relevant to the full realization of social and economic development.

Consequently, the restrictions imposed under the embargo deprive Cuba of access to food, medicine, new scientific and medical technology and capabilities in the field of information and communications technologies, among other essential resources. They also negatively impact the well-being of the population, in particular vulnerable persons such as women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Jamaica is concerned that, despite progress made in recent years towards a rapprochement between the United States of America and Cuba, we are now witnessing a retraction of prospects for meaningful dialogue between those countries and for maintaining regional peace and security.

Jamaica's strong advocacy for Cuba to be fully reintegrated into the hemisphere is based on its view that the embargo is not only a punitive measure against Cuba but also an impediment to shared regional development goals.

In keeping with that stance, action has been taken at the national level, and in October 2018, the Jamaican Parliament again approved a resolution in full support of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Within regional forums, Jamaica, along with other members of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), recently reaffirmed, in the Managua declaration adopted at the eighth summit meeting of ACS, in March 2019, its appeal to the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, trade and financial embargo it imposes on Cuba, as well as to repeal the Helms-Burton Act and stop its extraterritorial enforcement.

At the multilateral level, Jamaica has consistently supported annual General Assembly resolutions, including the most recent resolution, [73/8](#), calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, and urges all Member States to uphold the Charter by ceasing the application of such inimical measures, as well as resolution [73/167](#), on human rights and unilateral coercive measures.

Jamaica remains seized of this matter, with the aspiration that, in the near future, States using such methods for coercion and interference in the internal affairs of other States will take steps to repeal or invalidate such laws, acknowledging that they are ineffective tools to induce positive change for the advancement of countries and in particular their peoples.

## Japan

[Original: English]  
[4 April 2019]

The Government of Japan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind that are referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

The Government of Japan believes that the economic policy of the United States towards Cuba should be considered primarily as a bilateral issue. However, Japan shares the concern, arising from the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 (known as the Helms-Burton Act) and the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, that, if application of such legislation causes undue hardship in relation to the economic activities of the enterprises or nationals of a third party, the legislation is likely to run

counter to international law regarding the extraterritorial application of domestic laws.

The Government of Japan has been closely following the situation in relation to the above-mentioned legislation and the surrounding circumstances, and its concern remains unchanged. Having considered the matter with the utmost care, Japan voted in favour of resolution [73/8](#).

## **Jordan**

[Original: English]  
[11 March 2019]

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has not applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has consistently voted in favour of resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

## **Kazakhstan**

[Original: English]  
[24 April 2019]

In its foreign policy, Kazakhstan is guided by the principles of international law and stands for the rights of nations to develop according to their own way of development.

Kazakhstan strongly condemns any unilateral acts that affect the sovereignty of another State.

Kazakhstan has never adopted any national regulations that infringe upon, impede or delay the development of other countries, including in the economic, commercial and financial spheres.

In this regard, Kazakhstan, like the overwhelming majority of members of the international community, calls for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba and the cessation of all acts that are contrary to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

## **Kenya**

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Kenya reaffirms and reiterates its objection to the unilateral coercive measures that are at variance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Kenya has never unilaterally promulgated or applied laws or measures of any kind that have extraterritorial effects affecting the sovereignty of other States. The majority of the States Members of the United Nations and States members of other international organizations have called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. Kenya believes in and upholds the principles of maintaining friendly relations, including commerce, among all nations for the promotion of peace and security, as indispensable ingredients for the social and economic advancement of all people.

Kenya will continue to oppose the blockade against Cuba, which has negatively affected the citizens of Cuba and, in line with the position of the African Union, calls for the immediate lifting of the long-standing and unjustifiable economic and trade embargo imposed on Cuba, so as to allow that country to enjoy all the legitimate prospects for its sustained development. The Government of the Republic of Kenya has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions containing calls for the lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

To reaffirm Kenya's solidarity and support for Cuba the Vice President of the Cuban Council of State, Inés María Chapman, visited Kenya in April 2019 and met top government officials, including the President of the Republic of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta. Both countries reaffirmed their keenness to boost commerce, deepen exchange programmes in the health sector and other fields through scholarships for personnel, and share best practices in support of Kenya's "Big Four" agenda, including universal health coverage, regarding which the Cuban Government is at the forefront in support and in partnership.

## **Kiribati**

[Original: English]  
[3 June 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Kiribati reiterates its support for the implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial or financial relations between Kiribati and Cuba – or, for that matter, any other country.

The resolution addresses moral and humanitarian considerations and, when implemented, will contribute positively to improving the general welfare and well-being of the people of Cuba.

## **Kuwait**

[Original: English]  
[22 March 2019]

The State of Kuwait supports the implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), with an emphasis on the need to comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Furthermore, the State of Kuwait has always voted in favour of the resolutions of the General Assembly calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba.

## **Kyrgyzstan**

[Original: English]  
[25 April 2019]

In its foreign policy, the Kyrgyz Republic firmly adheres to the fundamental norms and principles of international law, including the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and advocates respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation.

## Lao People's Democratic Republic

[Original: English]  
[24 April 2019]

The Lao People's Democratic Republic would like to reaffirm its position that an embargo, with its extraterritorial implications, not only hinders the socioeconomic development of a nation, but it also contradicts the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law and the sovereign equality of States, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation. As such, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has neither promulgated nor applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 73/8.

The imposition of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America not only violates international law, but it also imposes severe restrictions and obstacles to the socioeconomic development of Cuba. Against this backdrop, the Lao People's Democratic Republic calls for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba at the earliest possible time.

## Lebanon

[Original: English]  
[1 May 2019]

The Government of Lebanon fully complies with General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled the "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", in accordance with the principles of the United Nations and international law.

## Lesotho

[Original: English]  
[24 April 2019]

The Kingdom of Lesotho reaffirms its commitment to the provisions and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law which, inter alia, provide for the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Kingdom of Lesotho is deeply concerned about the harmful effects of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. In that regard, Lesotho calls upon the United States to lift the embargo imposed against Cuba.

## Liberia

[Original: English]  
[13 June 2019]

The Government of Liberia remains committed to the call to end the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba – principally on humanitarian grounds, especially as the embargo poses considerable challenges to the people of Cuba.

We also acknowledge the overwhelming support for the resolutions on this matter adopted by the General Assembly over the years.

Liberia still views this call as prudent and, furthermore, envisages the normalization and strengthening of relations between the United States and Cuba.

Liberia will continue to collaborate with other States Members of the United Nations towards the achievement of this goal.

## Libya

[Original: Arabic]  
[8 March 2019]

Libya reiterates its strong opposition to unilateral measures imposed on States for political purposes, and stresses that such conduct does not help to resolve differences between States but, rather, complicates and deepens them.

Libya has consistently expressed its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. It has not enacted or applied any laws of the kind referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of General Assembly resolution 73/8.

Libya does not support the application of coercive unilateral extraterritorial economic measures, because such measures clearly violate the principles of international law.

Libya voted in favour of resolution 73/8 because it opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. It calls on States to resolve their differences by peaceful means and to shun coercive unilateral measures, which violate the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and human rights and impede efforts to achieve development, which is one of the lofty objectives of the United Nations.

## Liechtenstein

[Original: English]  
[6 March 2019]

The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”. The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein is furthermore of the view that legislation whose implementation entails measures or regulations having extraterritorial effects is inconsistent with generally recognized principles of international law.

## Madagascar

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

The Republic of Madagascar has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

In this connection, the Republic of Madagascar reiterates its support for all measures adopted with a view to ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

## Malaysia

[Original: English]  
[12 April 2019]

Malaysia reaffirms its support for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 73/8, adopted on 1 November 2018. Malaysia remains opposed to all forms of unilateral economic, financial and commercial embargoes that contravene the norms of international law and purpose of the Charter of the United Nations. Malaysia urges an end to the unilateral embargo by the United States of America against Cuba, which has impeded that nation's development and caused a significant amount of suffering for the Cuban people, and calls for the parties to resolve their disputes amicably through dialogue and negotiations.

## Malawi

[Original: English]  
[3 June 2019]

The Republic of Malawi and the Republic of Cuba enjoy cordial bilateral relations. The two countries established a joint permanent commission of cooperation in 1999, following the signing of an agreement on economic, scientific and technical cooperation. However, progress in the implementation of the agreement has been hindered by the continued isolation of the Republic of Cuba. Malawi voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", adopted by Member States on 1 November 2018.

Subsequently, Malawi continuously supported the aforementioned resolution. Malawi rejects and condemns the unilateral imposition of economic sanctions on any country by another Member State, because it is prejudicial to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, international law, international humanitarian law, international trade law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Malawi has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 73/8.

Malawi strongly believes in the amicable resolution of bilateral differences through peaceful dialogue. As such, Malawi encourages Cuba and the United States to settle the matter peacefully in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter. Therefore, Malawi is opposed to the continued unilateral application of such extraterritorial sanctions against any country and supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

## Maldives

[Original: English]  
[19 March 2019]

The Republic of Maldives is against imposing any kind of sanctions against any country without an explicit mandate from the Security Council. As such, the Republic of Maldives has not imposed any sanctions on Cuba nor has it enacted any laws or regulations that would contravene the provisions of General Assembly resolution 73/8, in support of which the Republic of Maldives has voted.



## Mali

[Original: French]  
[6 March 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Mali has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

The Government of the Republic of Mali, which fully supports General Assembly resolution 73/8, adopted by the Assembly on 1 November 2018, has not promulgated any laws or applied any measures of the kind referred to in that resolution.

As in the past, Mali maintains its position that the embargo against Cuba should be lifted.

## Mauritania

[Original: French]  
[8 May 2019]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania disagrees with and is opposed to all aspects of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania remains committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of trade and navigation.

## Mauritius

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

Mauritius reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs. In line with the above principles, and in conformity with international law, Mauritius has not promulgated any law or measure aimed at imposing a unilateral economic, commercial or financial embargo against Cuba.

The Republic of Mauritius enjoys good bilateral relations with Cuba and remains open to developing its trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

## Mexico

[Original: Spanish]  
[12 April 2019]

Mexico reiterates its firm rejection of national laws that are designed to be applied extraterritorially.

In this connection and in accordance with the rules of international law, Mexico believes that any unilateral measure by a State to effect political, economic or social change in another State runs contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the equality of States and the right to self-determination of peoples.

Mexico recognizes the efforts of Cuba to align the programmatic and legal foundations of its Government with new times, for the benefit of the Cuban people. The reform of its Constitution was subject to a popular consultation process through which the population made 650,000 proposals that led to 760 changes to the text by the National Assembly, which were adopted by citizens in the referendum of 24 February.

In the face of changes taking place in Latin America and worldwide, Mexico is convinced that relations between neighbours improve with mutual respect and understanding, for the benefit of peoples. It is therefore important to maintain open channels of dialogue and cooperation to address common issues, such as the bilateral commission between Cuba and the United States, which has met seven times and through which those neighbouring countries have addressed issues such as human trafficking; civil aviation security; law enforcement cooperation; agricultural cooperation; maritime security and cooperation in search and rescue; environmental challenges; and public health.

For Mexico, Cuba is a strategic ally. In recent years, we have worked to give this relationship more meaning and content, through intensive regular dialogue that is frank and based on respect and trust. This has deepened economic ties and cooperation on a broad agenda that is in line with current challenges.

In this regard, we have worked through the Standing Mexico-Cuba Information and Consultation Mechanism, the Mexico-Cuba Working Group, the Health Group, the Meeting of Fisheries Authorities and the Working Group on Migration and Consular Affairs. These efforts have made our day-to-day relations dynamic and effective.

In recent years we have signed 29 agreements on subjects such as air and maritime transport, migration, health, the environment, tourism and maritime delimitation. There are 34 Mexican companies and 39 Mexican investment projects in Cuba, as well as 15 scientific-technical cooperation projects in the areas of mining, geology, energy, agriculture, fisheries and the environment. We have established close links in academia, which includes 61 educational-cultural cooperation activities.

The Government of Mexico supports domestic exports to Cuba through letters of credit issued by the National Bank of Cuba and guaranteed by the National Bank of Foreign Trade of Mexico, made out to the Mexican companies in question.

In addition, measures to promote investment and trade helped Mexico to become the second Latin American trade partner of Cuba in 2018. Furthermore, Cuba is the sixty-first investor in Mexico and the twenty-third from among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

To support Cuba in its process of economic, political and social transformation, Mexico shares its technical expertise in public administration by means of seminars. Between 2015 and 2018, four seminars were held. The most recent was held from 24 to 26 May 2018, in Havana, on external economic management support.

Mexico also supports the participation of Cuba in regional economic agencies such as the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, as it promotes the integration of the island in the regional economy and facilitates access to the international financial system.

During the current administration, and as part of the interest in deepening the trade ties between Mexico and Cuba, measures will be taken to promote business opportunities and investment and strengthen development cooperation and the sharing of experiences.

## Monaco

[Original: French]  
[12 March 2019]

Pursuant to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the general principles of international law, the Principality of Monaco has not promulgated or applied any law or measure of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 73/8, adopted on 1 November 2018.

## Mongolia

[Original: English]  
[24 May 2019]

The Government of Mongolia has consistently supported the General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, and voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8.

In accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 73/8, the Government of Mongolia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution.

Mongolia reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular the principle of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government of Mongolia has consistently opposed the continued application of unilateral measures that continue to be the main obstacle to Cuba's economic and social development and reiterates its unconditional support for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

## Montenegro

[Original: English]  
[23 April 2019]

Montenegro has not adopted or applied laws or measures referred to in General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

## Mozambique

[Original: English]  
[12 April 2019]

The Republic of Mozambique has never promulgated, applied or contributed to the application of any of the laws or regulations of the kind mentioned in General Assembly resolution 73/8. This is the reason why the Republic of Mozambique voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution.

The Republic of Mozambique reiterates its unconditional support for the provisions of General Assembly resolution 73/8 and appeals to the United Nations to ensure that all Member States take the resolution into consideration.

## Myanmar

[Original: English]  
[18 March 2019]

During the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, Myanmar once again joined the international community and voted in favour of resolution 73/8, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

Myanmar believes in the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and good-neighbourliness. Nations should be guided by the principles enshrined in those guidelines to coexist, respect differences, promote prosperity and ensure safety. Myanmar stresses the need to normalize the relations between the United States and Cuba. We hope that this will lead to the eventual lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba. Total lifting of the embargo would alleviate the economic and social hardship of the Cuban people, thereby advancing their efforts towards achieving the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind.

In November 2018, 189 Member States voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8. The end of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba will contribute not only to the economic development of that country and the United States but also to the peace, stability and development of the whole region, as well as to the entire international community.

## Namibia

[Original: English]  
[9 April 2019]

As a matter of principle, the Republic of Namibia maintains that the blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba constitutes a great obstacle for the development of the full potential of the economy and well-being of the Cuban people, as well as for the economic, commercial and financial relations of Cuba and the United States and the rest of the world.

The Republic of Namibia maintains that the unconditional lifting of these illegal and unwarranted measures remains the only viable option for the normalization of relations between the two sister countries. Furthermore, it is equally important to note that the current measures taken by the United States Administration are unhelpful for achieving appreciable progress in the situation.

Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/8 on 1 November 2018, the Republic of Namibia has made interventions on various multilateral platforms to contribute to the successful implementation of the aforementioned resolution:

- On 2 November 2018, during the commemorative event for the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, speaking on behalf of the African Group, Neville Gertze, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Namibia to the United Nations in New York, stated: “It is regrettable that at a time when the world has committed itself through the implementation of Agenda 2030 to ensure that no one is left behind, these amendments and the continuation of the embargo will in effect, leave Cuba behind.”
- During the thirty-seventh ordinary session of the Permanent Representatives Committee, held on 15 and 16 January 2019 in Addis Ababa, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Namibia called upon the Committee to support a draft resolution proposed by the Cuban Government, requesting the

lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America. The Committee considered the draft resolution and agreed to table it to the Assembly of the African Union for consideration and adoption. Following this decision by the Committee, during the thirty-second ordinary session of the Assembly, held on 10 and 11 February 2019 in Addis Ababa, the Assembly took note of the resolution on “the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America” and pronounced its continued support for and solidarity with the people of Cuba.

Furthermore, various bilateral engagements with Cuba are a testament to the deep-seated strong bonds of friendship and solidarity that continue to exist between the Republic of Namibia and the Republic of Cuba, culminating in robust relations that have consolidated over the years.

Namibia and Cuba exchanged the following high-level visits during the last four years:

- In September 2015, the President of Namibia, Hage Geingob paid a State visit to Cuba.
- In January 2016, Peter H. Katjavivi visited Cuba to participate in the second United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) International Conference, “With All and for the Good of All”, on the thoughts of José Martí. Mr. Katjavivi also met with his Cuban counterpart, Esteban Lazo Hernández.
- Zephania Kameeta, Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare of Namibia, and his delegation visited Cuba in April 2017. The Minister visited schools to meet technicians and agricultural experts, as well as various facilities that deal with social programmes and humanitarian matters.
- The Namibian Minister of Defence, Penda Ya Ndakolo, visited Cuba in June 2017, at the invitation of the Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, Leopoldo Cintra Frías. The purpose of the visit was to strengthen defence cooperation between Namibia and Cuba.
- A delegation from the Ministries of Urban and Rural Development and Works and Transport visited Cuba in October/December 2017. The purpose of the visit was for the delegation to conduct personal interviews with the Cuban professional engineers/architects expected to replace the ones whose contract period expired towards the end of December 2017.
- A delegation from the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service visited Cuba from 19 January to 1 February 2018. The purpose of the visit was for the delegation to conduct interviews with the Cuban sports coaches who are expected to assist Namibia.

The Republic of Namibia and the Republic of Cuba signed the following bilateral agreements, memorandums of understanding and letters of intent, which are still extant and being periodically reviewed:

- Protocol agreements between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba and the Namibian Defence Force signed in June 2012.
- Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which facilitated the translocation of wild animals from Namibia to Cuba, signed in Namibia in June 2012.
- Specific agreement for the Cuban Medical Services between the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba and the Ministry of Health and Social Services of

Namibia, signed in Cuba on 9 October 2012 (for the provision of Cuban health professionals and technicians to Namibia on a commercial basis, at the cost of the Namibian Government).

- Collaboration of technical assistance for academic and professional activities, the “Yes I can” literacy programme, by use of audiovisual strategy with the Ministry of Education, signed in October 2012.
- Agreements on sports between the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service and Cuba Deportes for the provision of 11 sports coaches to Namibia, signed in October 2012.
- Specific agreement on Medical Academic Services between the Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Cuban Ministry of Public Health, signed on 28 February 2013 (for the training of 250 Namibian medical students, namely, 125 medical doctors, 50 dentists and 75 medical engineers/technicians, in the Cuban Medical Schools for the 2013 to 2020 academic years at the cost of the Namibian Government).
- Agreement on the Secondment of 11 Cuban technical experts and professionals to the Roads Contractor Company, signed between the Union of Caribbean Construction Companies and the Roads Contractor Company on 23 August 2013.
- Agreement for the employment or secondment of construction professionals to the National Housing Enterprise between the National Housing Enterprise and the Union of Caribbean Construction Companies, signed in April 2012. The agreement caters for four professionals in the fields of electrical engineering, civil engineering, quantity surveying and architecture.
- Letter of Intention between the University of Namibia and the University of Havana, signed in February 2014.

The Republic of Namibia reiterates its unequivocal support for the implementation of the resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

## Nauru

[Original: English]  
[20 March 2019]

The Republic of Nauru, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the National Constitution and in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which promotes solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among countries and nations, has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

The Republic of Nauru further reaffirms its full support for General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

## Nepal

[Original: English]  
[3 June 2019]

The Government of Nepal has firmly adhered to the provisions of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures contrary to the resolution.

## **New Zealand**

[Original: English]  
[15 April 2019]

The Government of New Zealand reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 73/8. The Government of New Zealand has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo against Cuba. We reiterate those calls. New Zealand has no trade or economic legislation or measures that restrict or discourage trade with Cuba or investment in or from that country, and welcomes all steps towards normalization, including lifting the embargo.

## **Nicaragua**

[Original: Spanish]  
[13 March 2019]

Nicaragua reiterates its firm and unwavering respect for the sovereign equality of States, the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, as set forth in various international instruments, as well as other principles that are essential to coexistence and peace, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It also reaffirms the right of every State to choose its own political, economic and social system free from outside interference, coercive economic measures, sanctions or embargoes.

We regret that the embargo imposed on Cuba continues to be the main obstacle to the development of the Cuban economy and the full enjoyment of all the human rights of the Cuban people, posing a serious challenge to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and has a marked impact on Cuban international financial and credit relations.

We urgently call for an end to the embargo against Cuba, which has caused so much suffering and harm to the brotherly Cuban people, as has been reflected in all of the Secretary-General's reports on this subject.

The embargo should be lifted without conditions aimed at changing the political, economic, social, legal and constitutional order of Cuba. The international community has consistently expressed its firm rejection of the embargo, as was evident in the latest vote on the General Assembly resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, on 1 November 2018, on which 189 of the 193 States Members voted in favour.

It is imperative that the international community rejects the new provisions and regulations to implement the measures announced by the current United States Administration, which have meant a serious setback in its bilateral relations with Cuba and a tightening of the embargo and its extraterritorial effects.

The Government of Nicaragua appeals for respect and compliance with United Nations resolutions, an end to this anachronistic policy against Cuba and for the foundations to be laid for respectful dialogue, in order to resolve outstanding bilateral issues between Cuba and the United States on the basis of equality, reciprocity and respect for the sovereignty and independence of Cuba.

## Niger

[Original: French]

[26 April 2019]

The Government of the Niger is deeply committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and freedom of international trade and navigation, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and has taken no measures that run counter to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 73/8.

On the contrary, the Republic of the Niger and the Republic of Cuba have maintained good cooperative relations since the signing of a general agreement on cooperation between the two countries in 1994. Since then, the scope of this cooperation and the activities covered by it have evolved and expanded. The two countries regularly hold bilateral consultations, attesting to the political will of their leaders to strengthen the bonds of cooperation and solidarity between them for the benefit of their peoples. In addition, the President of the Republic, Mahamadou Issoufou, conducted an official visit to Cuba in September 2014 to consolidate that cooperation.

Nonetheless, the economic, commercial and financial embargo remains in place and continues to inflict dreadful pain on the Cuban people and hamper their economic development.

The Niger therefore calls for the lifting of the embargo, which is a key prerequisite for the gradual normalization of relations between the United States of America and Cuba, which began with the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries in July 2015.

The Republic of the Niger thus remains in solidarity with and provides steady support to the Republic of Cuba and trusts, once again, that it will be able to rely on the support of the international community to secure the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

## Nigeria

[Original: English]

[28 March 2019]

The Federal Government of Nigeria maintains friendly relations with all States and does not favour unilateral measures to settle political disputes. Consequently, Nigeria reiterates its support for ending the embargo against Cuba. Nigeria is optimistic that the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States during the administration of President Barack Obama was a step in the right direction towards ending the embargo.

## Norway

[Original: English]

[29 April 2019]

The Government of Norway reaffirms its position in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8. Norway does not promulgate or apply laws or measures of the kind referred to in the resolution. Norway does not apply trade or economic legislation that restricts or discourages trade with or investment in or from Cuba. Norway opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures against a third country. Norway regrets the decision by the United States to renege on its long-



standing commitment to waive Title III of the Helms-Burton (Libertad) Act and encourages the United States and Cuba to work towards the normalization of bilateral relations with a view to bringing about the end of the embargo against Cuba.

## **Oman**

[Original: English]  
[7 March 2019]

The Government of Oman complies with and implements General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and does not apply any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to said resolution.

## **Pakistan**

[Original: English]  
[24 May 2019]

Compliance with the rule of law at the international level is an essential prerequisite for peace, stability and prosperity across the world. The Charter of the United Nations provides a framework and basis for restrictions or limitations applied against States under certain conditions in the economic or diplomatic domain. It is in the interest of all States to faithfully adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter and of international law.

Pakistan is opposed to the imposition of unilateral measures that are not in accord with the Charter or international law. In this spirit, we believe that unilateral economic sanctions vitiate the cordial and friendly atmosphere required for dialogue accommodation and cooperation, thereby decreasing the prospects for a peaceful resolution of differences and disputes between Member States.

We would like to reaffirm that Pakistan has not promulgated any law or enforced any measure of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

## **Panama**

[Original: Spanish]  
[25 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Panama continues to implement agreements that promote bilateral economic, commercial relations and cooperation with the Republic of Cuba, which may help to reduce the effects of the restrictive measures imposed against that country. Panama therefore reaffirms its support for resolution [73/8](#), on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Furthermore, the Government of Panama is concerned at the announcement of new measures that could aggravate the consequences of the economic embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

As a founding Member of the United Nations and a State that advocates peace, Panama maintains relations of friendship and cooperation with all States on the basis of inclusion and respect for the principles of justice and international law, as well as for the self-determination of peoples, respect for sovereignty and non-intervention in matters that lie essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States.

As a country that promotes dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as free trade and transparency in international commerce, the Republic of Panama has historically voted in favour of the draft resolution that supports the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, a commitment which is renewed, in order to achieve the end of the embargo against that country. The Republic of Panama reiterates its support for the elimination of the embargo, on the understanding that it would contribute to the full economic integration of the Republic of Cuba into the region and the socioeconomic development of its population, and therefore supports the preparation of a comprehensive report on the implementation of resolution 73/8.

## **Paraguay**

[Original: Spanish]  
[29 May 2019]

In accordance with the decision of the General Assembly, the Republic of Paraguay complies fully with resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, and has refrained from applying laws and measures of the kind referred to therein.

The Republic of Paraguay does not recognize in its legislation the extraterritorial application of domestic laws that violate the sovereignty of other States. This practice undermines the principles of international law.

In its foreign policy, Paraguay, as a founding Member of the United Nations, defends and upholds the constitutional principles that govern its international relations: national independence, the self-determination of peoples, the legal equality of States, solidarity and international cooperation, international protection of human rights, free navigation on international rivers, non-intervention and condemnation of all forms of dictatorship, colonialism and imperialism.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, Paraguay upholds Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the United Nations on the purposes and principles of developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and for the general principles of international law, considering that the extraterritorial application of domestic laws infringes on the sovereignty of other States, the legal equality of States and the principle of non-intervention, also affecting international free trade and navigation.

Within the United Nations, Paraguay has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and has repeatedly called for an immediate end to the embargo.

## **Papua New Guinea**

[Original: English]  
[21 May 2019]

The Government of Papua New Guinea reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 73/8, in which the imperative to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is emphasized.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 143 of the Constitution of the Republic of Paraguay.

Papua New Guinea is opposed to the extraterritorial application of laws and regulations that infringe on the sovereignty of other Member States.

Papua New Guinea currently has no restrictive legislative, policy or other measures against Cuba and, on the contrary, encourages constructive and friendly relations between Cuba and the United States consistent with the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant international law.

## Peru

[Original: Spanish]  
[30 April 2019]

Peru reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, particularly the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in a State's internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Peru considers that the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, as demonstrated by the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, constitutes a unilateral act that is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

Since 1992, when Peru voted in favour of resolution [47/19](#), submitted by Cuba for adoption by the General Assembly, the Peruvian Government has successively voted in favour of all resolutions on this matter.

Peru believes that coercive measures affect the economic growth of Cuba and hinder its social and human development. The Government of Peru expresses its concern about the adverse effects of these measures on the quality of life and well-being of the Cuban people, especially with regard to food supply, health and other essential services, by denying them access to private credit, food, medicine, technology and other supplies needed for the country's development.

Peru continues to promote trade and economic exchanges with Cuba and has consistently opposed the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against that country.

Peru considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is inconsistent with the dynamics of regional politics, which have been strengthened by Cuba joining dialogue and cooperation forums in the Americas.

During the visit by the President of the Republic of Peru to Cuba, on 18 February 2016, agreement was reached on the steps to be taken to expand the Economic Complementarity Agreement between the two countries.

## Philippines

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

The Philippines fully supports and reiterates its commitment to adhere to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

The Philippines has not imposed, and does not intend to impose, any laws, regulations or measures that are contrary to resolution [73/8](#).

## **Qatar**

[Original: Arabic]  
[22 March 2019]

The position of the State of Qatar remains unchanged with regard to the resolution, which it fully supports. Similarly, the State of Qatar firmly supports and applies the rules and principles of international law in its foreign policy and fully complies with the purposes and principles of Charter of the United Nations. Qatar has consistently urged against the imposition of any unilateral coercive measures.

Accordingly, the State of Qatar has not introduced or applied any laws or measures that are inconsistent with the resolution.

## **Republic of Korea**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Korea has consistently supported, since 1999, the General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. Therefore, the Republic of Korea has not applied laws nor administrative measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

## **Republic of North Macedonia**

[Original: English]  
[8 March 2019]

The Republic of North Macedonia has neither applied nor promulgated any unilateral sanctions or embargo and reiterates that it fully implements General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

## **Russian Federation**

[Original: Russian]  
[26 April 2019]

The Russian Federation has maintained a consistent position of principle with regard to the resolution and condemns the United States embargo against Cuba. In that regard, we share the view of the overwhelming majority of members of the international community. We call for the complete, immediate and unconditional lifting by the United States of its embargo against Cuba.

We view the illegitimate sanctions regime now in place as a direct violation of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. It is a flagrant example of the application of unilateral coercive measures, which are preventing the people of Cuba from exercising their inalienable right to a decent life and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are deeply concerned by the latest anti-Cuban measures taken by the White House to tighten the embargo of the island by reversing the suspension of title III of the Helms-Burton Act, on the extraterritorial application of United States law, and imposing additional migration and financial restrictions on Cuban citizens.

Once again, we wish to stress that such decisions and measures are illegitimate under international law and do great harm, and that making use of them to influence the domestic and foreign policy of a sovereign State is inadmissible. Such actions run

roughshod over market mechanisms by creating a discriminatory economic environment for trade and by deliberately restricting competition.

The unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States have a generally adverse impact on global development, fuelling social tensions, dampening global business and investment activity, disrupting established supply chains and slowing the creation of added value. The very architecture of the international financial and economic system, designed to create and maintain the most favourable possible conditions for the stable development of the world economy, is under threat.

We are convinced that no State has the right to dictate its will to others through economic restrictions. Those who so doggedly insist on the use of unilateral restrictions are, in effect, flouting the established world order, under which the United Nations Security Council alone is empowered to exercise such pressure in the interests of international peace and security. Under such circumstances, General Assembly resolution 72/201 on unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries is emerging as an increasingly important anti-sanctions tool within the United Nations.

The threat by Washington to impose sanctions on foreign operators or co-owners of nationalized property in Cuba is little more than an undisguised attack not only on the sovereignty of the island, which has repeatedly expressed its willingness to resolve disagreements bilaterally through constructive dialogue, but also on that of other States which are working steadfastly alongside Havana to modernize the country's socioeconomic model.

The history of the embargo against Cuba has long shown that illegal unilateral sanctions are ineffective and counterproductive as a means of imposing the will of one State on another and that, rather, they lead to the self-isolation of the countries that initiate them. That is underscored by the annual vote in the General Assembly on the resolution against the embargo, demonstrating near unanimous support for the Cuban people in the defence of their legitimate right to pursue their own development path.

## **Rwanda**

[Original: English]  
[29 March 2019]

Rwanda, like the majority of Members States of the United Nations, voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", adopted by the General Assembly on 1 November 2018.

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 73/8, reaffirms its support for said resolution and has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution. The Government of Rwanda stresses that there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Rwanda and Cuba.

## **Saint Kitts and Nevis**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis welcomes the annual adoption of the General Assembly resolution aimed at ending the economic, commercial and financial

embargo, which was unilaterally imposed by the United States against the people of Cuba, over five decades ago. We firmly believe that the embargo, in large measure, is contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations, the goal of which is to maintain world peace, develop relations among countries and foster cooperation among nations in order to solve economic, social, cultural, humanitarian and international problems.

Saint Kitts and Nevis therefore deems it extremely unfortunate that after 28 years of near-unanimous expressions of support for the resolution, the United States, after working towards improving relations with Cuba under the leadership of then-President Barack Obama, has now sought to intensify its economic aggression against Cuba.

Saint Kitts and Nevis therefore wishes to reiterate its unequivocal opposition to the continuance of this unjust embargo, which continues to cause widespread economic hardship for the people of Cuba. The embargo constitutes a key obstacle to Cuba's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Saint Kitts and Nevis therefore calls for increased dialogue and negotiations between Havana and Washington, as only through such mechanisms would differences be effectively addressed for the benefit of all parties.

It is against this backdrop that the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis stands in solidarity with the Cuban people and joins the large group of countries that continue to vote in favour of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and reiterates its position that the time has come for this long-standing unjust embargo to end.

## **Saint Lucia**

[Original: English]  
[23 April 2019]

The Government of Saint Lucia affirms its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, as well as peaceful coexistence among nations. As a small island developing State, Saint Lucia strictly adheres to the international legal doctrine of the exercise of sovereignty by a Member State in its lawful interests and its freedom to engage in commercial activity, trade or economic cooperation.

It is in compliance with these international obligations enshrined in the Charter that the Government of Saint Lucia has not promulgated any law, legislation or measure, nor has it taken any other action, that would infringe on the sovereignty of a State or its lawful national interests, or that would inhibit the freedom of commercial activity, trade and economic cooperation.

Accordingly, the Government of Saint Lucia reiterates its support for the General Assembly resolutions in which the Assembly has called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Saint Lucia acknowledges with appreciation the continued economic, educational and technical cooperation with Cuba in furtherance of socioeconomic development and sustainability consistent with South-South cooperation.

## **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

Each year since 1992, the General Assembly has passed a resolution entitled, “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, condemning the ongoing impact of the blockade and declaring it to be in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Opposition to this policy is now almost universal in nature. Citizens across the United States are joining the international community by increasingly voicing their disapproval and calling for the lifting of the unilateral sanctions. A total of 189 Member States voted in favour of resolution 73/8 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, with Israel and the United States voting against. Yet, very recently, on 4 March 2019, the Trump Administration threatened to put new financial restrictions on Cuba’s military and intelligence services.

It is necessary to underscore yet again that this economic, commercial and financial blockade has been and continues to be a violation of international law. We must be reminded still that it is contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines re-emphasizes its deeply held conviction that the ongoing blockade is a flagrant and systematic violation of the rights of the people of Cuba. Moreover, the blockade against Cuba is not merely a bilateral matter between Cuba and the United States, but because of its extraterritorial nature, it violates the sovereign rights of many other States.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines stands firmly against the continued interventionist assaults on the sovereignty of our neighbours in the Republic of Cuba. The anachronistic economic blockade of Cuba is both illegal and unproductive. The time has long passed for its complete repeal. We regret deeply that the fledgling rapprochement between the United States and Cuba has stalled and we call for a resumption of a mutually respectful dialogue between our two friends – Cuba and the United States.

## **San Marino**

[Original: English]  
[4 March 2019]

The Republic of San Marino has always and generally been against any imposition of any embargo and therefore it is against the imposition of the unilateral embargo against Cuba as a means of pressure, because of the serious repercussions on the population

## **Samoa**

[Original: English]  
[31 May 2019]

The Government of the Independent State of Samoa reaffirms its full commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of international law, including the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international navigation.

Samoa reiterates that it has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the type referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

Samoa has consistently supported the relevant General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and will continue to do so with the hope that this unilateral imposition by the United States is brought to a rapid end.

## **Sao Tome and Principe**

[Original: English]  
[26 March 2019]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe once again fully endorses the content of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, of 1 November 2018.

Sao Tome and Principe pursues a policy of full respect for international law and is committed to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal matters of other States.

The Government of Sao Tome and Principe continues to reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, and calls upon States to refrain from promulgating and applying such laws and measures as they affect the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of the entities under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Sao Tome and Principe therefore urges the expeditious removal of the current embargo facing the Republic of Cuba, which we believe will have a tremendous positive impact on the lives of the people of Cuba.

The Government of Sao Tome and Principe will continue to consistently support the annual resolution on this item and continuously vote in favour of this resolution in the General Assembly.

## **Saudi Arabia**

[Original: English]  
[5 March 2019]

Saudi Arabia enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

Saudi Arabia has not applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Cuba.

In this context, Saudi Arabia is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recalls and affirms its support for General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).



## Senegal

[Original: French]  
[24 April 2019]

Senegal remains committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to upholding the principles of international law.

As in previous years, on 1 November 2018 Senegal voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 73/8 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Senegal has not promulgated or applied any law or measure of the kind referred to in the preamble of the resolution and reaffirms its solidarity with the Cuban people.

## Serbia

[Original: English]  
[15 March 2019]

The Republic of Serbia, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirming its commitment to the rules and principles of international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, and has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures or acts of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution.

The Republic of Serbia has consistently supported resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba in the General Assembly and voted in their favour.

The Republic of Serbia calls for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, expressing the desire of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations.

## Seychelles

[Original: English]  
[15 March 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Seychelles once again fully endorses the content of General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted on 1 November 2018.

Seychelles pursues a policy of full respect for international law and is committed to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal matters of other States.

The Government of Seychelles continues to reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impacts and all other forms of coercive economic measures and calls on States to refrain from promulgating and applying such laws and measures, as they affect the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of the entities under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

That being said, the Government of Seychelles welcomes and encourages attempts by the United States and Cuba to normalize the relations between the two countries. Seychelles has always been of the view that the strained relationship

between the United States and Cuba has not been conducive to the sustainable development of the people of the United States or of Cuba.

In this context, Seychelles therefore urges the expeditious removal of the current embargo facing the Republic of Cuba, which it believes will have a tremendous positive impact on the lives of the people of Cuba.

The Government of Seychelles will continue to consistently support the annual resolution on this item and vote in favour of this resolution in the General Assembly.

## **Sierra Leone**

[Original: English]  
[5 April 2019]

Sierra Leone restates its firm commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the cardinal principles of international law.

The Republic of Sierra Leone reiterates its unflinching support for General Assembly resolution 73/8, and, in conformity with the obligations under the Charter, calls for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba.

The Government of Sierra Leone calls for the upholding of the principles of peaceful coexistence of nations and respect for the sovereignty of States and strongly supports fair and open trade relations between and among States.

The position of the Government of Sierra Leone on this issue remains unchanged and it will continue to join other nations in calling for the unconditional lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against Cuba.

## **Singapore**

[Original: English]  
[21 March 2019]

The Government of Singapore reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 73/8. Singapore has consistently supported resolutions calling for an end to the United States trade embargo against Cuba since 1995 and has voted in their favour.

## **Solomon Islands**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

Solomon Islands, in its support for General Assembly resolution 73/8, calls for the unconditional lifting of the 1962 economic and financial blockade on Cuba by the Government of the United States, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Solomon Islands appreciates the spirit, resilience and generosity of the Government and people of Cuba in educating, sheltering and clothing children from a multitude of States who are studying there, despite the imposed hardship.

## Somalia

[Original: English]  
[16 April 2019]

Somalia has no laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), in conformity with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

## South Africa

[Original: English]  
[16 April 2019]

The Government of South Africa supported the General Assembly resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted on 1 November 2018, and rejected the amendments to the resolution proposed by the United States, which were indicative of the efforts by the United States to intensify the embargo by politicizing human rights through the allegations of human rights abuses in Cuba and by sowing doubt about the commitment of Cuba to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goal on gender equality.

South Africa has noted the escalation of aggression by the United States against Cuba and the region since the near-unanimous adoption by the international community of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

Signals of increased aggression by the United States in the region, such as the rolling back of the policy of positive engagement with Cuba of the previous United States Administration and the announcement of additional United States sanctions on the same day that the aforementioned resolution was adopted are strongly rejected by South Africa.

South Africa also condemns the additional announcement on 17 April 2019 that the United States will activate Title III of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, which allows legal action through United States courts for reparations following the nationalization of properties in Cuba in 1959.

South Africa continues to stand in solidarity with Cuba and its people, despite the increased pressure of the current United States Administration on Havana in the context of its support for the Government of Venezuela and its people.

The relations between South Africa and Cuba continue to serve as a successful model of South-South cooperation, and South Africa has recommitted to its bilateral cooperation programmes with Cuba in the areas of health cooperation, human settlements technical exchange, public works technical assistance, cooperation on water resource management and water supply, professional services in the field of basic education and cooperation in information and communications technology.

Cuba has always been a beacon of hope for many developing countries, as was demonstrated again recently by the deployment by Cuba of a medical brigade and equipment during the devastation caused by Hurricane Idai, which affected Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

However, for Cuba, the embargo remains the most significant obstacle in its quest to realize its development objectives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The severe economic and financial restrictions, threatened

to be increased, further compound the hardships and the suffering of the people of Cuba.

South Africa therefore takes this opportunity to request third-party countries to support Cuba and its people by scrapping any domestic laws or regulations that continue to hamper the development of Cuba and its people, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

South Africa appeals once again to the international community to redouble its efforts to promote constructive and transparent dialogue between Cuba and the United States, with a view to achieving the objectives of all the resolutions already adopted by the General Assembly on the matter and to ensure the sustainable further progress of the people of Cuba.

## **South Sudan**

[Original: English]  
[16 April 2019]

The Republic of South Sudan reiterates its profound concern about the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. In line with the majority of States Members of the United Nations and African Union resolutions Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XVII), Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XIX) and Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XXI), the Republic of South Sudan calls for the lifting of the embargo endured by the Cuban people for over half a century. The Republic of South Sudan considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba is a unilateral act contrary to the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the basic principles of the multilateral trading system. The Republic of South Sudan considers that these coercive measures are affecting Cuba's economic growth and impeding its social and human development. In that regard, the Republic of South Sudan urges the implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", adopted on 1 November 2018.

## **Sri Lanka**

[Original: English]  
[13 March 2019]

Sri Lanka does not approve of the use of unilateral economic measures, against any country, that are inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Sri Lanka is of the view that the implementation of such measures impedes the rule of law, the transparency of international trade and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Sri Lanka has not promulgated any laws and measures referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

Sri Lanka has continuously supported the adoption of the resolutions on this item at the General Assembly and has taken the position that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba needs to end.

## Sudan

[Original: Arabic]  
[29 March 2019]

General Assembly resolution 73/8 is a very important resolution, and the Sudan fully supported it and voted in favour of it in the General Assembly. The resolution calls for an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Sudan and Cuba were established in 1969. The year 2016 marked the forty-seventh anniversary of the bilateral relations between the two countries. Bilateral relations between the two countries took a further step forward when the Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan in Venezuela was accredited as Ambassador to Cuba in March 2014. That bilateral relationship has been further strengthened through the exchange of visits by senior officials in the two countries.

The Government of the Republic of the Sudan pursues a policy of full respect for international law, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States, and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. Consistent with its principled stand, the Sudan opposes the imposition of sanctions on developing countries because of their devastating impact on the efforts of those countries to achieve sustainable development and because they constitute a violation of the Charter. To that effect, the Sudan participates every year in the debate of the General Assembly on the agenda item and votes with the majority of Member States, in favour of Assembly resolutions prohibiting the imposition of such unilateral measures and sanctions. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan reaffirms that it does not promulgate or apply any laws or measures that could, by being applied outside its own national borders, affect the sovereignty of any State. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan calls for the repeal of laws that impose such measures.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Sudan opposes the economic and commercial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, which has caused great damage and suffering to the Cuban people and violated its legitimate rights and interests, being a flagrant violation of international law and the Charter and showing disregard for their lofty and noble principles.

The Sudan itself continues to await the full implementation of the decision made by the United States in October 2017 to lift unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions, particularly with regard to facilitating banking and financial transactions, foreign direct investment flows and commercial exchange.

Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/8, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan has put the issue at hand before the concerned multilateral organs with a view to mobilizing support for the elimination of all forms of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries. The Republic of the Sudan also commends the initiative presented by Cuba with a view to modernizing its social and economic model.

## Suriname

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

The Republic of Suriname remains firmly committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as well as upholding the principles of international law. Suriname is of the considered view that sovereign

equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the right of nations to develop in accordance with their own charted paths should be respected at all times.

Suriname notes that the commercial, economic and financial embargo against Cuba imposed for decades by the United States of America, is contrary to those principles and norms, and is counterproductive in trade relations.

While the rapprochement between Cuba and the United States of America in 2015 was seen as encouraging and conducive to the achievement of a better understanding and improved relations between the two States, the recent announcement by the Government of the United States of America to activate Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which allows legal action against Cuban entities in United States courts, reverses that process, as it tightens the economic blockade, extends its extraterritorial effects and exacerbates the differences between the two States.

As repeatedly underscored in numerous international forums, trade is an engine to sustainable economic growth and essential to eradicating poverty at the national and global levels. Suriname therefore calls for the lifting of the commercial, economic and financial embargo of the United States of America against Cuba, which harms all sectors of Cuba's economy in a significant way, and thereby its very development path.

Suriname expresses, once again, its solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba and places on record that the Government of the Republic of Suriname has never promulgated or applied laws or measures affecting the economic, commercial and financial rights of the people and Government of Cuba, as referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#).

## Switzerland

[Original: French]  
[3 April 2019]

As in previous years, Switzerland expressed its support for General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) in 2018. Switzerland considers that the economic, financial and commercial measures taken against the Republic of Cuba have negative repercussions on the living conditions of the Cuban people and increase their economic difficulties. For these reasons, they should be repealed. Switzerland will continue to make its good offices available, if so desired.

## Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]  
[2 April 2019]

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its full commitment to General Assembly resolutions calling for an immediate end to the unjust economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the most recent of which is General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) of 1 November 2018.

The Syrian Arab Republic, which is a founding member of the United Nations, is firmly committed to applying the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#). It disregards and does not consider itself bound by any of the illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed on the Cuban people by successive American administrations since 1962.

The unjust embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America constitutes a flagrant violation of the various resolutions in which the General

Assembly has rejected all unilateral coercive economic measures imposed by certain Governments on other States and has characterized such measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

The Syrian Arab Republic condemns and rejects, as a matter of principle, the imposition by certain States or regional or subregional groups of any unilateral measures, whether economic, commercial or financial, on other countries. The experience of our world has shown that the sole purpose of such measures is to coerce developing countries politically, economically and socially, and to force them to submit to the policies and interests of Governments and entities that wield political, economic and military influence.

It is a well-known fact that the current American administration has resorted to reinstating or strengthening many of the oppressive economic blockade measures which the United States of America has imposed on Cuba since 1962. This American administration has enforced Title III of the so-called Helms-Burton Act, which is based on a decades-old extremist and immoral political conviction that the military power and economic influence wielded by the United States of America entitles it to wantonly exert domination over the peoples of the world and developing countries through the use of unilateral coercive economic measures.

It goes without saying that the policy of imposing economic embargoes, which has been adopted by the United States of America, by other governments and by regional and geographic groups, is contrary to human rights principles and international humanitarian law, and to the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It hampers the fulfilment of the pledge to leave no one behind and of the principle that development and well-being are among the fundamental rights of all peoples of the world, without discrimination or restriction.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls on all international parties and on the competent United Nations entities to respect the obligations set forth in the resolution with regard to the illegality of the imposition of unilateral coercive economic measures. In particular, the Syrian Government draws attention to General Assembly resolution [72/201](#), which urges the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries that were not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or are inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and that contravene the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

My Government is frankly of the view that the time has come for the Secretariat to genuinely consider the proposal of the Syrian Arab Republic that the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba should include practical and realistic recommendations to ensure that the relevant resolutions are implemented.

In that connection, the Syrian Government draws attention to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution [72/201](#), by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to monitor the imposition of unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion and to study the impact of such measures on the affected countries, including the impact on trade and development.

The Syrian Arab Republic recalls that the Syrian people continues to be the target of a number of coercive economic measures that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States, the European Union, the League of Arab States and a number of other States. Those aggressive coercive measures, many of which were imposed four decades ago, have caused huge losses to the Syrian economy. The situation is now even worse: after eight years of bitter suffering inflicted on Syria by terrorism, the

Governments that imposed the economic embargo on Syria have now strengthened it by preventing Syrian refugees and displaced persons from returning to their homes, and by preventing the process of reconstruction and reconciliation.

These illegal coercive measures prevent the Syrian people from meeting their basic needs and accessing essential services such as nutrition, medications, education, medical supplies, fuel, and agricultural and industrial items, as well as spare parts for civil aviation and telecommunications equipment. These measures also prevent the Syrian Government and private sector from cooperating or working with a third party, and they prevent any private establishment or foreign entity from entering into a contract with the Syrian Government out of fear that it might be slapped with financial and banking penalties and blacklisted by the States that have imposed the unilateral measures. These unjust measures impede the importation of the most basic needs of Syrians and prevent Syria from concluding maintenance and repair contracts. In the future, they will impede our ability to execute reconstruction and infrastructure rehabilitation projects and to achieve the sustainable development goals and objectives related to economic and social development.

Because there are no mechanisms or legal means to challenge unilateral coercive economic measures, the relevant annual General Assembly resolutions and reports of the Secretary-General, while important, have not been genuinely effective. As a result, there will be no genuine prospect of achieving the goals and targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

The time has come to put an end to the immoral and contradictory blockade policy against Cuba, the Syrian Arab Republic and other States. In a multipolar world, it is no longer appropriate for the Governments of certain States to have recourse to a policy of using their economic and financial might to subjugate peoples and exploit their economic, humanitarian and social conditions, and to interfere in the internal affairs of other States with a view to dominating or destroying them.

## **Tajikistan**

[Original: English]

[26 April 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), dated 1 November 2018.

Tajikistan, as a member of the international community, advocates adherence to the principles of international law and maintains that the freedom to determine its own path of development is a fundamental right of every nation. Therefore, interference in internal affairs of sovereign States is unacceptable.

Tajikistan believes that economic, commercial and financial restrictions always harm the economy of the country, thereby affecting people's welfare.

Moreover, given that the international community is facing challenges such as terrorism and an economic downturn, countries need to work together to address global challenges.

Such restrictions are contrary to the principles of the United Nations and create obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.



## Thailand

[Original: English]  
[18 March 2019]

Since 1994, the Royal Thai Government has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade and economic embargo against Cuba.

Thailand opposes the imposition by one country of its national law on another country which, in effect, compels a third party to comply with it. Such an act would be contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The imposition of the unilateral embargo against Cuba has undermined the socioeconomic development of the country and caused suffering for its people.

Thailand has maintained neither legal provisions nor domestic measures of such nature and continues to discourage them.

## Timor-Leste

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

### Background

In the aftermath of the events of 1961 and 1962, economic and diplomatic isolation became the major prongs of United States policy towards Cuba and continued even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some adjustments have been made to the trade embargo to allow for the export of some United States commodities entering Cuba; however, it has been stated that more than 60 years of rigorous trade restrictions has had an adverse effect on the Cuban people.

On 17 December 2014, a new chapter in the tumultuous relationship between the United States and Cuba, which has its roots in the cold war, began. The United States Government decided to undertake talks. For years, the Cuban Government had expressed its willingness to engage in dialogue on the basis of mutual respect, observance of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

In this new context, it is essential to respect the 27 resolutions adopted by an overwhelming majority of the international community, asking, in the General Assembly, for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

### Latest developments

Overall, the blockade policy of the United States of America towards Cuba has not changed, in spite of the major announcement made by then-President Barack Obama to ease the embargo against Cuba, which had been in place for decades, and as a result of which Cubans had been suffering.

In January 2015, the United States enacted new travel and trade regulations allowing United States travellers to visit Cuba for specific purposes without first obtaining a government licence.

The new rules also chipped away at economic sanctions by allowing, among other things:

- Travelers to use United States credit and debit cards

- United States insurance companies to cover health, life and travel insurance for individuals living in or visiting Cuba
- Banks to facilitate authorized transactions
- United States companies to invest in some small businesses
- Shipment of building materials to private Cuban companies

The United States eased trade and travel restrictions for a second time in January 2016, and again in March 2016, ahead of President Obama's visit. However, the United States Congress maintains control over economic sanctions; therefore, these changes have been counterproductive.

In addition to the release of prisoners, the United States agreed to further ease restrictions on remittances, travel and banking. Cuba also agreed to release 53 prisoners whom the United States had classified as political dissidents. United States officials confirmed in January 2015 that all 53 had been released. The United States and Cuba reopened their embassies in each other's capitals on 20 July 2015, effectively restoring full diplomatic ties. However, the White House had not yet named an Ambassador to Cuba.

Many observers, including foreign leaders and human rights activists, argue that the United States should go further and lift the economic embargo. That is unlikely to happen in the near future, due to strong opposition in the United States Congress. Despite the embargo, the United States had become Cuba's fifth-largest trading partner by 2007, boosted in part by the decision of former President George W. Bush in 2003 to reauthorize the export of United States agricultural products to the island. The United States agriculture and telecommunications industries stand to gain the most from expanded trade with Cuba.

President Trump's most significant changes, which came in a June 2017 memorandum, are prohibitions on commerce with businesses owned by the Cuban military and security services, a ban on individual travel to Cuba, recalling Embassy staff in Havana and continued criticism of the Cuban Government for its poor human rights record and single-party system.

The international community has strongly supported Cuba in the General Assembly for 27 consecutive years, calling for an end to the hardship as a result of the economic embargo imposed by the United States. Two countries, Israel and the United States, voted against the resolution "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

Timor-Leste sincerely acknowledged the positive steps taken by the President of the United States and was further encouraged by the determination of the President to persuade the United States Congress to ease or eliminate the whole blockade towards Cuba. Timor-Leste noted the positive development achieved by the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba and underscores the importance of the visit to Cuba by then-President Obama during his Administration. Speaking at the press conference with President Fidel Castro in Cuba, President Obama reiterated that the embargo against Cuba should be ended.

#### **Position of Timor-Leste**

Timor-Leste adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international navigation. In that regard, Timor-Leste reaffirms its position in

support of General Assembly resolution 73/8 and reiterates that it has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures referred to therein.

The Government of Timor-Leste is strongly opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures and supports the immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

The inconvenience caused by the embargo affects the normal operation of bank transfers from any country to Cuba, as was Timor-Leste's own experience in transferring funds to its diplomatic mission in Havana, which suffers losses in converting between currencies to enable the transfer.

## **Tonga**

[Original: English]  
[13 March 2019]

The Kingdom of Tonga adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and accepted under international law, in particular, the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Thus, the Kingdom of Tonga has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8. The Kingdom of Tonga maintains friendly and diplomatic relations with Cuba.

## **Togo**

[Original: French]  
[13 June 2019]

In keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Togo has always striven to promote respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and for non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs. Likewise, it supports unreservedly the principle of freedom of trade and navigation, which is enshrined in numerous international legal instruments.

Consequently, Togo systematically rejects the use of any unilateral measures to exert pressure on States.

For this reason, it has never promulgated or applied any laws or regulations that curtail the sovereignty of other States or the legitimate interests of entities or individuals under their jurisdiction.

The Government of Togo has always supported the initiatives taken by the Cuban Government to end the embargo imposed against Cuba by the United States of America. The embargo must end, as that would contribute to further advances towards the restoration of economic and trade relations between the two countries, a goal that the Togolese Republic wholeheartedly supports. Togo urgently hopes that the rapprochement that began with the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two States in 2015 will continue.

## Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]

[22 May 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government remains steadfast in its view that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws are inconsistent with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter and international law. Accordingly, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter and international law, Trinidad and Tobago does not apply unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against other States.

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has maintained a multifaceted relationship with the Republic of Cuba – an important dimension of which is economic in nature – since 1972, when diplomatic relations were established. Trinidad and Tobago has consistently supported subregional, regional and international efforts to promote constructive dialogue to bring about the cessation, sooner rather than later, of the economic, commercial and financial embargo in place against Cuba, which significantly challenges the achievement of sustainable development in that country.

Trinidad and Tobago had therefore welcomed with enthusiasm the reopening of direct and frank dialogue between Cuba and an influential and respected member of the international community in 2015. However, that optimism was short-lived as additional restrictions on travel to and trade with Cuba were imposed. Trinidad and Tobago reiterates its support for rolling back such a process and calls upon the well-respected and responsible member of the international community to work with Cuba to build a mature and open bilateral relationship, based on mutual respect and sovereign equality. Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its position that the full achievement of such a relationship will continue to be elusive without the lifting of the embargo. This crucial goal must be a priority for both Governments and peoples.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore renews, with fervour, its long-standing call for the full reintegration of Cuba into the international system and the end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

## Tunisia

[Original: French]

[16 April 2019]

Tunisia reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

In that context, Tunisia supported General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) and all of the previous Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba.

Tunisia does not apply unilateral laws or measures with extraterritorial effects. It therefore has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures against Cuba prohibiting economic, commercial or financial relations between the two countries.

## Turkey

[Original: English]  
[12 April 2019]

The Republic of Turkey does not have any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 73/8. Turkey expresses concern at such measures, which adversely affect the living standards of people, and reaffirms its adherence to the principles of freedom of trade and navigation in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. The Government of Turkey maintains its stance that differences and problems between States should be settled through dialogue and negotiations.

## Turkmenistan

[Original: English]  
[31 May 2019]

The Government of Turkmenistan once again reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 73/8, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

Turkmenistan reaffirms the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international navigation, which are also enshrined in many international legal instruments.

Turkmenistan considers that the use of economic measures as a means of exerting political and economic pressure contravenes the basic principles of international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as other fundamental international legal instruments.

The unilateral embargo against the Republic of Cuba prevents the development of the Cuban economy and creates a big obstacle for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The relevant United Nations agencies should take appropriate steps to prevent the use by individual States of economic sanctions and unilateral coercive measures against other independent States, including Cuba.

## Tuvalu

[Original: English]  
[21 May 2019]

The Government of Tuvalu supports and promotes the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for solidarity, cooperation, friendly relations and fair trade practices among all nations. The current embargo against Cuba limits the efforts of the Government and the people of that country to pursue and achieve their developmental and social goals and aspirations, as well as human rights. Despite the embargo, Cuba has continued to assist Tuvalu and many other developing countries by training medical personnel in its renowned universities. Cuba can really do much more to enhance its global outreach despite the embargo.

The Government of Tuvalu fully supports the lifting of the economic, commercial, immigration and financial embargo against Cuba in line with the unequivocal and continued request of the clear majority of the States Members of the United Nations. The positive advances in mending the relations between the United

States of America and the Republic of Cuba are an honourable step in the right direction, very much appreciated by Tuvalu.

## **Uganda**

[Original: English]

[27 March 2019]

Uganda has cordial bilateral relations and close collaboration with the people and Government of Cuba, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

It should concern the international community that, after decades of its implementation, the embargo against Cuba has reached no remarkable achievements, except to have caused great economic hardships to the Cuban people during the period that it has remained in force.

Uganda therefore fully supports the lifting of the economic, commercial, immigration and financial embargo against Cuba in line with the requests made by a clear majority of Members States of the United Nations.

## **United Arab Emirates**

[Original: English]

[28 March 2019]

The United Arab Emirates voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), which was adopted by 189 votes.

The United Arab Emirates acts in accordance with its obligations under the principles and goals of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and emphasizes that all States should enjoy full freedom of trade and navigation in all international sea lanes in accordance with international law, and therefore, the United Arab Emirates does not apply any economic, commercial or financial embargo on Cuba. Furthermore, the United Arab Emirates does not permit the application of such measures outside the context of international legitimacy.

## **United Republic of Tanzania**

[Original: English]

[29 April 2019]

The United Republic of Tanzania expresses its concern about the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo placed on Cuba. The devastating economic and social effects of the embargo deny the Cuban people the ability to exercise their basic human rights and are unbearable for them.

The embargo harms the people of Cuba, not – as intended – the Government. Cubans are denied access to technology, medicine, affordable food and other goods that could be available to them if the United States lifted the embargo.

Lifting the trade embargo will open the door to a huge export market, create jobs in both countries and support both their economies.

## Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]  
[27 March 2019]

In connection with General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, and in particular paragraph 4 thereof, Uruguay has always strictly respected and observed the principles of international law and all the norms set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

Even before the United Nations was established, the London Naval Conference of 1909 stipulated that embargoes are an act of war. Thus, Uruguay believes that, decades after the end of the cold war and in the current context, there is no justification for the continuation of measures such as the economic and trade blockade or embargo.

Accordingly, Uruguay has not promulgated or applied any provisions affecting the sovereign equality or decisions of other States, and respects the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of another State.

In addition, Uruguay has strongly condemned any theory that supports or justifies the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, except those that form part of international law, primarily in relation to protective jurisdiction and universal jurisdiction.

Uruguay rejects any direct or indirect means constituting unilateral action by one State to impose sanctions for sovereign decisions taken by another State in the political, economic, commercial, social, cultural or other arena.

Consequently, Uruguay believes that the sanctions imposed and the extraterritorial laws enacted against Cuba not only are a violation of international law, but also have caused harm to Cuban economic development, constitute a form of deprivation of the right to development and have inflicted incalculable damage on the dignity and sovereignty of the Cuban people.

The process of rapprochement between Cuba and the United States and the mutual de-escalation measures designed to improve the bilateral climate that led to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in December 2014 were historic steps and marked unprecedented progress in favour of peace and dialogue in the Americas as a whole. Nevertheless, Uruguay regrets the current cooling of relations between Cuba and the United States and rejects the ongoing embargo, encouraging the Government of the United States to minimize its implementation until it is completely eliminated.

## Uzbekistan

[Original: Russian]  
[4 April 2019]

The Republic of Uzbekistan supports General Assembly resolution [73/8](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, and reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law.

Uzbekistan fully complies with the provisions of this resolution and has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in its preamble.

## Vanuatu

[Original: English]

[29 April 2019]

Vanuatu reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 73/8. Vanuatu reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States and the freedom of international trade and navigation, which are also fundamental principles of international law. As such, Vanuatu has no sanctions or measures in place against Cuba or any other State that restrict trade or investment.

## Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

[Original: Spanish]

[29 April 2019]

The application of unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects violate the sovereign rights and political independence of other States and human rights. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela defends this position in adherence to the tenets and values expressed in the Constitution; these include humanism, cooperation, solidarity among peoples and staunch pacifism guided by unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law.

The Venezuelan Government therefore condemns the application of such measures by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba, as an anachronism contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal instruments and because such measures violate the freedom of trade and navigation and the norms of the international trading system. Venezuela also reaffirms its condemnation of the application of the extraterritorial provisions of the Torricelli Act and the Helms-Burton Act, which have caused serious additional harm to the economy of the Republic of Cuba for more than two decades, both in terms of its economic relations with third countries and with the subsidiaries of United States companies.

Venezuela has consistently supported the resolutions on this subject that have been adopted by an overwhelming and exceptional majority of the General Assembly since 1991. Similarly, Venezuela has made and supported declarations in other international forums repudiating such actions, which are by definition hostile and therefore undermine peaceful coexistence between nations and international legality.

The Bolivarian Government regrets the backsliding shown by the Government of President Donald Trump on a number of occasions when it has expressed its intention to reaffirm interventionism and interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Cuba as elements of its policies towards the brotherly Caribbean country. Venezuela believes that it is harmful to develop and implement State policies based on one-sided accusations wholly lacking in merit.

That policy of confrontation that has been promoted and implemented by the United States of America for decades has affected the well-being of the Latin American and Caribbean sister nation, whose human rights have been violated as a result of the implementation of these illegal measures. In this regard, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urges the United States of America to comply immediately with General Assembly resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8, 69/5, 70/5, 71/5, 72/4 and 73/8, whose adoptions have been marked by historical majority votes within the United Nations.



Consistent with those strong exhortations, Venezuela categorically rejects the measure announced by the United States Department of State to allow, in the near future and under title III of the Helms-Burton Act, lawsuits to be filed in courts of the United States, solely against Cuban companies included in the so-called Cuba Restricted List drawn up by that Government since 2017. The measure is clearly aimed at intensifying the embargo and extending its extraterritorial effects.

Similarly, preventing Cuban citizens from travelling is a violation of human rights and a clear setback in the process of normalization of relations between the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America, which in itself should be considered a wake-up call to the Latin American and Caribbean region, because of the negative type of relationship proposed by the current Government of the United States of America.

Indeed, while reiterating its condemnation of the continuation of this anachronistic and internationally illegal measure, the Government of Venezuela stresses that such actions in no way foster the climate of dialogue and cooperation that must prevail in international relations among sovereign, independent countries, in conformity with the spirit and purpose of the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), on the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, adopted on 24 October 1970.

One example of the harmful effects of the continued and unchanged application of the embargo worthy of mention is referred to in the 2017 report of the World Food Programme, in which it notes that “throughout 2017 the embargo continued to have a negative impact on the Cuban economy, as well as on the operational conditions of the World Food Programme. The high cost of importing agricultural equipment or inputs is a limiting factor for agricultural productivity in Cuba, and has an impact on the country’s ability to produce all its food requirements. As a result, the Government needs to import a significant proportion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety net programmes. This represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and imposes challenges to food security in Cuba”.

Furthermore, according to the 2018 report of the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization, in terms of technical cooperation funds in regard to purchasing and procurement, “it should be kept in mind that a high percentage of these funds are for the purchase of supplies and equipment in strategic areas. Prices and shipping costs are higher when it is necessary to resort to markets in Asia, Europe and Latin America instead of turning directly to the United States market [...]. In an emergency situation (such as that following Hurricane Irma), the need for immediate relief means that supplies are flown in from Europe, which can cost up to five times as much as purchasing them in the United States ...”.

By denouncing the criminal measures against Cuba by the United States, Venezuela has continued to comply with General Assembly resolution 73/8. In the light of its moral and material commitment to strictly adhere to international law, Venezuela once more calls on the United States of America to lift, unconditionally, the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Republic of Cuba, which owing to its extraterritoriality affects all States with economic, financial and trade relations with that country. A change on the part of the Government of the United States would demonstrate that country’s commitment to international law, and its respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The international community must continue to demand an end to the practice of applying unilateral coercive measures that seek to curtail the sovereign right of States to determine, in keeping with the right of self-determination, their political and social

model, in line with the situations and particularities of their respective countries and peoples. Peoples should under no circumstances be deprived of their own means of subsistence and development.

Lastly, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela renews its firm commitment to unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law and therefore appeals again to the Government of the United States of America to comply with the 27 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and to end the merciless and criminal economic, commercial and financial embargo which it has illegally maintained against Cuba for almost 60 years.

## **Viet Nam**

[Original: English]  
[25 April 2019]

The General Assembly has for many consecutive years adopted, with an overwhelming majority, resolutions demanding that the United States end its economic, trade and financial blockade and embargo policies and laws against Cuba, the most recent of which is resolution [73/8](#), adopted on 1 November 2018 with 189 votes in favour.

The United States policy of embargo against Cuba is a violation of fundamental principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and runs counter to the common desire of nations to develop equal international relations, regardless of political systems and based on respect for each nation's right to choose its own path of development.

Viet Nam strongly supports the United Nations and Member States to undertake concrete initiatives and measures soon to rapidly implement the adopted resolutions in order to put an immediate end to the blockade and embargo against Cuba.

It is the view of Viet Nam that the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba should maintain their dialogue and exchanges with a view to strengthening the relationship between the two countries based on the spirit of mutual understanding, respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in the other's internal affairs. We request that the United States put an early and complete end to its embargo and economic sanctions against Cuba. This will bring mutual benefits to the people of both Cuba and the United States and significantly contribute to the maintenance of peace and stability, as well as the enhancement of cooperation in the Americas and the world.

Once again, Viet Nam reaffirms its friendship, cooperation and solidarity with the Cuban people. Viet Nam resolves to do its utmost, together with other peace-, freedom- and justice-loving peoples in the world, to help the Cuban people to overcome the consequences of the above-mentioned immoral and illegal blockade and embargo policy.

## **Yemen**

[Original: English]  
[5 March 2019]

The Government of the Republic of Yemen reasserts its strong belief in the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law relating to national sovereignty, non-aggression, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, mutual respect, coexistence and the settling of disputes between States by peaceful means.

The Government of Yemen supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to create effective means of implementing General Assembly resolution 73/8, aimed at the adoption by the international community of effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral economic measures as a means of economic and political coercion against developing countries.

For almost four decades, the Republic of Yemen has enjoyed outstanding diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Yemen has consistently sought to develop and strengthen those relations in the joint interest of both countries and peoples. Yemen has concluded several bilateral cooperation agreements with the fraternal Republic of Cuba regarding diplomatic, economic, cultural and medical matters. As a result, there has been active cooperation in a number of areas.

## **Zambia**

[Original: English]  
[1 April 2019]

Zambia continues to support the General Assembly resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, because it considers that the persistence of the unjust and severe embargo is a retrograde measure which causes damage to the Cuban people.

Zambia expected that the normalization of the diplomatic relations between the countries would encourage the American authorities to take measures aimed at putting an end to the embargo, while respecting the right of the Cuban people to freely exercise their right to decide on its political and economic system in order to ensure the sustainable development of the island.

Zambia recognizes and encourages the efforts of the Secretary-General to put an end to the economic, trade and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. In this regard, Zambia reiterates its unconditional support for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the previous resolutions and takes this opportunity to appeal once again to the international community to redouble efforts to promote a constructive and transparent dialogue between the two countries, to achieve the objectives set in the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the matter.

In conclusion, Zambia encourages the United States and Cuba to continue building a relationship of dialogue and cooperation based on mutual respect for the benefit of both countries and peoples.

## **Zimbabwe**

[Original: English]  
[25 April 2019]

The Government of Zimbabwe remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs.

Zimbabwe believes that the imposition of economic and other unilateral coercive measures is self-defeating and contrary to the principles of international law and that it impedes the full enjoyment of human rights in countries subject to arbitrary sanctions. The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against Cuba

by the United States of America continues to be a heavy burden on the people of Cuba, as it has inflicted grave human suffering.

It is regrettable that there has been no effective implementation of the 27 General Assembly resolutions, as the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba has yet to be lifted. Zimbabwe notes with concern the further strengthening of this policy by the United States with the adoption of new provisions and regulations to implement the measures announced in March 2019.

Zimbabwe stresses the need to lift, immediately, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/8, the unjust and inhumane embargo imposed by the United States of America on the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of Zimbabwe expresses its strong support for and solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba, as they fight to defend their national dignity and sovereignty, and for their efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **Holy See**

[Original: English]  
[21 May 2019]

The Holy See has never drawn up or applied economic, commercial or financial laws or measures against Cuba. The Holy See, on the contrary, has maintained a consistent policy calling for an end to the embargo against Cuba.

The Holy See has consistently appealed, and continues to do so, for the consolidation of mutually beneficial relations between Cuba and the entire international community, by building bridges, a more meaningful civil society participation, opening new avenues of dialogue and strengthening those already existing.

In this context, the Holy See hopes to see as soon as possible an end to the embargo that, for decades, has had humanitarian consequences, especially for those most excluded in Cuba, and has caused the economic isolation of Cuba. The Holy See believes that the end of the embargo will contribute to more harmonious and fraternal relations between the people of Cuba and those of the United States of America.

The Holy See therefore urges Cuba and the United States to pursue perseveringly the process of normalizing their relations and encourages their respective political leaders to assume their responsibility in leading this process.

## **State of Palestine**

[Original: English]  
[10 May 2019]

The State of Palestine stands in solidarity with the Republic of Cuba against the decades-long economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on it by the United States of America, and joins the overwhelming majority of nations in calling for an immediate end to this unjust embargo.

The State of Palestine, which continues to suffer from the extensive humanitarian, socioeconomic, developmental, political and security impacts of a 52-year-old illegal foreign occupation, including an inhumane blockade imposed by Israel, the occupying power, on the Gaza Strip in grave breach of international law and with devastating consequences for our people and all dimensions of our society,

reiterates its full support for the calls to end the cruel embargo, which has so detrimentally and severely impacted Cuba and the Cuban people and their rights, including to self-determination and to development.

The State of Palestine reaffirms its principled position in support of General Assembly resolution 73/8 and all other relevant resolutions, as well as its adherence to the relevant positions affirmed by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, among others, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. We call for serious efforts towards the full and immediate implementation of this important resolution, consistent with international law and respect for the sovereignty of States and the freedom of commerce and navigation.

We deeply regret that the positive developments of recent years have been reversed and that the United States embargo against Cuba has instead been intensified and accompanied by escalating rhetoric, undermining dialogue and the important steps that had been made towards ending the embargo and fostering normalization. We thus, once again, join the international community's long-standing call for the lifting of the embargo to allow for unimpeded Cuban trade and normal economic activity, imperative for the sustainable development that Cuba and all nations are entitled to, as well as for the prosperity and stability of their peoples and countries.

The State of Palestine, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, affirms that it has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 73/8. Moreover, the State of Palestine enjoys full diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba and will continue to stand in solidarity with the Cuban people and Government and to work to strengthen the long-standing political, economic and cultural relations, cooperation and friendly relations with the Republic of Cuba.

### **III. Replies received from organs and agencies of the United Nations system**

#### **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

Cuba has not signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is therefore not a member of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. In addition, Cuba does not host international monitoring system facilities under the Treaty. On 18 June 2015, Cuba was granted observer status by the Preparatory Commission, enabling it to attend meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, without the right to participate in the decision-making process. As a non-signatory State, however, Cuba is not currently a recipient of equipment or technical support related to the establishment of a national data centre that would provide it with access to the data collected by the international monitoring system and it does not at present routinely take part in associated capacity-building or training programmes of the Organization. Therefore, in the context of General Assembly resolution 73/8, the situation has not arisen whereby the existing embargo could practically affect the implementation of the Organization's projects.

## Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

[Original: English]

[30 April 2019]

### I. General trends

According to estimates by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Cuban economy grew by 1.1 per cent in 2018. The loss of momentum from the already low growth rate in 2017 (1.3 per cent) was due to a decline in the number of visitors to the island, mainly as a result of the travel restrictions imposed by the Government of the United States of America on its own citizens, and to the impact of weather events on the primary sector. The slowdown was offset in part by considerable fiscal stimulus aimed at promoting exports, substituting food imports and driving infrastructure investment. The State deficit was equivalent to 8.8 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). The tightening of the economic embargo imposed by the United States, worsening economic conditions in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the weak performance of the primary sector all hindered the external sector's performance in 2018. Year-on-year consumer price inflation remained muted, owing to price controls. Despite the suspension of new permits for certain types of self-employed work for most of the year, demand for other available permits supported employment growth in the non-State sector.

For 2019, ECLAC forecasts a further deceleration of growth. On the one hand, economic activity is expected to continue to be supported by tourism-related activities, offsetting in part the winding down of fiscal stimulus, a higher fuel import bill and weaker revenue from other service exports. On the other hand, the forecast is subject to considerable downside risk from the impact of the aggressive foreign policy of the United States towards Cuba. The main risks are the impact of the full application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act from May 2019, which will discourage much-needed foreign investment; the limits on the amount of remittances that can be sent to the island from the United States, severely hindering the prospects for self-employed Cubans; a further deterioration of the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which would cut off access to subsidized oil and result in lower revenue from service exports; and lower-than-expected global growth, which would affect tourist arrivals.

### II. Economic policy

Although the fiscal deficit widened by 0.2 per cent of GDP in 2018, that was the result of a contraction of one percentage point of GDP in total revenues, only partially offset by a reduction in expenditure relative to GDP.

Based on an assumption of 4 per cent growth in the implicit GDP deflator for 2018, revenue declined by 0.6 per cent in real terms. This reduction mainly reflects a decrease of approximately 7 per cent in non-tax revenue in real terms (3.7 per cent in 2017), equivalent to about 14 per cent of GDP, seemingly affected by weaker returns on investment for State-owned companies and weaker demand for overseas health-care services. Tax revenue, which amounted to 42.6 per cent of GDP in 2017, is estimated to have grown by approximately 0.5 per cent in real terms in 2018 (4.5 per cent in 2017).

Total spending is estimated to have contracted by 0.1 per cent in real terms (6.1 per cent in 2017). The headline contraction in expenditures mainly reflects lower spending on budgeted activities, equivalent to 38.6 per cent of GDP in 2017, which is estimated to have fallen by 2.1 per cent in real terms. The fall was offset in part by 9.6 per cent growth in resources earmarked for non-budgeted activities (25 per cent of GDP) and, to a lesser extent, by a 17.6 per cent increase in capital spending and

transfers (5 per cent of GDP). The priority given to non-budgeted activities reflects the Government's efforts to promote exports and substitute imports to ease the curbing effect on growth from foreign-exchange availability.

As in previous years, the deficit was financed by issuing bonds in the national banking system with a repayment term of up to 20 years and an average nominal interest rate of 2.5 per cent. Cuba does not publish up-to-date figures for the public debt balance.

The Central Bank of Cuba reported a deceleration in the growth rates of the main monetary aggregates in 2018 (compared with 2017, when M2 grew by 8.1 per cent to an equivalent of 53.8 per cent of GDP). One of the determining factors behind this deceleration was weaker demand for cash owing to less momentum in tourism-related activities, which involve a large number of self-employed workers who favour cash. Available data also indicate a slowdown in bank lending for production activities.

In view of this scenario and given the absence of demand pressures, the Central Bank of Cuba made no adjustments to its legal reserve requirements or reference bands for nominal interest rates in 2018. To complement the changes in regulations on foreign direct investment (FDI), various mechanisms aimed at encouraging financial and investment institutions to participate in the national financial system came into effect in October. These mechanisms focused on streamlining procedures for approving and implementing FDI projects.

### **III. Evolution of key variables**

The performance of the external sector was influenced by the loss of momentum in tourism-related activities. According to Cuban official data, annual growth in tourist arrivals fell from 16.1 per cent in 2017 to 1.3 per cent in 2018. The largest decreases were observed in visitors from Canada and European Union countries. Although there was an increase of 3.2 per cent in visitors from the United States, there was a decline in those arriving by air, who spend more and stay longer on average, in relation to those arriving by cruise ship. That explains the decreases in the number of nights spent (-4.7 per cent) and in tourism-related income (-4.6 per cent). Exports of other services, especially health care, were also affected by weaker demand.

In 2018, exports of goods were hampered by weather events such as Tropical Storm Alberto in May and Hurricane Michael in October and by the scarcity of key intermediate inputs. The impact on the production of sugar, sugar by-products and nickel was particularly significant. The situation in the export sector was offset in part by the initiatives taken to limit imports, especially of capital goods.

According to Cuban official data, despite the negative impact of Hurricane Irma, the Cuban economy grew by 1.8 per cent in 2017 as a result of the performance of tourism-related sectors and reconstruction efforts towards the end of the year. The pace of growth slackened in 2018, as stagnating visitor flows have weighed on commerce, communications and transport, as well as hotels and restaurants. Sugar production also contracted in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma. However, the construction sector has been boosted by repair work following Hurricanes Irma and Matthew. There are no updated figures on consumer price trends. Nonetheless, given weaker economic activity and price controls, inflationary pressures are not expected.

In 2017, the labour-market participation rate continued to trend downwards, driven by population dynamics and migration, reaching 63.4 per cent. Although the gender gap in participation narrowed slightly, it still exceeds 25 percentage points. The unemployment rate fell from 2 per cent in 2016 to 1.7 per cent in 2017, while the nominal average wage grew by 3.6 per cent in 2017, indicating a significant

slowdown compared with the 7.7 per cent recorded in 2016. Changes to regulations governing self-employed activities, which involve roughly 12 per cent of the country's employed population, came into effect in December 2018. The main changes include a streamlined categorization of approved permit types, and the requirement that a proportion of transactions relating to self-employed activities be conducted through bank accounts.

#### **IV. United States economic embargo: recent developments**

Since February 1962, the Government of the United States has maintained a comprehensive economic embargo on Cuba. It is based on several statutes, including the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act) of 1996, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, sections 5 and 16 of the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. The Departments of Commerce and the Treasury are responsible for implementing the embargo.

The United States and Cuba resumed diplomatic relations in July 2015, after they had been severed in January 1961. As a result of the resumption, there was a gradual effort to lift some restrictions on travel and telecommunications, financial services, remittances and flights. Notwithstanding progress in the normalization of the bilateral relations between the Government of the United States and the Government of Cuba,<sup>2</sup> under the Administration of Donald Trump, the Government of the United States has gradually adopted an aggressive policy towards Cuba.

Through a National Security Presidential Memorandum issued in 2017, the Government of the United States made several changes to its policy towards Cuba. The most significant changes included prohibiting individuals and enterprises subject to United States jurisdiction from engaging in financial transactions with entities included in the "Cuba Restricted List" maintained by the Department of State;<sup>3</sup> adopting a general policy of denying licences to export items from the United States to entities on the restricted list; and banning individual people-to-people non-academic travel.

In January 2019, the Government of the United States extended the waiver on Title III of the Helms-Burton Act by 45 days, instead of the six months that had become customary for previous waivers since the Act was passed by Congress in 1996. Subsequently, on 16 April 2019, the Government of the United States announced the full implementation of the Act from 2 May onwards. Title III allows United States citizens to sue entities trading non-residential property valued at more than \$50,000 in 1959 and to which United States citizens had claims prior to expropriation by Cuban authorities. In addition, on 17 April, the United States National Security Adviser announced that the Government of the United States would restrict all travel by United States citizens to Cuba, with the sole exception of family visits. It was also announced that the Government would limit remittances that can be sent to Cuba to \$1,000 every three months.

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<sup>2</sup> Significant measures included the removal of the Government of Cuba from the Department of State's list of State sponsors of terrorism, the resumption of commercial flights between Cuba and the United States and the withdrawal of certain barriers to financial services.

<sup>3</sup> With certain exceptions, these include entities which, according to the State Department, have close ties to Cuba's military, intelligence or security services, including the Mariel Special Development Zone and the container terminals in Mariel and Havana. The list was amended to include five additional companies linked to the Cuban military in March 2019.



The main foreign investors in Cuba are Canada and the European Union, which strongly condemned the move<sup>4</sup> and consider the extraterritorial application of unilateral measures contrary to international law. Moreover, the measures violate a 1997 agreement between the United States and the European Union. In a joint statement, Canada and the European Union said that they would consider all options at their disposal, including contesting the measures at the World Trade Organization and using existing legislation to render null the enforcement of United States court judgments regarding Title III of the Helms-Burton Act within Canada and the European Union – legislation that also allows Canadian and European Union companies to countersue for damages against United States claimants.

Following the health incidents reported by some of its personnel in Havana in 2017, the United States Department of State ordered a significant drawdown of its personnel at the United States Embassy in Havana, a measure that was made permanent in March 2018. Consequently, immigrant visa services were gradually transferred to the United States Embassy in Georgetown. In March 2019, the United States Embassy in Havana announced that it was restricting the validity of tourist visas issued to Cuban nationals, reducing their duration from five years to three months and reducing their use from multiple entries to a single entry.

In April, the Vice-President of the United States announced that the Government would apply sanctions to several vessels owned or operated by the Venezuelan State-owned oil company as well as to other vessels that transport Venezuelan oil to Cuba. The sanctions prohibit all transactions by individuals and entities under United States jurisdiction. In addition, in April, the Government declared illegal an agreement that would have allowed Cuban baseball players to play with United States Major League Baseball teams without defecting.

The main effects of the embargo on the Cuban economy are those stemming from forgone income from exporting goods and services to the United States, the limitations imposed by having to source goods and services from third countries and restrictions on finance and investment owing to the inability to carry out financial transactions with United States institutions.

## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

### **Overall situation: effects of the embargo on the sectors of food security, agriculture, fisheries and the food industry**

The main changes since the previous reporting period can be summarized as follows:

(a) The cereal production of Cuba in 2018 is estimated at 670,000 tons (rice in milled equivalent), slightly above its 2017 level but still about 10 per cent below the previous five-year average;

(b) Paddy production in Cuba registered a slight increase in 2018, reaching 460,000 tons (307,000 tons in milled equivalent) supported by good weather conditions almost throughout the growing season. Early prospects for rice production in 2019 point to a larger increase, amid a rebound in plantings and local efforts to

<sup>4</sup> See “Joint Statement by Federica Mogherini, Chrystia Freeland and Cecilia Malmström on the decision of the United States to further activate Title III of the Helms Burton (Libertad) Act”, Brussels, 17 April 2019. Available at [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61181/joint-statement-federica-mogherini-chrystia-freeland-and-cecilia-malmstr%C3%B6m-decision-united\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61181/joint-statement-federica-mogherini-chrystia-freeland-and-cecilia-malmstr%C3%B6m-decision-united_en).

improve productivity levels. The latest production forecast by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is pegged at 721 million tons, thus up from 2018 and 2017 and representing an increase in Cuba's overall cereal production for the third year in a row. The country's maize production in 2018 is pegged at 362,000 tons, down from the previous five-year average by about 9 per cent. The decline mainly reflects lower plantings in response to the anticipated contraction in demand for animal feed. Nonetheless, imported volumes of cereals have remained fairly steady, at around 2.2 million tons, covering about two thirds of the country's domestic needs.

The main effects of the embargo on agriculture, fisheries, livestock and the food industry should continue to be viewed from two different perspectives:

(a) The impossibility of taking full advantage of the export potential (i.e., coffee, honey, tobacco, live lobsters and aquaculture products) to the nearest market, (the United States, has implied major losses, since it has been necessary to sell to markets located farther away, with the resultant higher marketing and distribution costs, negatively affecting Cuba's foreign-exchange earnings and its capacity to purchase basic products, especially food;

(b) The high costs of inputs needed for agricultural, fisheries and livestock production (fuel, spare parts for agricultural machinery, animal feeds, phytosanitary and zoosanitary products and fertilizers, products such as herbicides, low-toxicity insecticides, other highly effective pesticides or veterinary pharmaceuticals and disease diagnostic kits which, in many cases, are produced only by United States firms) reduce profitability and lower Cuba's ability to satisfy local food requirements.

Overall, the embargo has very negative implications for Cuba's balance of trade and foreign exchange earnings, as well as for the country's supply of food and agriculture products. One of the bottlenecks that the Government of Cuba is facing in its ongoing economic actualization process is its acute shortage of foreign exchange. The main source of foreign exchange expenditure is the purchase of agricultural products, amounting to around \$800 million per year.

The embargo affects the import of food products for human consumption, particularly those destined for social programmes, given that it restricts their quantity and quality, thus having a direct effect on the food security of the vulnerable segments of the population. The overall economic damage to the agricultural sector between June 2015 and May 2016 is estimated to be \$183,517,429.

An additional problem resulting from the embargo relates to the difficulty for Cuba to access external multilateral financing for development programmes in agriculture and rural development in general, and the related unavailability of resources for rehabilitating and modernizing agricultural equipment and infrastructure.

It is to be noted that, although the direct impact on the Cuban economy is difficult to measure, in 2016, Cuba and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding on agriculture and related fields. The memorandum is expected to enhance cooperation on issues like sanitary and phytosanitary measures, plant and animal sanitation, standards and forest conservation. In 2017, the countries signed a memorandum of understanding on animal and plant health, which is aimed at improving cooperation in the fields of animal and plant health, protection and quarantine. Furthermore, for the first time in a decade and following the 2018 United States farm bill, the United States removed some restrictions on financing agricultural trade with Cuba.<sup>5</sup> In the bill, Congress agreed to ease sanctions by allowing United

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<sup>5</sup> Congressional Research Service, "Cuba: US Policy Overview", 5 March 2019.

States producers to access certain governmental funding,<sup>6</sup> namely, the Market Access Programme and the Foreign Market Development Cooperation Programme, to carry out authorized export promotion programmes in Cuba.

Even the operations of FAO are directly affected, although it is officially exempted from the embargo. Delays in or blocking of payments to FAO staff (even if made in euros) and to providers for project procurement reduce the willingness of suppliers to sell to FAO-Cuba and increase the costs of the few remaining suppliers.

## **Effects of the embargo on selected agricultural commodities**

### **Cereals**

Estimates of the 2018 cereal production (milled rice equivalent) in Cuba point to an output level of 670,000 tons, a slight increase from 2017. Efforts to shore up rice production in Cuba continue to be concentrated on fostering yield gains through investments in irrigation and storage infrastructure, along with improved farming practices. In the absence of major disruptions, such endeavours are likely to sustain additional productivity improvements over the course of the 2019 season. The outlook for paddy plantings for 2019 is more promising, given that water levels in major reservoirs are reported to be above average. Early forecasts for 2019 point to a 12 per cent expansion in Cuban paddy production to 515,000 tons (343,000 tons milled equivalent).

Despite ongoing Government efforts to liberalize and promote domestic production, Cuba remains highly dependent on rice imports. In the calendar year 2018, Cuba is estimated to have imported some 520,000 tons of rice to meet consumption needs. As in previous years, Viet Nam provided the bulk of the country's rice needs through government-to-government deals that allow Cuba to defer payments of purchases. The balance was supplied by South American exporters, namely, Brazil, Guyana and Uruguay. Because of restrictions on payment and financing options imposed by the embargo, as well as the more advantageous terms provided by alternate rice exporters, virtually no United States rice has been shipped to Cuba since 2008. Still, the United States rice industry supports an easing of the embargo, having welcomed legislative provisions passed in December 2018 that lifted restrictions on the use of government funds by United States farmers to assist marketing of agricultural exports to Cuba. The United States industry's backing of such initiatives hinges on its belief that the commercial advantage provided by the geographical proximity of the two countries could help it to provide up to 30 per cent of Cuba's rice imports within two years of the lifting of the embargo.

In the case of maize, the only imported coarse grain, foreign purchases are projected to be in the order of 945,000 tons between July 2018 and June 2019, very similar to previous years, while wheat imports could increase slightly, reaching close to 830,000 tons. Overall, cereal imports account for about two thirds of total domestic consumption.

### **Oilseeds**

Oilseed production in Cuba is not significant and, as a result, the country depends almost entirely on imports to meet its vegetable oil and meal needs. Among the oilseeds, the commodities dominating imports are soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal. When the United States embargo came into effect, Argentina and Brazil became the main suppliers of soybeans and derived products. Both Canada and Mexico have occasionally shipped small volumes to Cuba. Cuba has imported

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<sup>6</sup> Congressional Research Service, "The 2018 Farm Bill (P.L. 115-334): Summary and Side-by-Side Comparison", updated 22 February 2019.

non-soybean oilseed products from, inter alia, Argentina, Canada, China, Mexico and the European Union. Imports of soybeans and derived products from the United States resumed in 2002. In that year, following the implementation of the United States Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act, and owing to geographic proximity, the United States became Cuba's principal supplier of soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal, largely replacing imports from other regions. However, in the second half of the 2000s, United States sales of soybean and soy products to Cuba were in part replaced by more competitive offers from Argentina and Brazil. The effect of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba in 2015 on trade flows remains unclear. In 2016, soybean imports from the United States recovered and, in 2017 and 2018, the United States supplied the bulk of Cuba's soybean imports. By contrast, the deliveries of soybean meal from the United States kept declining and were nil in 2018, as Argentina and Brazil became Cuba's leading suppliers. Deliveries of soybean oil from the United States in 2018 remained low and erratic, with Brazil and the Russian Federation reported to be Cuba's key suppliers.

### **Raw sugar**

Following eight consecutive seasons of growth, raw sugar production in Cuba contracted by 42 per cent in 2017/18, compared with 2016/17, falling to 1.1 million tons, the lowest level on record. The sharp decline was the result of significant damage caused to the crop by Hurricane Irma, which hit the country in 2017. Preliminary forecasts for 2018/19 indicate that sugar production could reach 1.5 million tons, rebounding by 43 per cent from the previous season. Sugar consumption, on the other hand, remained relatively stable at 0.6 million tons, which, combined with lower domestic production in 2017/18, led Cuba to increase its import of sugar from the world market. Imports were sourced mainly from Brazil, the Netherlands and, for the first time, France. For many years, the domestic sugar subsector has been managed by a complex system of a price-support mechanism, production limits and import restrictions designed to maintain high sugar prices. Despite a number of attempts over the years to reform the subsector, lawmakers have left the system in place to protect sugar growers and processors. As part of an ambitious objective to improve the efficiency of the Cuban economy, a new national Constitution which contains provisions that ease foreign direct investment in the country, notably investments directed to the sugar industry, was approved in July 2018.

### **Meat**

Cuba's total meat output expanded by 2.2 per cent in 2018, reaching 378,000 tons. The year-on-year growth was significantly lower than the 5.2 per cent expansion registered in 2017. Pork is the most important meat category in Cuba, followed by beef and poultry, and yet the sector expanded by only 1.5 per cent in 2018. Cuba imported 347,000 tons of meat in 2017, mostly poultry meat, with a significant portion of imports coming from the United States. A key constraint to enhancing meat production to satisfy national requirements is the high import cost of animal feed and other agricultural inputs, including veterinary pharmaceuticals from distant markets that are not necessarily the least expensive or most convenient suppliers. In addition, it has become difficult to access modern production technologies required by the sector, including agricultural machinery and spare parts. Despite the recent changes in government policy in favour of the development of national agriculture, restrictions on access to financial resources and technologies have made it difficult to develop farm-related infrastructures and increase productivity.

### **Dairy products**

Milk production in Cuba in 2018 is estimated at 530,000 tons, down 2.1 per cent from 2017. In view of the shortage in meeting national dairy consumption needs, Cuba imported an estimated 450,000 tons (in milk equivalents) of dairy products in 2018, mainly milk powders, from suppliers in Europe, Latin America and Oceania, especially New Zealand. The expenditure on milk powder alone amounted to over \$400 million dollars, equivalent to 20 per cent of total foreign currency expenditures. Thus, the development of the dairy sector remains a high priority for the Government in its drive towards food and nutrition security. However, the dairy sector continues to face many challenges, including limited herd size, high costs of animal feed and limited availability of fuel and transport equipment.

### **Fish products**

Fish products are important for food security in Cuba as a source of nutrition and earnings from exports. In 2016, capture fisheries production reached 23,540 tons, a decline of 8 per cent compared with 2015 and of over 90 per cent compared with 1986, when the country also fished in distant waters. The potential for expansion of capture fisheries is limited and focused on the adoption of a management approach that allows recovery of fish stocks that may have suffered overfishing. The greatest potential for expansion lies in aquaculture, which has shown some fluctuations during the past few years and represented 29,200 tons in 2016 (9 per cent less than in 2015). Almost all of Cuba's fish exports consist of high-value products, notably frozen lobster and shrimp, which are in high demand on the international market. However, the embargo prevents access to the United States market, which is one of the most important markets and the leading world importer for fish and fish products. As a result, Cuba exports to more distant destinations, facing higher marketing and distribution costs. In addition, the economic crisis in some of its markets had a negative impact on demand from 2012 to 2014, resulting in a decline in exports. In 2016, as a result of improved demand, exports reached an estimated \$69 million, representing an increase of 30 per cent compared with 2015, but a decline of 21 per cent compared with 2007 and of 29 per cent compared with 1997. Fish imports, consisting mainly of low-value fish products, increased by 3 per cent in 2016, compared with 2015, reaching an estimated \$43 million.

### **Forestry**

The economic impact of the embargo is estimated at \$13,300,000 from wood imports. In Cuba, most of the extraction means and the sawmills use technology from the United States that is now obsolete. The lack of parts and accessories for the equipment causes standstills and losses in the production process.

### **Technical assistance to Cuba by the Food and Agriculture Organization**

FAO continues to provide support to Cuba, notably in promoting rural development and fisheries with emphasis on food security. FAO has assisted Cuban institutions in organizing several international congresses and events in the areas of sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, animal production and animal health surveillance; cooperatives and family farming; fisheries and related policies; forestry and biodiversity; and environment and climate change, among others. In addition, FAO assists Cuban experts in providing help in respect of South-South cooperation and in attending meetings on international conventions and agreements. Travel logistics and flight bookings also are affected by the embargo.

In the context of South-South cooperation, FAO is supporting Cuban participation in a joint activity with the International Regional Organization for Plant

and Animal Health for the eradication of the classic swine pest in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Technical support for the life-cycle management of pesticides continues to be provided to Cuba as part of the regional initiatives under the project funded by the European Commission to support capacity-building related to multilateral environmental agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, for the clean-up of obsolete pesticides, pesticides management and sustainable pest management. The project has supported the inventory of obsolete pesticides, strengthening pesticide registration and raising awareness of pesticide issues. Cuba participates in workshops in the framework of the project.

Policy and technical support has been provided to update the national agricultural policy, with particular emphasis on the dairy sector, given that it constitutes one of the most important components of the food basket, as well as being a major economic engine for the generation of employment and income in rural areas. Technical assistance has been focused on assessing the productivity level of different forms of industrial organizations and assisting the Government in identifying policy recommendations to strengthen the industrial set-up of the national dairy sector.

FAO provided technical support and assistance to develop tools for Cuba to establish its national information system mechanism for applying the new monitoring approach for the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The Cuban delegation participates routinely, through the FAO Commission and its intergovernmental working group on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, in the development of the policy framework of the Second Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as well as indicators and targets for plant genetic resources and in the preparation of gene bank standards for plant genetic resources.

Policy advice is provided for agricultural sector policies, agro-environmental policies, rural youth employment and the development of sustainable intensification programmes based on FAO pilot projects in the grain, milk and beef value chains. In addition, FAO is assisting Cuba in projects focusing on the rehabilitation and conservation of the environment, particularly in managed landscapes, and in resilience to the risks associated with climate change.

As part of its support to country capacity development and with a view to generating evidence-based policy advice, the Agricultural Development Economics Division of FAO is planning a coordination mission to Cuba on “Strengthening public policies to improve the impact of food and nutrition security policies”. The objective of the mission is to develop a project aimed at improving the country’s capacity in terms of policy analysis and formulation.

### **Effects of the embargo on projects implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization in Cuba**

Given the embargo to which Cuba is subjected, projects implemented by FAO in the country are affected in regard to the procurement of equipment and supplies that complement the technical assistance provided by FAO because the resources that could be imported from the United States have to be imported from far more distant markets, at much higher prices and higher freight costs. If acquisitions could be made in the United States, it would be much cheaper and more activities could be supported through the available budget.

Under the embargo, conditions hinder the processes of payments and banking transactions to and from suppliers who provide services for cooperation projects and

to the FAO country office. This is demonstrated by banks' rejections of transfers from FAO for sales to Cuba; the impossibility for suppliers to offer products to Cuba obtained from other North American companies; and the inability of suppliers to transfer funds to Cuba for payment of services contracted in the country.

FAO staff continue to be affected by expensive and long formalities in banking processes.

A summary of the negative effects caused by the embargo in some of the sectors in which FAO is providing technical support and other sectors included within its country programming framework is presented below.

The losses originated mainly in:

- (a) Price difference owing to changes in the import market;
- (b) Additional costs related to freight insurance;
- (c) Additional costs owing to a freeze on assets;
- (d) Monetary damages;
- (e) Losses owing to lack of access to the latest technology from the United States;
- (f) Relocation of exports.

## **International Atomic Energy Agency**

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

The assistance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to all of its member States, including Cuba, is governed by article III/C of its statute, which reads as follows: "In carrying out its functions, the Agency shall not make assistance to members subject to any political, economic, military, or other conditions incompatible with the provisions of this Statute".

However, the existing embargo poses certain difficulties for the implementation of the IAEA technical cooperation programme in Cuba. For instance, the procurement of equipment, consumables and materials such as chemicals, radiopharmaceuticals, air samplers or gas chromatography coupled with a mass spectrometry is affected by the limited number of vendors willing and able to procure for and/or ship to the country.

Furthermore, there are indirect complications for the contributions made by Cuba to the Technical Cooperation Fund, owing to peso-United States dollar exchange limitations.

Restrictions also apply to the participation of nationals from Cuba in IAEA-organized training activities, fellowships and meetings in the United States and vice versa. Owing to poor Internet connections, Cuban counterparts cannot participate in online meetings to review project progress.

In accordance with the above-mentioned article of its statute, IAEA tries to overcome these difficulties, to the extent possible, for example, by sending Cuban nationals for training in other countries, in order to meet the requirements of the IAEA technical cooperation programme in Cuba.

## International Civil Aviation Organization

[Original: English]

[30 April 2019]

At the thirty-ninth session of the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), in September 2016, the Economic Commission reviewed the submission by Cuba on the continued economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States. The Commission noted that economic sanctions had a negative impact on the safe operation of civil aviation, the achievement of the organization's objectives relating to no country left behind, and the development of air transport, trade and the economy. It was also pointed out that such sanctions had an extraterritorial impact on aviation businesses beyond the States concerned. The United States, however, stated that its actions were fully compliant with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The decision of the thirty-ninth session of the ICAO Assembly contained in resolution A39-15 (appendix A, sect. I, para. 3) was that the Assembly "urges Member States to avoid adopting unilateral and extraterritorial measures that may affect the orderly, sustainable and harmonious development of international air transport and to ensure that domestic policies and legislation are not applied to international air transport without taking due account of its special characteristics".

During the reporting period, Cuba continued its active participation in three regional projects implemented through the ICAO Technical Cooperation Bureau. The projects were aimed at providing administrative assistance in the management and administration of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission secretariat, fostering the implementation of performance-based air navigation systems in the Caribbean region leading to a seamless global air traffic management system, and establishing and operating a regional safety oversight system that encompasses the requisite technical, logistic and administrative support in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its annexes. No bilateral projects with Cuba were initiated or implemented during the reporting period.

## International Civil Defence Organization

[Original: English]

[11 June 2019]

The International Civil Defence Organization reaffirms its view that the United Nations is an appropriate forum in which to address questions related to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. It therefore welcomes the positive consideration of resolution 73/8, adopted by the General Assembly on 1 November 2018, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Republic of Cuba became a full member of the International Civil Defence Organization on 18 December 2014. Its needs are great in all the four steps related to disaster management: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Thus, and to fulfil its obligations towards its member States, the International Civil Defence Organization is in the process of providing technical assistance in different areas of civil defence in Cuba, by transferring equipment and technology and supporting training courses in civil defence.



## International Fund for Agricultural Development

[Original: English]

[18 April 2019]

Many of the measures taken by past United States Administrations to reduce the restrictions of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba have been reviewed by the current Administration and have therefore had an impact on the Cuban economy, particularly in the commerce and financial sectors.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is currently co-financing two projects in Cuba, the “Rural Development Project for Cooperatives in the Eastern Region” and the “Development Project for Livestock Cooperatives”. The projects are being executed by the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture and have been designed to provide agricultural support services to small rural producers, including women, youth and other groups that are highly vulnerable to external economic shocks and the impacts of climate change. Owing to the impact of the current measures of the United States, IFAD-funded projects in Cuba continue to face delays in implementation as a result of scarce foreign exchange, lengthy import procedures and high costs of imports.

The usual challenges faced by Cuba as a small island developing State are exacerbated by trading and financial restrictions. In particular, in the agricultural and rural sector, the following limitations, among others, contribute to low productivity levels, limiting the quantity, quality and competitiveness of domestic food production and making high levels of food imports necessary to cover the needs of the rural population:

- Obsolete agricultural equipment (for example, tractors, irrigation systems and water pumps) and lack of spare parts
- High cost and lack of inputs required for agricultural and livestock production, processing and distribution (for example, fuel, animal feeds, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and veterinary pharmaceuticals);
- Insufficient access to hard currency financing for the import of equipment and inputs
- Limited access to providers of new agricultural technologies
- Limited export opportunities for some agricultural products.

In short, the measures currently in place continue to affect the economic, social and cultural development of the Cuban people, in particular, the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups living in rural areas, opportunities for agricultural and rural development, and human development in general.

## International Labour Organization

[Original: English]

[4 April 2019]

The embargo continues to have indirect, and even direct, effects on perspectives for economic development and therefore job creation and decent work. Among them, just to name a few:

- Unnecessary restrictions on the transfer of remittances still imply a high indirect tax burden on salaries legitimately earned abroad and sent for household

spending on basic human needs such as food, clothing, education, housing, water and sanitation.

- Limitations on commerce and financial transactions still represent a serious bottleneck and an additional cost for business development and job creation, as decent work largely depends on productive investment and access to financing.
- Limited access to technology transfer implies further difficulties for enterprises, as well as social and economic development.

The direct and indirect effects of the embargo on the Cuban economy and people affect not only the enterprises, but even more their workers and the population in general. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is particularly concerned about the impacts on children, workers and the elderly. Ending the embargo would turn the overall loss into an opportunity for productive investment, employment generation and new job opportunities.

Cuba is a deputy member of the ILO Governing Body and will actively participate in the 108th International Labour Conference (10–21 June 2019). ILO considers that the General Assembly is the appropriate forum for addressing questions related to ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

## **International Maritime Organization**

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

As a member State of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Cuba participates in the meetings of IMO bodies and is a recipient of the available technical cooperation programmes (IMO regional programmes on support for maritime development in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as global programmes, as applicable).

IMO maintains collaborative relations with all Latin American member States, including Cuba. Since the early 1980s, IMO has collaborated closely with the Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of the Americas, which comprises South America, Cuba, Mexico and Panama.

The assistance by IMO to Latin America is guided by the maritime strategies of the region, which are revised every five years, and the organization will continue to focus on supporting their implementation. The countries of the Operative Network have addressed issues such as safety standards, training aspects and marine environment protection through regional strategies, with numerous training activities organized in cooperation with IMO. In this context, and in accordance with the decentralization policies adopted by IMO, most of its support is channelled through the Operative Network by virtue of a memorandum of understanding signed with the secretariat of the Operative Network. Through this instrument, the Operative Network is assigned responsibility for the management and execution of regional technical cooperation activities identified by the respective countries, including Cuba, as priorities in building capacities for the effective implementation and enforcement of IMO global maritime standards.

Cuba also receives technical assistance from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre for the wider Caribbean, a regional centre based in Curaçao, which aims to assist countries in the region in preventing and responding to major pollution incidents in the marine environment.

IMO has not encountered difficulties in delivering any of the activities in the projects mentioned above as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

## **International Organization for Migration**

[Original: English]  
[30 April 2019]

Cuba joined the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a member during the 108th IOM Council in 2017.

However, as explained in the previous report, the partnership between IOM and Cuba began before the country's accession to membership. For example, IOM supported the response of the Cuban authorities to Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Irma in 2017 by distributing non-food relief items to affected populations. The payment process influenced the implementation of the IOM humanitarian response. Payments to suppliers were slow, given that the Office of Foreign Assets Control compliance group requested IOM to send details of the purchases and supporting documents.

Cuba has actively participated in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Government has sent participants to the Inter-American Course on International Migration in Mar del Plata, Argentina, for the past six years.

IOM is currently participating in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process for the period 2020–2024 and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In 2019, IOM started working on a new project on migration management with the Ministry of the Interior. The project budget is \$200,000.

In March 2019, IOM received \$205,729 from the Central Emergency Response Fund to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to families housed in state facilities or in the homes of family and friends after the passage of a tornado through the Cuban capital earlier in the year. The project is expected to assist 3,800 individuals or 950 households, which represents 38 per cent of the persons evacuated.

The IOM office in Cuba is also actively participating in the United Nations emergency technical team, a group of professionals of the United Nations system that supports the United Nations country team in preparing and responding to emergencies.

In addition, IOM continues to provide assisted voluntary return services to Cuban nationals and stranded migrants, as well as resettlement assistance for refugees.

## **International Telecommunication Union**

[Original: English]  
[14 March 2019]

During the period in question, the International Telecommunication Union received in relation to General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) the following correspondence: note No. 415/2018 dated 12 September 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland addressed to the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union.

## Inter-Parliamentary Union

[Original: English]

[18 April 2019]

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has for many years held the view that “economic sanctions are to be avoided as far as possible because they inflict suffering on too many innocent persons” and has opposed “the adoption, by a State or groups of States, of laws or other measures with extraterritorial effect which are aimed at obliging third party States or their nationals to apply economic sanctions adopted by it”.<sup>7</sup> In April 2017, IPU adopted a resolution, by consensus, entitled “The role of parliament in respecting the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States” at its 136th Assembly, in Dhaka. The resolution underscores that “the people of each country have the inalienable right to determine their own political future, and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, in accordance with international law”.

In a context marked by a series of announcements made by the Government of the United States of America imposing a setback to its bilateral relations with Cuba, IPU welcomes the efforts by the United States Congress and the National Assembly of Cuba to improve their collaboration. IPU was delighted to learn that, as in previous years, legislators from the United States continued visiting Cuba to discuss greater cooperation between the two countries and to find ways to work together on issues of mutual concern. IPU is very hopeful that this kind of initiative will lead to the definitive lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. IPU is convinced that only political dialogue can generate decisions that are acceptable to all and create the conditions for sustaining peace and understanding among peoples.

IPU would like to restate its firm support for the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba and express its solidarity with the Cuban people, who continue to suffer from its consequences.

## Office for Outer Space Affairs

[Original: English]

[7 May 2019]

Cuba has been a State member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space since 2001. Between 1994 and 2001, Cuba participated in the work of the Committee and its subcommittees, following the Committee’s practice of sharing seats on a rotating basis. Since the early 1980s, Cuba has regularly attended the sessions of the Committee and its subcommittees as an observer.

From 26 to 30 March 1990, Cuba and the Office for Outer Space Affairs organized jointly a workshop on the theme “Space communications for development”, held in Havana. From 5 to 8 November 2012, Cuban experts benefited from participating in a workshop on the theme “Contribution of space law to economic and social development”, held in Buenos Aires (see [A/AC.105/1037](#)).

The potential for disasters as a result of natural hazards – such as hurricanes, tsunamis, storm surges, earthquakes, landslides, droughts, floods and heatwaves – is high in the Caribbean. In the course of multiple crises over the years, the Government of Cuba has put in place an efficient and unique alert system reaching all corners of the country. However, the use of satellite-based data, as well as of precise positioning

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<sup>7</sup> See Inter-Parliamentary Union resolution adopted at the 104th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Jakarta, October 2000.

and navigation systems or of modern satellite telecommunication, by its civil protection agency could improve the performance of the alert system, while providing for improved contingency planning and preparedness. The integration of these tools in the existing systems in Cuba would be greatly facilitated by well-structured participation of all stakeholders at the various levels of administration in Cuba.

The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), implemented by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, ensures that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle. The Platform is achieving its mission by focusing on being a gateway to space information for disaster management support, by serving as a bridge to connect the disaster management, risk management and space communities and by being a facilitator of capacity-building and institutional strengthening. UN-SPIDER is supported by 22 regional support offices (including 5 in Latin America), all of which are crucial to fulfilling the mission of the Platform.

Since 2009, the Platform has provided detailed advisory services to seven countries in Latin America and the Caribbean: the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica and Peru. That support has allowed Governments to set priorities to strengthen their capabilities in discovering, accessing and using space-based data, information, products and services, helping to reduce the vulnerability of their population and infrastructure to natural hazards.

Finally, in support of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Office for Outer Space Affairs has set up a global partnership using space-based technology applications for disaster risk reduction and is a key member of the International Network for Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems. Those mechanisms put space technology and applications forward as a critical set of tools to plan, prepare, measure and monitor the efforts of nations in reducing risks associated with natural hazards.

A technical advisory mission of the Platform, composed of a Spanish-speaking international expert team that would consult key entities in Cuba with responsibilities or potential roles in disaster risk reduction and emergency response, would allow the assessment not only of the current capabilities but also of priorities for action. Such a mission could be planned and executed in 2020 or 2021, funds permitting, and deliver clear recommendations to the Government of Cuba.

## **Office of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system for operational activities for development, Cuba**

[Original: English]  
[1 May 2019]

Cuba is a country with a high level of human development, ranked seventy-third on the Human Development Index in 2018. National authorities have expressed their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Government of Cuba is implementing a transformation process to update its economic model, focusing on national priorities such as economic efficiency and productivity, the national food security strategy and import substitution policies. National authorities have stated their strong commitment to maintaining social development standards. The initial landmark in this process comprised the 2011 Economic and Social Policy Guidelines for the Party and the Revolution. One of the guidelines calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration, with reference to the

entities of the United Nations system. In May 2017, the National Assembly approved an update of the guidelines (2016–2021), as well as two strategic documents: “Conceptualization of the Cuban Economic and Social Model of Socialist Development” and the bases of the “2030 National Plan for Economic and Social Development”. The latter is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

A new Constitution of Cuba was endorsed by a referendum process in February 2019. The approved Constitution strengthens citizens’ rights, recognizes different types of property, establishes new governance structures and reaffirms the local role in development, among others.

In this context, the United Nations system supports the efforts of national authorities to address emerging issues and development challenges. The current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2014–2019) supports sustainable development priorities, focusing on four strategic cooperation areas: population dynamics and social and/or cultural services; sustainable economic development, which includes value chains, local development and sustainable energy development; food security; and environmental sustainability and disaster risk management.

In addition, the United Nations system in Cuba supports the humanitarian response. In January 2019, an estimated 253,682 people bore the brunt of a severe tornado that tore through five municipalities in Havana. For 30 minutes, the EF4 category tornado (Enhanced Fujita scale with a maximum intensity of 5) produced winds of up to 300 km per hour as it travelled at a speed of 46 km per hour and cut a 20-km-long by 400-to-600-metre-wide path, destroying houses, apartment buildings, hospitals, clinics, schools, electrical and telecommunication infrastructure, small and medium industries and harbour infrastructure. Seven individuals were killed and 190 injured.

The diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba experienced an improvement when both countries restored diplomatic relations in July 2015. However, under the Trump Administration, many of the measures taken by the Obama Administration to reduce the restrictions of the embargo were reversed, negatively affecting Cuban society, especially in commerce and financial activities, as well as United Nations operations in the country. The situation worsened, particularly after the departure of non-emergency personnel assigned to the United States Embassy in Havana and the suspension of consular services in Havana for Cuban citizens who wish to travel to the United States.

In January 2019, the annual suspension of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which allows lawsuits to be brought against third-country companies that conduct business with Cuba and use properties nationalized by the Government of Cuba that belonged to United States persons, was renewed for only 45 days. The Helms-Burton Act was passed in 1996 as legislation that further tightens the economic embargo, but Title III was suspended every six months by all previous administrations. In spite of a 30-day suspension put in place in March, it was still allowed to bring lawsuits against Cuban companies included in the United States State Department’s List of Restricted Entities and Sub-entities Associated with Cuba. Finally, the United States Secretary of State announced on 17 April that this Title III would be implemented in full effective 2 May.

The embargo maintains the restrictions on the use of the United States dollar and those relating to imports from Cuba. It affects opportunities for national and local development and creates economic hardship for the population. It has an impact on the population’s most vulnerable groups and on human development in general.

The United Nations country team in Cuba comprises the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization. In addition, non-resident entities, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations Volunteers programme, have ongoing activities and initiatives in Cuba.

Each United Nations agency, fund and programme has provided individual inputs to the present report. The submission by the United Nations country team in Cuba summarizes the most significant cross-cutting issues that are having a negative impact on the humanitarian and development cooperation of the United Nations system in Cuba.

### **Impact on Cuban people**

The embargo affects the ability of Cuban programmes to ensure continued quality and universal public services such as health and education, owing to the existence of commercial restrictions that prevent the purchase of health supplies and teaching materials from United States companies. There are items that cannot be acquired because they are made in the United States or have United States components, including technologies that can save, prolong or increase the quality of life.

In higher education, the implementation of the embargo has posed obstacles to Cuba's access to the technology and equipment needed for advanced learning and scientific research. Participation in exchanges and academic cooperation between Cuban and United States universities, institutions and research centres is limited for Cuban scientists and health professionals because of the embargo. Cuban participation in online training has been affected by the adoption of the CISCO WebEx platform by WHO/PAHO.

High costs to import agriculture equipment or inputs, caused by the embargo, are a limiting factor for agricultural productivity in Cuba, affecting the country's ability to produce the required food. The need to import a considerable portion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety net programmes represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and poses challenges to food security in Cuba.

The departure of non-emergency personnel assigned to the United States Embassy in Havana has led to Cubans having to travel, when possible, to third countries to apply for a United States visa. In March 2019, it was announced that the United States would reduce the validity of its B-2 visa from five years to three months for Cuban citizens, with a single entry. In addition, on 17 April 2019, the United States National Security Adviser announced that the Government would restrict all travel by United States citizens to Cuba, with the sole exception of family visits. Moreover, it was announced that the United States Government would limit the amount of remittances that could be sent to Cuba to \$1,000 every three months.

Although there have been agreements in the telecommunications sector for direct connections with four United States companies, they have not been

implemented, partly because of technical challenges related to the embargo and partly because of domestic policy and infrastructure issues.

Culture is also affected by the enforcement of the embargo, given that it restricts the proper promotion, dissemination and marketing of Cuba's artistic talent. The embargo limits the purchase of updated bibliographical materials, resources for the conservation of cultural property and state-of-the-art technological equipment when they are under the protection of United States patents. Also, in April 2019, the United States Government declared that an agreement that would have allowed Cuban baseball players to play in the United States Major League Baseball League without defecting was illegal.

### **Impact on the Cuban economy**

According to ECLAC estimates, the Cuban economy grew by 1.1 per cent in 2018. The loss of momentum from the already low growth rate in 2017 (1.3 per cent) is due to the decline in the number of visitors to the island, mainly as a result of the travel restrictions imposed by the Government of the United States on its citizens, and to the impact of weather events in the primary sector.

The embargo has limited Cuba's access to development credit granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, which has narrowed the possibility of obtaining resources to provide financial support for Cuba's national and local development plans.

In the context of updating the Cuban economic model, the embargo also limits the participation of foreign investors, particularly United States companies, in prioritized economic projects, including the special development zone in Mariel. In that regard, the embargo has a negative impact on investment flows and limits access to regional and global value chains. The full application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act will discourage much-needed foreign investment, and the limits on the amount of remittances that can be sent to the island from the United States will severely limit the prospects for self-employed Cubans.

Cuban companies and foreign companies established in Cuba cannot purchase products, components or technologies from the United States even though the latter is the closest, most competitive and most diversified market. Alternative markets are more distant, resulting in higher import costs and delays in delivery time. In April 2019, the Vice-President of the United States announced that the United States Government would apply sanctions on several vessels owned or operated by the Venezuelan State-owned oil company, as well as on others that transport Venezuelan oil to Cuba. Sanctions prohibit all transactions by individuals and entities under United States jurisdiction.

Goods, services or technologies produced by the United States, covered by United States patents or containing any component produced and/or patented by the United States are not available to Cuba. In addition, the embargo places restrictions on shipping line companies whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. This situation significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading and delivery of goods. The export sector is also affected by the enforcement of the embargo, given that it limits the proper promotion, dissemination and marketing of Cuban products. The prohibition of bank transactions with Cuba prevents direct transactions with the United States regarding the sale of goods and services.

The main effects of the embargo on the Cuban economy are those stemming from forgone income from exporting goods and services to the United States, the limitations imposed by having to source goods and services from third countries, and



restrictions on finance and investment owing to the inability to carry out financial transactions with United States institutions.

### **Impact on United Nations operations**

The above-mentioned restrictions cause critical difficulties for the implementation of United Nations programmes and projects, in particular in the acquisition and purchasing of development and humanitarian products, such as medicines, medical equipment, fertilizers, food supplements, laboratory equipment, agricultural implements, educational tools, computers, information and communications software, construction materials and bibliographic resources, even if they are purchased through multilateral cooperation. These products are purchased from third countries and from secondary suppliers at prices significantly higher than those of comparable products sold on the international market.

Even when long-term corporate agreements with international suppliers apply to the projects in Cuba, the providers must obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control to deliver services or products to projects in Cuba, a bureaucratic process that takes much time and effort.

The increase in costs for transportation and freight, charged in commodities and related materials that need to be purchased in other regions, is also significant. The procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities, including fortified food provided by the World Food Programme, are delayed owing to the above-mentioned logistical challenges. As a result of the embargo, vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for trans-shipment, causing delays and additional costs that also affect United Nations shipments. For the United Nations Population Fund, the commodities linked to sexual and reproductive health assistance and related materials have to be purchased in other regions, usually resulting in an increase in costs for transportation and freight charges.

Therefore, financial proposals and new projects must include an extended period for procurement processes and allocate additional financial resources that could otherwise be allocated to development activities.

At a financial level, the embargo prevents United Nations country offices in Cuba from making transfers in United States dollars. For that reason, and although the budgets of all projects are recorded in United States dollars, transfers abroad must be made in another currency. However, even when payments are made in another currency, bank withholdings significantly increase as a result of requests for additional information by banks to comply with the Office of Foreign Assets Control all along the banking chain system (issuer, intermediary and beneficiary). This measure has affected the ability of the country offices to honour payments to suppliers within the agreed time frames.

For example, a significant number of suppliers that have had fluid commercial relations with Cuban companies and with the United Nations Development Programme in Cuba for years had their accounts closed in 2018–2019 as a result of policies implemented by Multibank, Panama, that are directly and explicitly related to United States sanctions against Cuba. The United Nations Children's Fund office in Cuba is obliged to use a correspondent bank to pay back the funds in its local account in United States dollars. This process results in losses of approximately 3.5 per cent of the total value transferred owing to differences in exchange rates. Money transfers made from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization headquarters in Paris have often been affected by restrictions imposed by the United States Department of the Treasury on banks conducting transactions with Cuban banks. This has caused the office delays in availability of funds, consequently affecting its capacity to meet financial commitments on time.

Challenges in repatriating funds from agencies' representations in Cuba to their headquarters in the United States have also been reported. For example, in 2018, there continued to be problems with repatriating and receiving funds from the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization country office in Cuba to the organization's headquarters in Washington, D.C. As a result, the approximate monthly average of immobilized funds in Cuba from March 2018 through February 2019 was almost \$355,000, causing heavy financial losses for the organization in terms of interest and higher overhead costs.

Financial resources that could have been used to more effectively achieve the expected programme and development results are required to cover additional costs incurred owing to the conditions caused by the embargo.

The embargo continues to obstruct financial transactions conducted by United Nations international and national personnel, as well as banking and insurance services received by said personnel. Local officials find it difficult to use United States-based services, such as transfers to internal bank accounts or between bank accounts. In addition, international personnel with local credit cards or bank accounts generally have difficulties in making payments abroad.

Access to Internet services is still limited because of the embargo, which inhibits the efficient use of institutional platforms and slows online processes and activities. Voice and data communications are extremely expensive given that they must bypass United States telecommunications infrastructure. The embargo also prevents United Nations country offices from directly accessing technical support for products and services from the United States. The same applies to software licences.

Many websites and services accessed from the Cuban Internet service provider are blocked. Therefore, the United Nations country offices' primary access to the Internet is gained through satellite providers, which entails higher costs, limited bandwidth and degraded service quality for video and voice through the Internet. At the time of the preparation of the present report, the satellite provider of the United Nations Development Programme in Cuba was blocked for the same services banned in Cuba.

The suspension of consular services in the United States Embassy in Cuba hinders the obtaining of visas by United Nations officials who travel on mission to the United States.

As to medical insurance, United Nations officials are also directly affected, since many health insurance companies cannot work directly with Cuban health service providers given the restrictions imposed by the embargo.

## **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

[Original: English]  
[6 May 2019]

As in its previous contributions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continues to express concern regarding the negative impact that extraterritorial sanctions have on human rights. This concern is also voiced by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in his latest reports to the General Assembly ([A/73/175](#)), which contains a section on Cuba, and to the Human Rights Council ([A/HRC/39/54](#)).

In the present contribution, OHCHR would like to reiterate its recommendation made in 2018 for Cuba to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which it signed in 2008, in order to highlight, through the periodic reporting obligations of that country, the negative impact that the economic, commercial and financial embargo has on Cubans. That recommendation was echoed by many Member States during the review of Cuba, in May 2018, under the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/39/16, para. 24.1). The Government of Cuba took note of the recommendation (A/HRC/39/16/Add.1, para. 8). During said review, several States also highlighted the negative impact that the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States on Cuba had on the human rights of the Cuban people and recommended that Cuba persevere despite the embargo (A/HRC/39/16, paras. 24.100–24.104). These recommendations enjoyed the support of the Government of Cuba (A/HRC/39/16/Add.1, para. 7). In this context, OHCHR would like to further encourage Cuba to take the steps necessary to ratify the Covenant.

In parallel, the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights has consistently stressed that unilateral sanctions may unlawfully discriminate against persons on the basis of their nationality, national origin or place of residence (A/73/175, para. 15). Regarding economic sanctions such as those imposed on Cuba, in his latest report to the General Assembly, the Special Rapporteur claimed that these sanctions arguably entailed some form of prohibited “collective punishment” and could not be justified under the rules of international humanitarian law (*ibid.*, para. 34). The Special Rapporteur concluded that unilateral sanctions, especially those of a comprehensive nature, in particular when aggravated by secondary sanctions seeking the “economic isolation” of the target country, amounted to discrimination against the innocent population of the country concerned, in violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (*ibid.*, para. 52).

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in its concluding observations on the combined nineteenth to twenty-first periodic reports of Cuba, in 2018, indirectly acknowledged the negative impact of the embargo imposed by the United States when it welcomed the fact that, despite the economic, commercial and financial blockade, the State party had succeeded in establishing a universal education and health system and extending social protection coverage to the whole of the population, including people of African descent (CERD/C/CUB/CO/19–21, para. 6).

OHCHR reiterates its call for Cuba to extend invitations to special procedures mandate holders as a way to assess independently the impact that such unilateral measures have on the human rights of Cubans. In particular, OHCHR believes that the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights should be invited to undertake a country visit to Cuba in the near future and provide their views and recommendations for action.

Following the restrictions reinstated in June 2017, the Administration of the United States further tightened the sanctions against Cuba in November 2017 by including restrictions on financial transactions, trade and commerce with certain entities in Cuba and individual non-academic travel to the island.<sup>8</sup> These restrictions require, among other things, that travellers of the United States have “meaningful interaction with individuals in Cuba”. The restrictions could negatively affect the

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<sup>8</sup> United States of America, Department of the Treasury, “Treasury, Commerce, and State implement changes to the Cuba sanctions rules” (press release), 8 November 2017. Available at [www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/sm0209.aspx](http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/sm0209.aspx).

most vulnerable parts of the Cuban population by limiting their access to basic human rights, such as access to food and medicines at competitive prices, as well as life-saving technology and convertible currency. In its resolution 73/8 of 2018 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the General Assembly expressed disappointment in the reinstatement by the Administration of the United States of certain restrictions on Cuba in November 2017. The non-renewal of the waiver of title III of the Helms-Burton Act announced by the Administration of the United States on 17 April 2019 may result in thousands of legal claims in courts in the United States and constitute a serious deterrent for private companies to invest in Cuba. In addition to lifting the waiver, the United States has announced such additional restrictions as a further limit to money transfers allowed to Cuba and to the number of non-family related travel. The impact of these additional unilateral coercive measures will probably increase the difficulties for average citizens to have access to food and medicines at competitive prices and to convertible currencies to buy those items.

## **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

Cuba is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol thereto. Nevertheless, thousands of refugees have found international protection in Cuba over the years, and the Government has allowed the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to exercise its mandate to recognize refugees and grant them international protection for three decades.

Cuba has maintained its de facto policy of non-refoulement for all refugees recognized under the mandate of UNHCR. In 2018, 38 asylum seekers arrived in Cuba, a slight increase from 2017 (33) but a decrease from 2016 (89). Although the overall population of concern to UNHCR in Cuba decreased in 2018, few solutions remain available.

Asylum seekers in Cuba are allowed to remain in the country temporarily while UNHCR conducts a determination of their refugee status and, upon recognition of said status under its mandate, seeks durable solutions for them. In 2018, more than 250 refugees were in need of a durable solution and, for most, resettlement to a third country was the only viable option. However, access to resettlement was available to only a few of them owing to the very limited number of resettlement spaces.

Cuba has not developed a local integration policy. Nevertheless, in recent years, a limited number of refugees were granted permanent residence permits on the basis of marriage to a Cuban national, in accordance with the current national legislation. Such individuals were given a legal status that grants them similar rights and opportunities as nationals.

While most recognized refugees are not granted work permits, they have access to free health-care and education systems on a nearly equal footing with Cuban nationals. Although groups of refugees specifically admitted to Cuba under governmental scholarships have had their tertiary education funded, the programme applies only to refugees who are pre-selected before their arrival and therefore cannot be extended to all refugees recognized under the mandate of UNHCR.

In the past, Cuba has made relevant contributions to regional frameworks aimed at enhancing international protection and promoting solutions for refugees, stateless persons and other persons of concern to UNHCR. In December 2014, the country

agreed to approve the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action. Similarly, Cuba has participated in a constructive way in the formal consultations leading to the development of the global compact on refugees, which was affirmed by the General Assembly on 17 December 2018.

If the embargo against Cuba ends, more favourable conditions in Cuba could ultimately be fostered for persons of concern to UNHCR. Such conditions could also support local integration. UNHCR will continue to advocate Cuba's accession to the international refugee and statelessness treaties and looks forward to improved international cooperation, which would encourage accession and help to promote stronger protection for refugees and displaced persons.

## **United Nations Children's Fund**

[Original: Spanish]

[15 April 2019]

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been working with Cuba since 1962. In 2000, it established a country office with official representation and national and international staff. The current five-year country programme is fully aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, the national priorities of Cuba and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014–2018, which was extended until 2019 at the request of the Government of Cuba.

UNICEF supports the Government's efforts to maintain past achievements in social policy on universal access and improve service quality in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in three areas: health and nutrition; education; and protection and participation. In this context, the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba continues to affect the ability of Cuban children, adolescents and their families to improve their living conditions and opportunities for development.

Given that certain basic supplies for children's programmes are not produced in the country, they must be obtained from distant markets or through intermediaries, leading to delays, increased costs and the payment of higher freight charges. This increases the cost of providing social services to women and children.

### **Effects of the embargo on UNICEF operations**

The above-mentioned commercial restrictions also apply to the operations of UNICEF in Cuba, in the context of both its regular programme and its humanitarian response.

Purchasing processes are not competitive and generate additional transactional costs because of the lack of access to the United States market even though that country is the nearest market. Goods, services and technology produced in the United States, covered by United States patents, or containing components manufactured and/or patented in the United States, are not available to the Cuban market.

The UNICEF office in Cuba cannot benefit from transactional cost savings that are made through global long-term agreements with companies located in the United States for the purchase of supplies and services, specifically those related to information and communications technology, software licences and Internet services.

In addition, the use of long-term agreements with companies not located in or not from the United States require a permit from the United States Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control to purchase computers because they include components manufactured by United States companies. This has delayed the procurement process by up to three months. Furthermore, for the purchase of

materials, some suppliers require an end-user certificate indicating that only the UNICEF office will be the user of the product and not a beneficiary entity.

To mitigate the impact, the UNICEF office in Cuba is obliged to identify, in advance, suppliers for this type of goods and services that charge higher prices and incur higher administrative costs, which have to be absorbed by the budgets of the UNICEF programme.

### **Constraints associated with financial transactions**

Restrictions on bank transfers of United States dollars to and from Cuba remain in place. The UNICEF office in Cuba is obliged to use a correspondent bank in a third country to pay back the funds in its local account in United States dollars. This process results in losses of approximately 3.5 per cent of the total value transferred because of differences in exchange rates. In 2018, that loss amounted to \$51,085. In addition, transfers are lengthy processes and can take up to 20 days. This has made it difficult for the office to fulfil its financial obligations. To mitigate risks, the office is maintaining funds in reserve in each of its bank accounts to guarantee transactions for the next 30 days, an exceptional measure according to the standards for cash flow management at UNICEF.

## **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

[Original: English]  
[15 April 2019]

The Nairobi Maafikiano (TD/519/Add.2 and Corr.1), adopted at the 14th session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in July 2016, “From decision to action: moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development,” provided as follows:

“States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries, and that affect commercial interests. These actions hinder market access, investments and freedom of transit and the well-being of the populations of affected countries. Meaningful trade liberalization will also require addressing non-tariff measures including, inter alia, unilateral measures, where they may act as unnecessary trade barriers.”<sup>9</sup>

Cuba has been under the United States economic embargo since 1962. The current United States policy towards Cuba was laid down in the National Security Presidential Memorandum entitled “Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba”, enacted on 16 June 2017. The directive established a new policy direction, which, inter alia, sought to tighten the embargo against Cuba, including restrictions on transactions with companies controlled by certain government entities and the elimination of individual people-to-people travel. The Directive repealed the previous Presidential Policy Directive entitled “United States-Cuba Normalization”, issued by the former United States President, Barack Obama, on 14 October 2016, which recognized the embargo as an outdated policy that should be lifted. The embargo against Cuba thus remains in force and operational in 2019.

<sup>9</sup> UNCTAD, TD/519/Add.2 and Corr.1, 5 September 2016.

## Bilateral trade between Cuba and the United States

Estimates by UNCTAD suggest that, currently, bilateral trade between Cuba and the United States is relatively small, particularly given the size of their respective economies, as well as the economic complementarities and geographical proximity of the two nations.<sup>10</sup> In 2017, the United States market remained virtually closed to Cuban products as most imports from Cuba and other Cuban-origin goods are prohibited, with some limited exceptions. Cuban exports to the United States were insignificant, valued at \$842,000, or 0.03 per cent of Cuba's total exports to the world.

By contrast, there exists far greater and sizable trade in the opposite direction. In 2017, Cuba imported products from the United States that were worth \$490 million, or 4.5 per cent of its total imports. These products mainly consisted of basic food items, such as meat and meat preparations and cereals and cereal preparations, including edible meat (e.g., poultry), wheat, maize and soybeans. This reflects the fact that United States commercial agricultural exports have been authorized since 2001, albeit subject to numerous restrictions and licensing requirements. The United States has indeed become one of Cuba's primary suppliers of food and agricultural products. Commercial exports of medicines and medical products have also been authorized since the early 1990s.<sup>11</sup>

## Overall economic and trade trends

Trade plays an essential role in the Cuban economy. As a small island country short on natural resources, endogenous capital and sufficient domestic demand, the country needs access to international markets to build up a vibrant productive base and generate foreign exchange earnings; and access to a larger quantity and variety of goods and services, as well as foreign capital, technology and investment, to fulfil the domestic needs of its population and industries and to fuel its economy and sustain its economic growth.

In 2017, exports of goods and services accounted for 15 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Cuba and imports accounted for 12 per cent, which represented a steady decline from the post-2009 crisis peak levels registered in 2011 and 2012, of 26 per cent and 24 per cent, respectively. During the period between 2000 and 2017, the country's per capita income at constant prices (2010) rose from \$3,473 to \$6,580. In 2018, the country was ranked seventy-third in the United Nations Development Programme human development index and qualified as a country with high human development. Nevertheless, the relative importance of trade in GDP, a proxy of countries' degree of trade integration, is less pronounced in Cuba than in other Caribbean economies. For an average Caribbean economy, the trade-to-GDP ratio reached 26 per cent for exports and 28 per cent for imports in 2017. Hence, Cuba is yet to exploit the full potential of trade to leverage growth and development.

The overall economic conditions facing Cuba today, however, do not seem to be amenable to dynamic trade growth in the immediate future. Between 2012 and 2017, the Cuban economy registered an average annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent, lower than the 5 per cent deemed necessary for the country to attain a sustainable growth path.<sup>12</sup>

After registering a robust growth rate of 4.4 per cent in 2015, the Cuban economy decelerated in 2016 to grow only by 0.5 per cent before expanding by 1.8 per

<sup>10</sup> The source of all data referred to in the text is UNCTADstat, unless otherwise specified.

<sup>11</sup> See Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. policy in the 115th Congress", Congressional Research Service, 15 January 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Richard E. Feinberg, "Cuba's economy after Raúl Castro: a tale of three worlds," The Brookings Institution, February 2018.

cent in 2017.<sup>13</sup> The economy is estimated to have grown at a slower rate, by 1.1 per cent, in 2018, and is forecast to grow at a similar pace in 2019 (1.3 per cent). The slowdown may be attributable to lower export earnings, reduced bilateral support and oil supply from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the wake of its economic hardships, austerity measures in place since 2016 and significant damage to tourism, agriculture sector and infrastructure caused by Hurricane Irma in September 2017.

At a more structural level, the deceleration of growth is symptomatic of chronic stagnation in domestic production affecting productive sectors, including agriculture, energy and industry. As a small island economy with a GDP of \$97 billion (2017), Cuba has a small agriculture sector that accounts for 4 per cent of GDP (but employs 13 per cent of workforce) and an industrial sector that makes up 25 per cent of GDP. In contrast, the services sector has become dominant in the economy, contributing 72 per cent to GDP and emerging as the main export industry.

Partly reflecting the domestic production structure, the country's trade is characterized by a persistent deficit in merchandise trade (\$7.6 billion in 2017)<sup>14</sup> and a persistent surplus in services trade (\$9.1 billion in 2017). Over the past few years, there has been a decline in trade surplus, giving rise to balance-of-payments challenges. The surplus has fallen from \$3.8 billion in 2012 to \$1.5 billion in 2017.

It is particularly notable that Cuban merchandise exports have steadily and substantially fallen since 2011, partly reflecting a weakening of domestic production. In 2017, the value of Cuban merchandise exports rose to \$2.6 billion, bouncing back by 8 per cent from the previous year. However, this was below 2006 levels, and less than half the historic high of \$6.4 billion attained in 2011. Consequently, the share of Cuba in the world merchandise exports more than halved, from 0.035 per cent in 2011 to 0.015 per cent in 2017.

Cuba's export basket includes basic food, beverages and tobacco, ores and metals, chemical products and other manufactured goods. In 2017, sugar (24 per cent), tobacco (17 per cent), metalliferous ores (10 per cent), medical and pharmaceutical products (10 per cent) figured prominently among the major export products. Despite their diminished role in the economy, over the past two decades, traditional cash crops – sugar and tobacco – remained the country's main foreign exchange earners. In addition, a biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector that supplies the domestic healthcare system has become a significant export industry while nickel mining has also produced viable export activities.

These exports were destined mainly for the European Union (27 per cent), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (14 per cent), Canada (12 per cent), China (10 per cent) and the Russian Federation (4.5 per cent). The relative importance of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as an export market declined since 2010 and that of the European Union rose. In these major markets, Cuban exports faced a weighted average tariff of about 7 per cent.<sup>15</sup>

Estimated at \$10.8 billion in 2018, merchandise imports were four times larger than merchandise exports, as the country relies heavily on imports for the supply of essential energy and foodstuffs, as well as capital goods. Basic food (22 per cent), including cereals (8 per cent) and meat (3 per cent); fuels (9 per cent); manufacturing including machinery and transport equipment (32 per cent); and other manufactured

<sup>13</sup> United Nations, *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2019*.

<sup>14</sup> As reported in the balance of payments. Balance of payment-based statistics of trade in goods may differ from international merchandise trade statistics reported elsewhere in the text owing to differences in the concepts and definitions.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Trade Analysis and Information System database, accessed through the World Integrated Trade Solution.



goods (23 per cent) are indeed the main imported items. Cuba reportedly meets 70 per cent to 80 per cent of domestic food needs from imports. As to energy, since 2000, the country has maintained a preferential oil agreement with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (essentially an oil-for-medical-personnel barter arrangement) which until recently provided the country with a quantity of oil covering two thirds of its domestic consumption.

The main sources of these imports were: the European Union (30 per cent), China (18 per cent), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (12 per cent), the United States (5 per cent), Brazil (4 per cent) and Canada (4 per cent). It is notable that the United States is ranked fourth on account of its food exports as noted above. The relative importance of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has declined since 2010 in favour of China.

Cuba has developed important export capabilities in the services sector over the past two decades. In 2017, Cuba's services exports stood at \$11.1 billion, and imports at \$2.0 billion, generating a trade surplus of \$9.1 billion as noted. Key sector activities generating foreign exchange are the export of professional services, largely medical personnel supplying services in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and booming tourism services. Tourism has grown significantly since the mid-1990s and an estimated 4.75 million tourists visited the country in 2018, with a corresponding increase in tourism revenues. In 2017, related travel services generated \$3.2 billion in exports, accounting for 28 per cent of total services exports.

On the other hand, remittance flows to Cuba sent by migrants and workers abroad amounted to some \$4.5 billion in 2017, around \$3 billion of which were estimated to originate in the United States. The amount was greater than the country's total merchandise export receipt and equivalent to 4.7 per cent of its GDP. Remittances have been the major sources of external finances and could potentially serve as investment capital for households and private enterprises.

Further development of these promising activities, however, has been constrained by the embargo, as travel to Cuba for tourist activities, including individual people-to-people travel, remains prohibited in the United States. The United States regulations currently restrict travel to Cuba to licensed travellers engaged in certain specified activities. The United States embargo also restricts financial transactions affecting Cuba, with extraterritorial effects, while compromising efficient remittances flows and increasing remittance costs.

## **Conclusion**

Recent actions taken by the United States have affected the efforts to ease the embargo and normalize bilateral diplomatic relations. The essential elements of the embargo remain in force and continue to restrict a healthy development of commercial relations between the two neighbouring countries. This continues to be a matter of concern to Cuba as trade plays a crucial role in its economy. To date, the embargo has frustrated the country's efforts to use trade as an instrument of sustainable development, including through further expansion of promising tourism and professional services activities, as well as productive use of remittances. This is all the more significant in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals which profile international trade as an essential means of implementation and call for significantly increasing the exports of developing countries under its target 17.11.

## United Nations Development Programme

[Original: English]

[10 April 2019]

Cuba continues to maintain a high human development index ranking. President Miguel Díaz-Canel has ratified Cuba's commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Cuban development model continues to change. The document entitled "Social and economic policy guidelines" was updated at the Seventh Communist Party Congress, held in April 2016, and it continues to provide guidance for ongoing reform. The Cuban Parliament approved the conceptualization of the Cuban economic and social model and the 2030 national plan for economic and social development. The plan defines key strategic priorities for: an effective and socialist government and social integration; changes in the production sector and participation in international trade; infrastructure development; the development of human potential, science, technology and innovation; natural resources and the environment; as well as human development, equity and justice.

The social and economic guidelines are innovative within the national context and represent a challenge for the country. The main objective of the guidelines is to stimulate foreign investment and accelerate economic growth and competitiveness, recognizing that local governments have a vital role in the forthcoming decentralization framework. In late 2013, Cuba initiated a process of monetary unification which represents a key challenge for the country. This complex process is ongoing and requires rigorous preparations to address possible impacts it may have on the population. In this context, universal social services and social development remain a priority for the Government. The traditional social protection network is thus being adjusted to ensure sustainability and greater focus on the most vulnerable groups, such as the elderly.

Guideline No. 85 of the social and economic guidelines calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration to support the 2030 national development plan, with direct reference to the United Nations system. In that regard, the United Nations system supports national authorities in addressing emerging issues and challenges.

The Seventh Communist Party Congress also approved the State plan to respond to climate change and to promote resilient development, known as Life Task (*Tarea Vida*).

A new constitutional text was endorsed by a broad referendum process in 2019. The new Constitution recognizes citizens' rights, as well as different types of property; reaffirms the local role in development; and legalizes changes in the governance structure, among others.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports national authorities' efforts to address emerging development issues and challenges. The partnership between UNDP and Cuban authorities is based on a long-standing relationship. UNDP has supported major local and national development strategies and policies for over 40 years. At present, cooperation is carried out within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the UNDP country programme document initiated in 2014 and extended to 2019. UNDP cooperates with national authorities in the following areas: supporting local governments and their development strategies, including those related to value chains; introducing and applying measures for adaptation to climate change, especially in food production and coastal zones; using renewable energy; supporting national policy and productive sectors to reduce levels of imports; contributing to sustainable development by

promoting (a) the sustainable use of natural resources through knowledge and technology transfer to productive sector policies and (b) a more effective disaster risk reduction strategy; and supporting the national response to HIV/AIDS and efforts to combat discrimination based on sexual diversity. Gender and youth are cross-cutting themes.

UNDP supports priority areas of cooperation that contribute to the implementation of the social and economic policy guidelines in areas that are at times innovative within the national context and have a high strategic relevance in view of the changes to the Cuban development model. Fostering sustainable human development will continue to be at the heart of the cooperation programme, which promotes South-South cooperation, innovation and technology and knowledge transfer.

### **Diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States**

In December 2014, the Presidents of Cuba and the United States of America, Raúl Castro and Barack Obama, announced the decision to initiate conversations, focusing on steps to be taken to officially re-establish diplomatic relations. After several rounds of negotiations, the Embassies of Cuba and the United States were opened in Washington, D.C., and Havana, respectively, in the summer of 2015. A bilateral commission was established to help move towards the full normalization of diplomatic ties. However, the current United States Administration has adopted measures that have negatively affected bilateral relations.

After the re-establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of the respective Embassies in Washington, D.C., and Havana, the process towards the normalization of relations has been affected by the recent measures adopted by the current United States Administration. Among the measures that negatively affect bilateral relations are: the suspension of consular services in the United States Embassy in Havana for Cuban citizens who wish to travel to the United States; the significant reduction of United States diplomatic personnel in the country; the elimination of the granting of tourist visas valid for five years for Cubans; and the entry into force of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, entitled “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act”, which reinforces the general conditions of the embargo, by allowing legal claims for property confiscated in Cuba from United States citizens and companies, as well as Cuban citizens nationalized in the United States.

### **Specific effects of the United States embargo**

In this context, the embargo remains in place, and its negative impact continues to be very similar to that of previous years, particularly on commerce and financial activities. The embargo affects the external economic relations of Cuba, and its impact can be observed in all spheres of the country’s social and economic activities; the embargo maintains the restrictions on the use of the United States dollar and on imports from Cuba. It affects opportunities for national and local development and creates economic hardship for the population. The embargo has an impact on the population’s most vulnerable groups and on human development in general.

According to official estimates, the cumulative direct and indirect losses to the Cuban economy due to the embargo from the early 1960s until April 2017 amount to \$130.2 billion at current prices.

The embargo has limited Cuba’s access to development credits granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. This has narrowed the possibility of obtaining resources to provide financial support for Cuba’s national and/or local development plans.

In the context of updating the Cuban economic model, the embargo also limits the participation of foreign investors – particularly United States companies – in prioritized economic projects, including the special development zone in Mariel. In that regard, the embargo impedes investment flows and limits access to regional and global value chains.

Travel by Cuban experts and researchers to the United States in the framework of cooperation agreements has been limited by the process of obtaining visas.

The embargo has continued to negatively affect day-to-day work in external cooperation initiatives, creating many difficulties for the implementation of programmes and projects owing to trade restrictions or prohibitions on purchasing inputs from United States companies and subsidiaries established in the United States or in other countries. It also reduces the number of possible suppliers and limits competitive processes.

On a financial level, the embargo continues to prevent the UNDP country office from making transfers in United States dollars. For this reason, and although budgets of all projects are recorded in United States dollars, transfers abroad are made in another currency (mainly euros, British pounds, Canadian dollars, Japanese yen and Swiss francs). However, even when payments are made in one of these currencies, bank withholdings have significantly increased as a result of requests for additional information by banks in order to comply with the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Treasury (OFAC) all along the banking chain system (issuing, intermediate and beneficiary). This measure has affected the ability of the country office to honour payments to suppliers within agreed timeframes.

In addition, despite the measures on port security, the embargo places practical restrictions on shipping lines whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. This significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading of goods. Costs associated with intermediaries and long-distance transportation have had a negative impact on the ability to access key inputs and on the final cost of imported project goods and equipment. Likewise, products for development projects must be purchased and imported from more distant places at much higher costs.

### **Effects on projects**

The embargo has had a direct impact on all UNDP development projects and emergency activities, because it increases the transaction costs of obtaining project inputs, the transportation costs of imported goods and transportation time. Finding alternative shipping companies requires additional time and efforts. As a result, projects have been affected by significant delays in the purchase and distribution of project inputs, which has had a negative impact on the timely implementation of project activities and on results.

The situation has been particularly worrisome in the case of projects related to food security and local development, given the lengthy process to access and import agricultural inputs such as irrigation systems, machinery and agricultural tools. In general, procurement processes take longer, delaying project activities and their results. Therefore, financial proposals and new projects must consider, in their designs, an extended period for procurement processes and they also must allocate additional financial resources to cover incremental costs that could otherwise be allocated for development activities. Those additional costs are covered by the funds provided by international development partners, which are channelled through UNDP.

Many of the assets required by the country office projects involve United States technologies or have United States manufacturing components. The Torricelli Act of

1992 and Helms-Burton Act of 1996 are still in force, both of which explicitly prohibit sales to Cuba by United States companies and subsidiaries in third countries and include sanctions against those who violate the prohibition.

This situation also affects the acquisition of computer technology. After the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2015, an information and communications technology provider, Planson International, stated its interest in participating in bidding processes through competitive procedures. When the provider was finally awarded a purchase order in early 2017, it faced delays in obtaining export licences to Cuba. This was the first purchase order placed with this provider and an important advancement in the enrichment of the information and communications technology provider portfolio of the UNDP Cuba country office. The contract was signed on 7 March 2017 and on 28 March, the vendor announced that the delivery would be delayed by licensing issues in relation to the United States Department of Commerce (Bureau of Industry and Security). On 30 March, the vendor sent a communication expressing its regrets and informing UNDP that it could not confirm whether it would be able to obtain the licences on time. In view of the risk of breach of contract with the consequent loss of funds, the purchase order was cancelled. The vendor has still not been able to obtain the licence.

The projects financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, of which UNDP is the principal recipient, provides medicines, reagents and laboratory equipment for the benefit of 21,946 people of all ages living with HIV/AIDS. The provisions are purchased from third countries and from secondary suppliers at prices significantly higher than those of comparable products sold on the international market. Even when UNDP long-term corporate agreements with international suppliers apply to the project in Cuba, the embargo hinders purchases of products that are manufactured or have a component manufactured in the United States. In such cases, the providers have to obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control to deliver services or products to projects in Cuba, a bureaucratic process that takes much time and effort.

### **Effects of the embargo on country operations of the United Nations Development Programme**

The embargo also affects the day-to-day work of the UNDP country office in Cuba. There are limits on the use of corporate long-term agreements which are meant to effectively implement and monitor development, among others. For example, although there is a signed long-term agreement with Toyota Gibraltar Stockholdings Ltd., to date, the company cannot supply spare parts manufactured in the United States. As a result, the transaction costs increase by at least 15 per cent for UNDP Cuba owing to prices obtained from alternative and less competitive suppliers. Furthermore, in 2018, Toyota Gibraltar announced the cancellation of the supply of vehicles to the UNDP country office in Cuba. This decision put the country office and its projects in a challenging situation regarding the renovation of the vehicle fleet and the purchase of new vehicles. At the end of 2018, a new supplier from Japan established its branch office in Havana, and UNDP signed a contract for the procurement of a vehicle. However, payment issues came up in February 2019, when the previously agreed 20 per cent advance payment to that supplier was returned to UNDP headquarters. The supplier is therefore now reluctant to proceed with the shipment of the vehicle.

Access to Internet services is limited owing to the embargo. Many websites and services accessed through the Cuban Internet service provider are blocked. The country office therefore primarily has access to the Internet through a satellite provider, which is accompanied by higher costs, limited bandwidth and degraded service quality for video and voice messages through the Internet.

This situation restrains the effective use of corporate platforms, increasing the amount of time required to perform online processes and activities. Access to online training and webinars is also limited, while cloud-based services cannot be used.

In addition to this, at the time of the present report, the satellite provider for the UNDP country office in Cuba has seen the same services blocked as those that are banned for Cuba.

In information and communications technologies, the embargo prevents the UNDP country office from directly accessing technical support for products and services from the United States. The same applies to software licences. For example, a United States company holds a long-term contract with UNDP, but it cannot be used by UNDP Cuba, owing to the embargo regulations. The same applies to authorized distributors.

The UNDP country office in Cuba is also affected by not being able to use corporate accounts with United States banks or the United States dollar as a currency of payment. The office has to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations; for example, it has to use third-country banks, which results in higher costs for the office and its projects, as well as a heavier administrative burden. The related increase in costs has been covered by UNDP and project funds from donors, therefore using resources that could otherwise have been used for development activities.

Quite a significant number of suppliers who had fluid commercial relations with Cuban companies and with UNDP Cuba for several years saw their accounts closed in 2018 and 2019 as a result of policies implemented, directly and explicitly related to United States sanctions against Cuba. The impact has been particularly negative for projects of UNDP Cuba, involving the cancellation of contracts in the case of two emergency projects that were seriously delayed, as well as payment issues for other development projects and for UNDP operations in general.

Another way in which UNDP is affected by the embargo is that national staff required to travel to UNDP headquarters in New York have to request their visas well in advance.

## **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

[Original: English]

[11 April 2019]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America on Cuba for almost 60 years continues to cause unjustifiable harm to the Cuban people and to obstruct the country's economic development.

The embargo affects the capacity of the educational system to implement in its fullest extent, and in the least possible time, the ongoing upgrading programme of the national system of education, which includes modernizing the curricula and reordering institutional processes to improve efficiency and quality. This upgrading process requires the use of new teaching materials, laboratory equipment and other inputs for which import costs increase considerably owing to the effects of the embargo.

Specifically, in higher education, the implementation of the embargo has posed obstacles that hinder Cuba's access to the technology and equipment needed for advanced learning and scientific research. This includes research materials, the proper dissemination and remuneration of results, the purchase of supplies, resources and instruments, as well as support for university extension programmes in communities,

which foster local development. Likewise, the embargo hinders free exchanges and academic cooperation between Cuban and United States universities and research centres, activities that would be highly beneficial for the advancement of scientific knowledge.

The culture sector is also affected by the enforcement of the embargo, as it limits the proper promotion, dissemination and marketing of Cuba's artistic talent.

Despite the existence of a proven market for Cuban music in the United States, Cuban musicians promoted by Cuban artistic agencies are unable to make full use of these opportunities, forcing them to sell their music in markets with a lower demand. The persecution of bank transactions with Cuba prevents direct transactions with the United States regarding the sale of cultural goods and services, especially in the field of music.

The Cuban music industry continues to be affected and limited by the obstacles imposed on accessing raw materials for recording and on state-of-the-art technology. Artistic training, particularly in the field of music, is limited by the barriers imposed on access to capacity-building courses in world-renowned United States universities and by the increase in costs for purchasing musical instruments required to train new talents.

The embargo is also evidenced through obstacles to the purchase of updated bibliographical materials, resources for the conservation of cultural property and state-of-the-art technological equipment when these are under the protection of United States patents.

In the telecommunications field, it is difficult to purchase materials, equipment and software licences, as well as other merchandise and supplies from the United States and other suppliers that market these products under United States patents.

Despite recent advances in the introduction of 3G technology and the expansion of access points to Wi-Fi connectivity across the country, the availability and diversity of Internet services continue to be limited due to the embargo. Internet providers interested in introducing their products and services onto the Cuban market are limited in doing so, due to sanctions that the United States Government could impose. In addition, some websites and Internet services hosted by United States-located servers are not accessible from Cuba.

In the context of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo, financial restrictions that prevent or hinder bank transactions, even in currencies that are not the United States dollar, tend to increase. This effect does not exclude international agencies that, like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have offices in Cuba.

Money transfers made from UNESCO Headquarters in Paris have often been affected owing to restrictions imposed by the United States Department of the Treasury on banks conducting transactions with Cuban banks. This has caused the UNESCO office in Cuba delays in availability of funds, consequently affecting its capacity to meet financial commitments in time.

These negative effects also limit financial transactions conducted by UNESCO international and national personnel for their private matters. For example, local officials find it difficult to conduct bank transfers between personal accounts associated with United States-based banks or credit institutions, such as the United Nations Federal Credit Union, and their accounts in Cuba. In addition, international personnel cannot receive their salaries in their personal bank accounts and, in general, have difficulties making payments online with credit cards. This is particularly relevant since UNESCO personnel in Cuba cannot use their accounts in Cuban banks

to make reservations or pay for air tickets, hotel accommodations and related services for either personal trips or official missions abroad.

Unable to access the United States market, the Cuba office is required to cover high freight costs since it has to import its inputs from more distant countries.

United States-based companies supplying information technologies based in the United States with which UNESCO maintains global supply agreements are obliged to request special licences from the United States Department of the Treasury to export their products to the Cuba office. These permits are issued under the condition that said property not be transferred to any national entity. This affects the implementation of UNESCO collaboration projects at the local level, increasing purchasing costs and eliminating the possibility of benefiting from post-sales services and better commercial warranties.

The UNESCO Regional Office for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean continues to adopt additional measures to carry out financial operations for its programmes, often resorting to banks located in third-party countries, a factor that increases banking costs and the administrative workload. This has caused, in some cases, delays in financial transactions with Cuban institutions or service providers because they have been considered “prohibited transactions” by virtue of the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List of the Office of Foreign Assets Control or other lists of sanctions or affected countries. The expanded list of Cuban institutions with which no direct financial transactions may be established by persons or companies subject to United States jurisdiction, updated by the State Department, already totals over 200 entities and sub-entities, and imposes additional restrictions on any operation involving said entities.

The initially indefinite, and later definitive closing of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services office in Cuba hinders the request for visas by officials of the UNESCO office who are to travel on mission to the United States, or to other countries the flight route to which would cost less in terms of time and money via the United States, with resulting cost increases by way of trips to third-party countries that these officials must make to request immigration proceedings.

As to medical insurance, UNESCO officials are directly affected, since many health insurance companies cannot work directly with Cuban health service providers given the restrictions imposed by the embargo, making it difficult to ensure health services for the Cuba office personnel.

The entry into force of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act”, tightens the general conditions of the embargo, allowing the proliferation of lawsuits over properties confiscated in Cuba from United States citizens and companies, as well as from Cuban citizens nationalized in the United States. These include facilities that today are schools and cultural centres, among other institutions.

## **United Nations Environment Programme**

[Original: English]  
[3 April 2019]

From the environmental perspective, the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba not only affects that Caribbean country but also the subregion and the United States itself.

Conservation efforts in the Caribbean island hotspots are fragmented and incomplete and they lack a necessary common strategy, since Cuba is excluded from several of the most important projects in the subregion, owing to the fact that they are



being implemented with United States funds. This not only prevents Cuba from benefiting from the projects, but affects the Caribbean subregion, as it cannot be approached as a whole.

The embargo also significantly affects the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems shared between Cuba and the United States. The embargo eliminates the possibility of implementation of common strategies for the integrated management of the environment and natural resources that surround these two countries and no important integrated progress can be made with the absence of agreements and dialogue between the two Governments to focus on their shared environments.

Much of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is carried out through South-South cooperation, which involves knowledge transfer, capacity-building and technical support from and to Cuba and other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, by way of training events, capacity-building activities and workshops, among others. Therefore, the continuing embargo translates into missed opportunities for environmental cooperation in the region.

When working in Cuba, there is often a need to search for alternatives in the use of technology, for example, the global information system software used for remotely sensed and spatial data gathering and processing, which is needed for certain activities and projects. Given the existing trade restrictions, common suppliers are unable to deliver products and services in Cuba; therefore, the alternatives in terms of other capable software are limited.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba also affects the operations of UNEP. Simple things, such as Cuba making its financial contribution to the Programme, are affected, as banks often block transfers and transactions of funds coming from the country. Cuba's financial contribution is important to support the implementation of the programme of work.

A concrete example of the embargo's effects is a global environment facility project in Cuba which is ready to start a number of initiatives, but faces challenges with the transfer of funds to Cuba. The transfer must be done through the United Nations Development Programme, which entails additional expenses. Funds that would otherwise be invested in the project are used to pay those expenses. In addition, the United Nations Development Programme has stated that, owing to those difficulties, no procurement of any kind will be made for the project. This creates problems for the general implementation of the project.

Other examples of the impacts linked to the embargo are:

(a) As United States companies are not allowed to sell equipment, technology or products, among others, to Cuban companies, Cuba is forced to buy them in other markets, increasing cargo travel times and subsequently increasing carbon emissions associated with transport.

(b) Cuba continues to increase energy efficiency, under its energy revolution programme, as well as to promote recycling and other green technologies. The aim is to decrease oil consumption and carbon dioxide emissions and to achieve general resource efficiency. However, United States companies or their subsidiaries in other countries are not allowed to sell technologies that could benefit from this endeavour to Cuba. The same is true of products of non-United States companies that contain parts or components provided by United States companies or subsidiaries that could assist in advancing such developments.

(c) Cuba will face difficulties in meeting the obligations derived from the Minamata Convention on Mercury as a consequence of limited access to mercury-free technology, as well as in phasing out products containing mercury, such as dental

amalgams; leading to uncontrolled mercury releases that have regional and global effects.

(d) The participation of Cuban experts in environmental and sustainable development conferences and training activities is often constrained by travel restrictions and thousands of dollars are spent on more expensive and often longer routes for travel. In addition to this, their daily subsistence allowance cannot be provided through bank transfers because of the financial restrictions. Similarly, the challenges in processing the financial transactions and Internet connections make it difficult for the UNEP staff to participate in missions to Cuba.

(e) The embargo also restricts Cuba's access to information from leading scientific and technical journals and publications, as well as Internet access to specialized companies and institutions in the United States. This limits access by Cuban academics, engineers and students to cutting-edge developments in energy and environmental sciences; such access could increase their capacities to implement sound environmental technologies.

(f) Connectivity restrictions also limit Cuba's ability to implement and comply with certain environmental treaties that require the constant use of Internet. There is an important issue of connectivity between the United States and Cuba with respect to migratory birds and several marine species. An approximate amount of 200 species of migratory birds that breed in North America stop by or spend the winter in Cuba, and marine species such as snappers and groupers have a spawning spot in the north of the province of Pinar del Río in Cuba. Cuba exports most of its larvae from this spawning spot to Florida, one of the most important sites for sport fishing of these species in the United States. The embargo restrictions prevent fluid and efficient cooperation between conservationists and biodiversity protection agencies of Cuba and the United States to achieve effective protection of these connectivity processes.

(g) Cuba also has limited bandwidth as a result of the embargo, which affects the participation of Cubans in Internet-based conference sites and webinar platforms to attend virtual meetings and training sessions, which are increasingly being implemented to decrease travel costs, among others.

(h) Cuba and the United States are located in a region where disasters, particularly hurricanes, are seriously affecting ecosystems and populations. Both countries are working to attain higher levels of prevention of and preparation for disasters. In this sense, cooperation would benefit both countries, as well as countries of the wider Caribbean area.

For the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is imperative to facilitate cooperation among countries and remove barriers. The total elimination of the obstacles that limit normal exchange between Cuba and the United States would contribute to advancement in the sustainable management of shared ecosystems, cooperation among scientific and academic communities and the increased contribution of both countries in the fight against climate change, in ecosystem management, in facing natural disasters and the prevention of accidents. It would also benefit countries with which Cuba and the United States have cooperative programmes.

Notwithstanding the difficulties posed by the embargo, UNEP supports Cuba within its possibilities, trying to offset the limitations posed by this embargo. However, the ending of the embargo would significantly facilitate the processes and operation of projects and programmes in Cuba.

## United Nations Human Settlements Programme

[Original: English]

[18 April 2019]

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has been working in Cuba since 2001 and has had an office in Cuba since 2005. The main objective of its presence is to accompany the Government of Cuba in the implementation of its development agenda and priorities in line with the priorities and mandates of UN-Habitat.

During the past 14 years, UN-Habitat has supported Cuba in the implementation of several projects whose priorities are reflected in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the UN-Habitat country programme. Notable projects include planning and urban management at the national and municipal levels; housing and urban recovery after the impact of hurricanes; supporting changes in the housing sector; and promoting the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national and local levels.

The projects that are being implemented are oriented to development issues. There have been some restrictions on their execution owing to the international implications of the political, economic and commercial embargo, which restricts financial transactions and access to international markets that are of great importance for guaranteeing the acquisition of supplies, equipment, technologies and infrastructure for the urban and territorial development of Cuba and gradual improvement of the quality of life of the Cuban people.

With the new scenario of Cuba-United States relations and the different measures that have been approved and put into practice by both countries, the necessity of ending the economic and commercial embargo has become more obvious, as new opportunities are affected by this phenomenon.

From the perspective of UN-Habitat, the implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) will enable Cuba to contribute decisively to the achievement of the New Urban Agenda and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 11, to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

## United Nations Industrial Development Organization

[Original: English]

[27 March 2019]

Currently, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is supporting the efforts of the Cuban Government to promote foreign direct investment and create strategic alliances conducive to strengthening the country's industrial capabilities and competitiveness in priority industrial sectors through the implementation of a country programme.

The country programme focuses on three main objectives: (a) improving the business environment and sustainability; (b) improving industrial competitiveness; and (c) attracting foreign investment. The country programme includes various projects in strategic sectors for Cuba's economic and social development, such as industrial policy, the use of renewable energies, fresh-food industry and the integrated management of hydraulic resources, among others.

An overall budget of 50 million euros for four years has been tentatively identified, to be mobilized for the implementation of the programme. However, owing to the restrictions in fund mobilization and partnership constraints caused by the

economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, UNIDO has not been able to make the expected and needed progress within the country programme.

Nonetheless, UNIDO is implementing three ongoing projects with an overall budget of \$6.3 million, and two new initiatives are in advanced stages of funding negotiations for \$6 million for three years.

UNIDO is convinced that, without the restrictions caused by the embargo, this interregional effect to promote foreign direct investment, one of the key elements of the Programme for Country Partnership approach of UNIDO, could have brought more benefits.

## **United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction**

[Original: English]  
[6 May 2019]

Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Government of Cuba has actively engaged in disaster risk reduction knowledge-sharing processes and initiatives, in particular through the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean. In addition, the support of Cuba for the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas has been crucial to solidify regional commitments and ensure regional coherence. The cooperation of Cuba with the entire region, including through the sharing of its expertise, is of great importance to advance the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Through the “Tarea Vida” (life task) plan, Cuba has outlined a comprehensive and multisectoral approach to addressing climate change and disaster risk coherently through short-, medium- and long-term actions, reflecting the interconnectedness of disaster risk and climate risk and underlining the importance of addressing them to achieve sustainable development. The necessity of the plan is underscored by the lasting effects of Hurricane Irma of 2017. Although Cuban authorities reacted promptly and made considerable material and financial resources available for effective recovery, the country sustained significant damages, including to critical infrastructure and tourism facilities, highlighting the need for international cooperation for risk-informed investment and resilient infrastructure.

The lessons learned and best practices emerging from the 2017 hurricane season and the advances made by Cuba in disaster risk reduction, including through the synergistic implementation of climate adaptation programming, represent an important contribution to advancing disaster risk management in the Caribbean region. Further progress will require access to current scientific and technological advances, including risk-modelling technology, best practices with regard to resilient infrastructure and information technology, to further develop recovery capacity with a “build back better” approach, as well as access to ex ante risk-informed financing for the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

## **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

[Original: English]  
[11 April 2019]

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) notes that the Caribbean region continues to be confronted with serious challenges related to the illicit production and trafficking of cocaine originating in Latin America. UNODC is further strengthening its presence in the Caribbean to support member States in their

efforts to counter these challenges and expects to strengthen its cooperation with Cuba in the context of initiatives for the region, including new initiatives to enhance border controls.

Cuba is covered by the UNODC Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean in Panama, which initiated its activities in September 2009. In April 2014, UNODC launched the Regional Programme 2014–2016 (recently extended through 2018) in support of the Crime and Security Strategy of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Although Cuba is not a member of CARICOM, it benefits from the Regional Programme, particularly through synergies with the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of which Cuba is a member. The Programme consists of five subprogrammes, which not only reflect the range of thematic areas covered by the UNODC mandate, but also directly target the strategic goals of the CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy.

In the context of the Regional Programme, UNODC re-established a presence in the Caribbean, in Barbados, in August 2015. The UNODC Caribbean office is expected to support Cuba as part of a strengthened UNODC presence in the region, in close coordination with key regional and national counterparts.

Cuba has effectively cooperated with UNODC and this contribution has been always positively assessed by both parties. Cuba is a State party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and has participated in an active and efficient manner in its review process (Cuba has been the reviewer of Guyana, Nicaragua and Saint Lucia and has used its right to request the publication of its final country report on the homepage of UNODC).

Following Cuba's expression of interest in joining the Global Container Control Programme of UNODC and the World Customs Organization, an initial technical mission took place from 30 May to 3 June 2016 to assess the existing capabilities and discuss the details for Cuba to become a member of the Programme. As a result of the mission, it was agreed that the container control programme for the sea would be implemented in the port of Mariel, while the container control programme for airports would be implemented at José Martí International Airport. On 7 June 2017, Cuban authorities and UNODC signed the memorandum of understanding for the implementation of the container control programme in the country. A number of training and mentoring events followed the signing of the document, leading to the first seizure by the container control programme Joint Port Control Units in Cuba: a case of undeclared goods.

In the implementation of its initial activities in Cuba, UNODC has been facing some communication-related challenges, especially with regard to the quality and cost of Internet services. Nevertheless, UNODC has continued to collaborate with Cuban authorities, including in the development of the national strategy against trafficking in persons: the latter was shared with UNODC, which allowed the office to suggest elements for inclusion in the document. Cuban officials have also participated in the meetings of the regional law enforcement network on wildlife crime organized by UNODC in the Caribbean in 2016 and 2017. Cooperation was also established in the context of the fight against firearms trafficking and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017, Cuban civil servants participated in a regional meeting on the monitoring of firearms-trafficking flows held in Panama, which set the basis for increased sharing of information and best practices at the continental level, as well as for the alignment of efforts to achieve target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Recently, UNODC has secured funding to support the implementation of the Airport Communication Project in Cuba. Activities under this initiative, which is

aimed at strengthening national and regional capacities to interdict illicit trafficking flows, are scheduled to start during the second half of 2019.

For UNODC it is essential to continue promoting resource mobilization to include Cuba in the implementation of UNODC activities in the Caribbean. In this context, the regional office for Central America and the Caribbean is making every effort to include Cuba as a beneficiary/partner in new initiatives to be presented to donors for funding. An end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo would presumably facilitate the future operational engagement of UNODC in the country, in close partnership with the Cuban authorities.

## **United Nations Population Fund**

[Original: English]  
[29 April 2019]

Despite the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba in 2015, various measures taken by the Administration of President Obama to reduce the restrictions of the embargo have been reversed under the Administration of President Trump, with a negative impact on Cuban society. This is particularly evident in the areas of commerce and financial activities and also has an impact on United Nations operations in Cuba. The embargo continues to affect the economic, social and cultural development as well as the quality of life of the Cuban people, especially the most vulnerable groups.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continues to face difficulties in implementing its country programme, given that the embargo impedes the acquisition and purchase of commodities, equipment, medicines and laboratory materials produced in the United States or covered by United States patents. In general, necessary inputs for UNFPA operations cannot be procured on the local market, which tends to negatively affect the implementation of the UNFPA programme.

UNFPA is one of the few organizations that support sexual and reproductive health, population and development issues, and gender programmes in Cuba. Despite the limited amount of programme resources available for Cuba, UNFPA has further strengthened its cooperation with government, academic and non-governmental actors in support of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. UNFPA continues to support Cuba's efforts to maintain the progress it has attained in the areas of sexual, reproductive and maternal health, including access to family planning methods and sexuality education, as well as in data generation on and analysis of population dynamics and sustainable development.

## **Universal Postal Union**

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has always regarded Cuba as a full-fledged member of the organization. As such, Cuba enjoys the same rights and obligations as any other UPU member country.

Cuba currently serves as a member of both the UPU Council of Administration and the UPU Postal Operations Council, following the elections that took place on 5 and 6 October 2016, respectively, during the twenty-sixth Universal Postal Congress, held in Istanbul, Turkey.

Moreover, Cuba regularly benefits from postal development assistance provided within the framework of UPU technical cooperation activities. In terms of any relevant developments since June 2018, the following activities may be highlighted:

- Cuba participated in a workshop concerning the UPU Operational Readiness for E-commerce (ORE) initiative, held in Montevideo in September 2018.
- An ORE-related field activity (on-site process review) aimed at reviewing the postal operations of Cuba's designated operator was held in Havana in July 2018.
- Within the framework of the UPU Postal Financial Services project for the Latin American region, Cuba's designated operator is expected to receive equipment (computers and printers) that will allow the extension of its CorreoGiros (a postal financial service initiative) network to 44 post offices in the country.
- Within the framework of the UPU Quality Service Fund, the designated operator of Cuba started implementing a project entitled "Improving postal security in the international exchange office and postal treatment centers". The project is aimed at installing closed-circuit television systems in six major postal centres.
- Cuba presented its candidacy and was appointed as host country for the UPU Regional Strategy Conference for the Caribbean Region, which is scheduled to be held in June 2019 in Havana. Two representatives from each of the 23 UPU member countries in the Caribbean region (one from the ministry in charge of postal affairs and one from the designated operator) will be invited under UPU fellowships.

UPU has not encountered difficulties in implementing the aforementioned assistance or undertaking any other joint activities with Cuba as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against that country.

## World Food Programme

[Original: English]  
[15 March 2019]

Over the past 50 years, Cuba's comprehensive social protection programmes have largely eradicated hunger and poverty. Cuba was one of the most successful countries in implementing the Millennium Development Goals and is ranked seventy-third on the human development index of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

During the 1990s, Cuba faced a severe economic crisis which had a lasting effect on food security and nutrition. The 2008 global financial crisis, frequent natural disasters – including the drought spells currently affecting the country –, high global food prices, limited access to credit, low productivity, and the embargo by the United States of America have further exacerbated the food security situation in the country.

In 2011, the Government of Cuba launched a process to improve the efficiency, reduce the costs and increase the sustainability of social protection programmes. Those efforts are guided by the Government's commitment to ensure that no Cuban is left unprotected. Under the process, food security was identified as a national priority, with an emphasis on food-related social protection systems, the decentralization of the decision-making process regarding food resources, the adoption of a new management model for agriculture, reinforcing value chains and reducing food imports.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has been working in Cuba since 1963 to support the Government's efforts to promote food security and nutrition. In 2015, the

agency launched its first four-year country programme for Cuba. In 2018, WFP started the implementation of activities under its new transitional interim country strategic plan for the biennium 2018–2019.

WFP works in the five eastern provinces (Granma, Guantánamo, Holguín, Las Tunas and Santiago de Cuba), which have the lowest development rates and are prone to drought, torrential rains and occasional earthquakes. In addition, WFP works in the provinces of Pinar del Río and Matanzas in western Cuba, which are exposed to tropical cyclones that severely affect food security and nutrition. WFP activities are aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Cuba 2014–2019, which defines food and nutritional security as one of the four pillars of United Nations cooperation in Cuba. The current programme of work in Cuba focuses on capacity-building and augmentation using focused transfers to meet critical food and nutrition needs and to strengthen the overall food-related safety nets in Cuba. The programme supports national and local authorities in shifting to more sustainable and targeted social protection systems. This is achieved through five main activities:

(a) Providing food assistance to vulnerable people benefiting from food-based social protection programmes and technical assistance and training of experts and decision makers engaged in these programmes;

(b) Providing unconditional food assistance to shock-affected populations from pre-positioned food stocks to ensure a swift delivery;

(c) Providing specialized nutritious foods to vulnerable people and technical assistance and training to experts and decision makers of national and local institutions engaged in nutrition programmes;

(d) Providing training, equipment and technical support to smallholder farmers, traders and other stakeholders in food value chains;

(e) Providing training and technical assistance to decision makers and smallholder farmers to improve local risk-reduction management.

### **Effects of the United States embargo**

Throughout 2018, the United States embargo continued to have a negative impact on the Cuban economy as well as on the operational conditions of WFP. High costs of importing agricultural equipment or inputs are a limiting factor for agriculture productivity in Cuba, affecting the country's ability to produce all its food requirements. As a result, the Government needs to import a significant proportion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety nets programmes. This represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and poses challenges to food security in Cuba.

The ability of WFP to procure services and products from United States-based companies or companies that process payments through United States subsidiaries is also affected by the embargo, directly affecting projects and the ongoing running of the office of WFP.

The procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities, including fortified food provided by WFP, are also delayed owing to the above-mentioned logistical challenges. Because of the embargo, vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for trans-shipment, causing delays and additional costs that also affect WFP shipments.

The ongoing work of WFP in Cuba is also affected by difficulties in purchasing equipment at more competitive prices, given that suppliers both in the region and elsewhere are often prevented from selling directly to Cuba. This applies to project



equipment, office equipment, information technology equipment, spare parts for cars, office stationery and other specialized technical equipment for projects, increasing the regular costs for WFP. Moreover, voice and data communications are extremely expensive as they have to bypass United States telecommunications infrastructure.

Banking transactions are also restricted by the limitations that the embargo imposes on financial institutions dealing with Cuba. This can affect the payment of staff entitlements, as well as their personal financial activities. The country office's payments, though processed through UNDP, are also vulnerable to these limitations.

## **World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization**

[Original: English]

[18 June 2019]

On 16 June 2017, the Government of the United States issued a national security presidential memorandum entitled "Strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba". This memorandum outlined the policy of the Administration of the United States towards Cuba and defined the policy implementation actions to be taken by the Government of the United States. The memorandum superseded the presidential policy directive entitled "United States-Cuba normalization" of 2016.

In March 2019, the Government of the United States announced that Cuban citizens visiting the United States for family visits, medical consultations, tourism or shopping would now be issued single-entry visas for a maximum of three months.

### **Impact on the population, the health sector and the health of individuals**

Health is a high priority for the Government of Cuba. The health outcomes and indicators of that country are comparable to those of developed countries. Public resources allocated to health exceeded 10 per cent of gross domestic product.

In order to record and monitor the effects of the embargo on the health sector, the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba meets with all national institutions that document and report on this impact (national hospitals and research institutions), as well as with provincial units and national groups working in various specialty areas.

The Ministry has created standing committees, comprising the director of each of these health institutions and facilities, to study the impact of the embargo. The quality of the information is ensured by individual offices and through monitoring meetings, in accordance with the provisions of Decree-Law No. 290 of 29 March 2012 of the Cabinet of Ministers and Law No. 80 on the Reaffirmation of Cuban Dignity and Sovereignty of 24 December 1996.

For purposes of compliance with these national laws and regulations, the Government of Cuba considers that losses due to the embargo are those that result from the application by the Government of the United States of extraterritorial measures and political or other pressures that hinder or impede the ability of Cuba to conduct commercial and economic transactions stemming from collaboration projects and financial investments, as well as those that impede access to technology or knowledge or adversely affect production and services or other areas.

The consequences of the embargo during the reporting period can be summarized as follows:

- Added financial burden due to an inability to procure supplies, equipment and medicines directly from the United States
- Delays in the development of e-health and telemedicine due to difficulties in accessing affordable technology

- An inability to access developmental loans from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank
- Limited access to philanthropic donations from civil society in the United States and other countries
- Limited scope for research and scientific publications as Cuban scientists cannot participate in some multi-centre research projects

### **Impact on World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization technical cooperation**

The embargo has an impact on the financial transactional costs of the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO), as well as on the efficiency of their procurement processes; the participation of Cuban nationals in international meetings; the costs of convening international meetings in Cuba; and the participation of Cuba in virtual discussions and training platforms.

Restrictions related to the embargo affect all banking transactions between the WHO/PAHO regional office for the Americas and the country office in Cuba. Consequently, the country office is unable to readily repatriate funds back to the regional office, leading to their accumulation in a dollar account in Cuba. This account does not earn interest, causing further significant losses to WHO/PAHO.

The efficiency of purchasing mechanisms for medicines and technology is negatively affected by the need for special licences that must be granted by the United States Department of the Treasury. The issuing of these licences can take several months. Potential international suppliers, therefore, have little interest in moving forward, given the associated costs, the time required to complete the transactions and the small size of the Cuban market. For emergencies, relief medicines and supplies need to be sourced in Europe, resulting in additional costs and transport time, thus constraining the effectiveness of the response.

Special visa requirements and processes limit the participation of Cuban public health experts in meetings hosted in the United States and has an impact on airfares.

Restrictions imposed by the United States on credit cards issued in Cuba affect the ability of Cuban nationals to make hotel reservations in the United States. In addition, international civil servants cannot use credit cards issued by United States banks to pay for hotels while in Cuba.

The cost of events organized by WHO/PAHO in Cuba is also significantly affected by the inability to import affordable goods from the United States and the need to import supplies from Latin America, Europe and Asia.

The inability to utilize online platforms for sharing knowledge also has an impact on the effectiveness of the work within WHO/PAHO and other country offices, as well as with the 10 WHO/PAHO collaborating centres located in Cuba.

### **World Intellectual Property Organization**

[Original: English]  
[25 April 2019]

As a result of the embargo, the circumstances outlined below have been observed in Cuba as an obstacle to the country's advancement in the field of intellectual property and as having a direct impact on its technological, social and economic development.

By restricting the access of Cuban citizens to the United States of America, the embargo limits the possibilities of human resources development in the United States. As a result, specialized Cuban professionals may not fully benefit from greater specialization opportunities in the field of intellectual property, especially those available in the United States. These include, notably, aspects of intellectual property asset and office management, as well as the opportunity to become acquainted with successful experiences in the implementation of technology transfer offices, technology management, intellectual property valuation and intellectual property collateralization.

Visa restrictions also hinder the possibilities of Cuban intellectual property professionals to participate in regular training programmes, meetings and other events organized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in the territory of the United States.

Restricted telecommunications infrastructure hinders the widespread dissemination of WIPO online distance learning courses in Cuba, despite the efforts and commitment of local authorities to foster a nation-wide culture of respect for intellectual property. Videoconference facilities, which allow a most efficient, cost-effective means of communication, especially for educational and training purposes, are also unavailable, since a major portion of the necessary technical equipment and software tools originating from the United States may not be acquired.

Poor telecommunication facilities also have a negative impact on and obstruct the access of Cuban nationals to WIPO online databases and other digital services in the field of intellectual property. This situation, in particular the obstructed online access to global intellectual property databases such as Patentscope (patent information), the Global Brand Database and others that are available only through the Internet, is detrimental to the advancement of technological research and other innovation programmes carried out by the Government of Cuba in the field of environmental, medical and life sciences, as well as bio- and nanotechnologies. It limits the possibility of learning about the behaviour of brands in potential export markets.

The embargo affects the availability of information technology equipment and software for the performance of administrative operations regarding filing and granting procedures, in particular patent and trademark searches and examination services. Although Cuba is administratively equipped to perform such functions owing to a capillary presence of provincial branches of the Cuban Industrial Property Office, the lack of specialized software critically hinders such performance. External procurement formalities to obtain the required equipment and software are extremely burdensome. This situation continues to cumulatively delay the delivery of services that these offices are required to render and prevents the normal growth and expansion of such services. Most importantly, this situation stifles the possibility of taking full advantage of the functionalities available under the WIPO intellectual property automated system, since some of the system's operating tools are not freely accessible for users in Cuba. As such, the possibilities of expansion and customization of the system to the needs of Cuban users (both in the capital and the provinces) are seriously compromised.

The extraterritorial effects of the embargo extend to the financial arena as well. Payments from Cuba to WIPO under the WIPO-administered treaties (Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid System) may be effected only in euros or Swiss francs, not in United States dollars, in order to avoid the restrictions imposed by the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control. Payments from WIPO to the Cuban Industrial Property Office must be made in the same currencies. The cost of these indirect transactions for the purpose of avoiding the United States banks amounts to

considerable financial losses and discourages the use by Cuban nationals of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and Madrid System.

The financial implications of the embargo also extend to the payment of copyright royalties based on the rights granted by the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. A number of national banks cannot receive deposits from or send deposits to the Cuban collective management society of authors. Also, the exercise of rights based on the said Convention through reciprocal representation agreements between the Cuban and United States collective management societies is not possible.

## **World Meteorological Organization**

[Original: English]  
[10 April 2019]

In the framework of the activities of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) regional office for the Americas, Cuba is very often present through its representatives in meetings, courses and workshops; the exchange of meteorological and hydrological data; and projects covering the Caribbean area. During the year 2018, WMO did not encounter any inconvenience or limitation regarding Cuba on regional scientific collaboration.

## **World Tourism Organization**

[Original: English]  
[24 May 2019]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba persists, including restrictions on the travel of citizens of the United States to Cuba, which has a direct effect on the tourism sector in Cuba.

The new regulations imposed by the United States Departments of Treasury, Commerce and State issued on 8 November 2017 – based on the national security presidential memorandum entitled “Strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba”, which President Donald Trump signed on 16 June 2017 – tighten the measures under the embargo. The above, along with the reduction in numbers of diplomats of the United States in Cuba, have consequently increased even further the impact on commerce with and tourism in Cuba.

Other regulations imposed by the United States Department of State include the decision to expand the list of restricted entities associated with Cuba to United States citizens, among whom a good number are from the tourism sector, harming the economic rights of those citizens, limiting the ability to expand their businesses and preventing the development of the Cuban economy and, consequently, hindering the living conditions of the Cuban population.

According to the latest *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*, international tourist arrivals worldwide grew by 5.6 per cent in 2018, but the Caribbean subregion experienced a decline of 1.8 per cent. The Caribbean Tourism Organization reported that, in 2018, Caribbean nations received 29.9 million travellers, the second-highest total recorded after the 30.6 million reached in 2017, despite the decrease in arrivals caused by the two devastating hurricanes that occurred in that year. The main issuing market for tourists to the Caribbean continued to be the United States, with 13.9 million visits from that country, representing 46.5 per cent of the total number of visitors.

From April 2018 to March 2019, the inflow of visitors from the United States reflected the fact that the number of visitors by air (who stay overnight and provide more income at destination) had decreased in relation to the previous year, with Cuba receiving 103,161 fewer visitors by air than in 2017, that is, a decrease of 28.6 per cent.

In terms of tourism promotion, Cuba cannot access advertising companies or other promotion channels of the United States. Moreover, travel agencies from that country are not allowed to promote Cuba as a destination, making it more difficult to promote the country.

The embargo measures concerning e-commerce, Internet usage and transactions with credit cards issued in the United States as a means of payment for air tickets and tourism services continue to affect tourism operations in Cuba. The effects arise, in particular, as a result of the geographical relocation of the suppliers, which results in higher prices and higher transportation and insurance fees, owing to the long distance that needs to be covered from the supplier markets as well as the non-mobility of resources to keep large stocks of merchandise. This also results in higher financial costs, because of the need to rely on the more expensive commercial credit, compared to cheaper state and bank credit, which is difficult to obtain as a consequence of the pressure from the Government of the United States on third countries and because of variations in currency exchange rates, as the United States dollar cannot be used as a purchasing currency.

Cuban tourism companies have to incur extra costs for the import of products highly demanded by tourists, which have to be obtained through third countries. For instance, products such as food, special tourism equipment, technological products, electrical equipment, general hardware, computer equipment and construction materials are produced in the United States; however, as a result of the embargo, they have to be bought from third countries.

All in all, international and domestic tourism in Cuba from April 2018 to March 2019 has continued to suffer greatly from the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the Government of the United States in important areas related to operations and crucial logistical services for the tourism sector, which amounted to an estimated \$1.4 billion.

## World Trade Organization

[Original: English]  
[24 April 2019]

The scope and functions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are defined in the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization. The preamble of the said agreement recognizes that trade and economic endeavours should be conducted with a view to, among others, attaining higher living standards and ensuring full employment, in accordance with the objective of sustainable development and in a manner consistent with members' needs and concerns at different levels of development. The preamble also stresses the desirability of the elimination of discriminatory treatment in international trade relations.

The issue referred to in General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) was raised in the context of the 2018 WTO Trade Policy Review of the United States. As part of that process, the report prepared by the WTO secretariat<sup>16</sup> contains various references to measures affecting Cuba. In addition, the issue was raised orally during the meeting

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<sup>16</sup> See World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/S/382.

of the WTO Trade Policy Review Body on 17 and 19 December 2018 dedicated to the referred review of the United States trade policy.

In the report by the WTO secretariat, it is mentioned that the United States country-specific sanctions were tightened against Cuba during the period under review (2016–2018) as a result of the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba of 16 June 2017. During the meeting of the Trade Policy Review Body in December 2018,<sup>17</sup> Cuba stated that the embargo had been strengthened both bilaterally and multilaterally through the widening scope of its extraterritorial implications. The United States stated that the embargo on trade with Cuba was fully compliant with the relevant obligations under its international trade agreements. The United States also stated that it considered the embargo to be a bilateral issue.

The issue was also referred to in Cuba's annual report to WTO of 28 November 2018<sup>18</sup> on a waiver extension granted under the decision of 12 December 2016.<sup>19</sup> This waiver was originally granted to Cuba under the decision of 14 October 1996<sup>20</sup> in relation to Article XV:6 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994. In the annual report, Cuba mentions, inter alia, that the economic, commercial and financial embargo policy of the United States continues to be strictly implemented and that the scope of legislation underpinning the policy has grown, with new regulations in 2017. Moreover, Cuba argues that new measures in the finance area are generating additional difficulties and costs in Cuban commercial operations. The economic, commercial and financial embargo is overall described as one of the main obstacles to development in Cuba.

#### **IV. Replies received from entities and organizations having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly**

##### **South Centre**

[Original: English]  
[26 April 2019]

On 1 November 2018, the 193 States Members of the United Nations gathered for the twenty-seventh consecutive annual vote of the General Assembly on a draft resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". The resolution was adopted with a nearly unanimous vote of 189 votes to 2 (the United States of America and Israel), with no abstentions.<sup>21</sup> Before the vote, the United States proposed eight amendments to be considered by the 193 Member States, all of which were rejected.

The South Centre is the intergovernmental organization of developing countries established in 1995 pursuant to the Agreement to Establish the South Centre, deposited with the United Nations. The South Centre holds observer status at the General Assembly and currently has 54 developing countries as its members, including Cuba. The Centre supports developing countries in promoting and advancing their common interests in the international arena. The Centre also

<sup>17</sup> See World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/M/382/Add.1.

<sup>18</sup> See World Trade Organization, document WT/L/1043.

<sup>19</sup> See World Trade Organization, document WT/L/1003.

<sup>20</sup> See World Trade Organization, document WT/L/182.

<sup>21</sup> See United Nations, "General Assembly adopts annual resolution calling for end to embargo on Cuba, soundly rejects amendments by United States", press release, 1 November 2018.

undertakes research on the various international policy areas that are relevant to the promotion of the development needs of developing countries and their efforts towards the strengthening of the United Nations system and of multilateralism.<sup>22</sup>

The adoption of General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on 1 November 2018 with a nearly unanimous vote represents a strong and renewed endorsement by the States Members of the United Nations of their long-standing call on the United States to end the nearly six decades of unilateral embargo against Cuba and its people. The United States embargo against Cuba has severely impacted all the economic and social sectors in Cuba as well as Cuban commercial and cooperation relations with the world. Given its extraterritorial nature, in particular in relation to banking, international trade and international cooperation, the embargo prevents United States companies, as well as third countries and their companies, from undertaking any economic transactions with Cuba. The embargo has therefore created obstacles to the achievement of the country's national plan for economic and social development. It also affects United States interests: there is a growing recognition by domestic private businesses, political groups, the press, academia and civil society organizations in the United States of the negative impact of the embargo.

The abstention of the United States and Israel from the vote in 2016, the first time since 1992, when the first such resolution was brought to a vote, marked a unique moment in the history of multilateralism. For the first time ever, such a resolution was adopted with a nearly unanimous vote, 191 votes to none, with 2 two abstentions (the United States and Israel).<sup>23</sup> The engagement policy had opened the door for important changes in relations between the United States and Cuba, including the withdrawal of Cuba's designation as a State sponsor of terrorism in May 2015, the restoration of diplomatic relations in July 2015, and efforts to increase travel, commerce and the flow of information.<sup>24</sup> However, the engagement policy by the United States towards Cuba proved to be short-lived.<sup>25</sup>

The adoption in 2017 and 2018 of new coercive measures<sup>26</sup> and the reversal of other policies that had been put in place by the previous United States Administration is leading to the tightening, once more, of the blockade against Cuba.<sup>27</sup> New sanctions include travel and trade, which marks a return to a policy of isolating Cuba, with a severe impact on its economy and people.

In its resolution [73/8](#), adopted on 1 November 2018, the General Assembly, in line with resolutions, reports and declarations previously adopted by the United Nations and other intergovernmental forums and bodies, rejected the use of unilateral coercive measures such as trade sanctions in the form of embargoes and the interruption of financial and investment flows between sender and target countries, such as the United States embargo on Cuba. Such measures have had a negative

<sup>22</sup> For more details on the work of the South Centre see [www.southcentre.int](http://www.southcentre.int).

<sup>23</sup> See United Nations, "As United States, Israel abstain from vote for first time, General Assembly adopts annual resolution calling for lifting of United States embargo on Cuba", press release, 26 October 2016.

<sup>24</sup> Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. policy in the 116th Congress", CRS Report No. R45657 (Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., 29 March 2019). Available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov>.

<sup>25</sup> See United Nations, "As General Assembly adopts annual resolution urging end to United States embargo on Cuba, delegates voice concern about possible reversal of previous policy", press release, 1 November 2017.

<sup>26</sup> On 16 June 2017, President Donald Trump signed a national security presidential memorandum that represented the tightening of United States policy against Cuba. See [www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/10/20/2017-22928/strengthening-the-policy-of-the-united-states-toward-cuba](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/10/20/2017-22928/strengthening-the-policy-of-the-united-states-toward-cuba).

<sup>27</sup> Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. policy overview", In Focus No. IF10045, version 54, updated 24 June 2019.

impact on the full enjoyment of human rights by the people of the countries concerned, in particular the most vulnerable groups, including women, the elderly and children. Such measures have also adversely affected the ability of countries undergoing sanctions to contribute to international development cooperation, such as Cuba with its well-known international healthcare cooperation programme.

In the resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed the commitment of Member States to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and called upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures such as the embargo imposed against Cuba, contrary to international law and the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as freedom of international trade and navigation.

In the resolution, the General Assembly further recalled the statements of the Heads of State or Government of the Latin American and Caribbean region at the Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), in which they unanimously called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Over the years, the annual report of the Secretary-General has become an important platform for highlighting the adverse impact of the United States embargo on Cuba and reaffirming the almost universal call for its end. The report provides a clear picture of the impact of the unilateral coercive measures under the United States embargo against Cuba and shows the consequences around the world and for the Cuban people. The report contains contributions from Member States, organs and agencies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, some of them working on the ground in Cuba. The South Centre has actively contributed to the report over the past years.

The tightening of unilateral coercive economic measures against Cuba by the present United States Administration, after the positive strides made under the previous Administration to normalize relations, is contrary to the sentiment of the international community as seen in the vote on General Assembly resolution 73/8. The international community has called for an end to unilateral policies that have caused, and continue to cause, severe socioeconomic hardship for the Cuban people. According to the Government of Cuba, the quantifiable cumulative damage caused by the almost six-decade long blockade amounts to \$933,678 billion, adjusting for the devaluation of the dollar against the price of gold.<sup>28</sup> In present-day dollars, the embargo has caused more than \$134,400 billion in financial damages (including approximately \$4,321 billion in 2017 alone), according to figures provided by the Government of Cuba.<sup>29</sup>

When introducing the draft resolution on 1 November 2018 at the General Assembly, Cuba's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, stated "The blockade continues to be the main obstacle to the implementation of both the 2030 national plan and the Sustainable Development Goals".<sup>30</sup> An estimated gross domestic product growth of 10 per cent a year could have taken place in Cuba with economic and social benefits in the past decades, had the embargo not been in place. In 2017, while presenting a resolution on the same issue, the Foreign Minister had already stated that there was not a Cuban family or social service in Cuba that had not suffered the deprivations resulting from the blockade.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Statement made by Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly (see [A/73/PV.30](#)).

<sup>29</sup> See 2018 report of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba on resolution 72/4, 29 August 2018.

<sup>30</sup> See Statement made by Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla ([A/73/PV.30](#)).

<sup>31</sup> Statement made by Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, at the seventy-second session of the General Assembly (see [A/72/PV.38](#)).



For over two decades, the United States has applied the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act adopted on 12 March 1996 (commonly referred to as the Helms-Burton Act), which codified all United States sanctions against Cuba and tightened the economic blockade imposed on Cuba. Title III is the most contested part of the Act, as it entitles United States citizens who have property in Cuba that was confiscated by the State – including Cuban Americans who were not United States citizens at the time of confiscation – to file a lawsuit before United States courts against persons who may be “trafficking” that property. The Act has extraterritorial effects adversely impacting Cuba’s trade and international cooperation arrangements. On 4 March 2019, the Government of the United States announced its decision to allow the filing of lawsuits before United States courts under title III of the Helms-Burton Act against approximately 200 Cuban companies that had been included in the list of restricted entities and sub-entities associated with Cuba issued by the Government of the United States in November 2017, allegedly for trafficking in confiscated property.

On 17 April 2019, the Government of the United States announced a package of new restrictions aimed at tightening the embargo against Cuba.<sup>32</sup> The new restrictions included limiting non-family travel and the volume of remittances sent back by Cuban Americans to the Caribbean island. The Government of the United States also announced that it would no longer suspend title III of the Helms-Burton Act effective from 2 May 2019. It was the first time since the law was passed in 1996 that those provisions would be implemented, after having been waived for 22 years. The decision allows the initiation of legal action under title III against other Cuban entities or foreign companies that maintain commercial or economic relations with Cuba. The effect will be a further tightening of the embargo.<sup>33</sup> United States and third-country companies investing in Cuba could face a massive amount of lawsuits. The decision will create difficulties for third-country investors in Cuba, as it may dissuade international companies from doing business in Cuba. It also has an impact on investments already made in the country, including United States investments. And it could lead to disputes at the World Trade Organization by allies of Cuba that have invested in Cuba over past decades.

The Government of Cuba considers the decision to activate title III of the Helms-Burton Act an attack on international law and Cuba’s sovereignty. According to the Cuban Minister for Foreign Affairs, the decision was an attack on the sovereignty of Cuba and other States considering the extraterritorial character of title III, aimed at depriving Cuba of foreign investments and threatening current and potential partners.<sup>34</sup>

The European Union also regretted the decision taken by the United States Administration not to renew the waiver related to title III of the Helms-Burton Act. The European Union reiterated its strong opposition to the extraterritorial application of unilateral measures related to Cuba that were contrary to international law. The European Union considered that the decision was a breach of the commitments undertaken by the United States in the agreements between the European Union and the United States of 1997 and 1998, which had been respected by both sides without interruption. In those agreements, the United States committed to waiving title III of

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<sup>32</sup> Niraj Chokshi and Frances Robles, “Trump Administration announces new restrictions on dealing with Cuba”, *New York Times*, 17 April 2019.

<sup>33</sup> Cuban News Agency, “Cuba strongly rejects new US tightening of blockade”, 5 March 2019.

<sup>34</sup> Prensa Latina, “Helms-Burton Act title III attacks international law, Cuban Foreign Minister says”, 17 April 2019.

the Helms-Burton Act and the European Union, inter alia, suspended its case before the World Trade Organization (WTO) against the United States.<sup>35</sup>

The European Union also announced that it would consider all options at its disposal to protect its legitimate interests, including in relation to its WTO rights and through the use of the European Union Blocking Statute. The Statute prohibits the enforcement of judgments by United States courts relating to title III of the Helms-Burton Act within the jurisdiction of States members of the European Union and allows European Union companies sued in the United States to recover any damage through legal proceedings against United States claimants before courts in the European Union, the European Union said in its statement released following announcement by the United States.

A new chapter in the relations between the European Union and Cuba began in December 2016 with the signature by both parties of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement in Brussels. The European Union announced that it could take action if the United States did not extend the European Union's waiver under the Helms-Burton Act.<sup>36</sup> In the framework of its common commercial policy, the European Union had firmly and continuously opposed such extraterritorial measures.

The Government of Canada also expressed deep disappointment with the decision, while announcing it would be reviewing all options in response to the United States decision.<sup>37</sup> In a statement delivered following the announcement of the decision by the Government of the United States, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada stated, "Since the United States announced in January it would review title III, the Government of Canada has been regularly engaged with the United States Government to raise our concerns about the possible negative consequences for Canadians – concerns that are long-standing and well known to our United States partners".

The extraterritorial character of the United States embargo on Cuba is also reflected in the financial restrictions against third-country banks and the imposition of new fines on the grounds that regulations of the Government of the United States regarding Cuba have been violated. That has encouraged many banks to close accounts belonging to the Government of Cuba and to adopt measures that obstruct the normal functioning of the banking system in the country. Between April 2017 and March 2018, Cuba was negatively affected by the application of the blockade policy – particularly by its extraterritorial character – to more than 128 foreign banks. Transactions involving contributions by the Government of Cuba to various international organizations have also been delayed due to restrictions on the transfer of payments by the Government. Recent decisions of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control highlight the extent to which the embargo remains in place against Cuba, with third countries, their companies and banks being subjected to the payment of large fines because they have maintained trade and finance relations with Cuba.

On 5 April 2019, the United States Department of State announced that two companies, Ballito Bay Shipping Inc. and ProPer in Management Inc., were sanctioned for operating in the oil sector of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, a

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<sup>35</sup> European Commission, "Joint statement by High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström on the decision of the United States to further activate title III of the Helms Burton (Libertad) Act", Brussels (17 April 2019).

<sup>36</sup> Agence Europe, "EU could take action if derogation from Helms-Burton Act is lifted", 4 April 2019. Reuters, "Spain rejects possible U.S. lawsuits against foreign firms in Cuba", 3 April 2019.

<sup>37</sup> Global Affairs Canada, "Government of Canada will defend interests of Canadians doing business in Cuba", 17 April 2019. Available at [www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca).

measure that also applied to the vessel *Despina Andrianna*, which they had used to transport oil to Cuba. Additional vessels in which that country's state-owned oil company, *Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A.*, had interests were identified as blocked property pursuant to executive order 13850.<sup>38</sup> The Government of the United States also encouraged companies, banks and other institutions to refrain from providing services that supported the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. That decision also has a negative impact on the oil supply to the Caribbean island, with the ensuing socioeconomic consequences for its population.

The blockade violates the rights of the Cuban people in the most sensitive social sectors. Examples showing the negative impacts of the policy on the health sector during the reference period are set out below.

### **Impact on the right to health and life**

Cuban hospitals cannot have any state-of-the-art technology or equipment that is exclusively manufactured in the United States to treat certain pathologies. For that reason, and with the purpose of ensuring that every citizen, without any distinction, has universal, free and quality access to health services, Cuba had to send a group of patients and their companions to foreign hospitals, at a cost of \$1,066,600. The necessary technologies could have been imported from the United States, had it not been for the blockade, and those patients could have been treated in their home country.

Despite the hardship of the embargo, Cuba has achieved an exemplary health system that could serve as a model for many countries. The World Health Organization recently certified that Cuba has officially become the first country in the world to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and syphilis. Cuba's success is a step in the right direction to reduce the global threat of HIV/AIDS, as called for in the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>39</sup>

### **Impacts on international cooperation**

The blockade creates difficulties for developing Cuba's full capacity in international cooperation, both as a recipient and contributor. Cuba's cooperation on health and disaster response with other countries for instance, is a good example. The well-known and globally recognized work of Cuban doctors after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and the Ebola virus outbreak in Liberia in 2014 are two great examples.

As a Caribbean island, Cuba is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change. In the aftermath of the devastating 2017 hurricane season, it sent 750 doctors and medical professionals to other Caribbean islands to assist with rescue efforts. Cuba suffers annually during the hurricane season from July to September, which is increasingly becoming severely destructive to the region. In September 2017, Hurricane Irma, a Category 5 hurricane, barreled through the central and western provinces, causing catastrophic destruction with severe flooding and affecting hundreds of thousands of people.

The *Havana Times* stated that the embargo would make rebuilding efforts and government purchases of building materials both extremely burdensome and costly because multinationals that traded with the United States were prohibited from selling to Cuba. Under the United States embargo, the island nation was also prohibited from

<sup>38</sup> United States Embassy in Cuba, "The United States sanctions companies enabling shipment of Venezuelan oil to Cuba", 9 April 2019.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations, "Cuba eliminates mother-to-child transmission of HIV and AIDS", United Nations Web TV, 27 March 2017.

joining the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which granted crucial infrastructure loans.<sup>40</sup>

### **Impacts on the right to food**

The economic, commercial and financial blockade applied by the United States has impaired the development of Cuba's agricultural and food processing sectors over the past six decades as a result of policy impediments to trade, financial credits, investments, access to technology and building of human capacity through academic exchanges.

The United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba, a group of United States agriculture and farming processing associations, has requested that Congress end the blockade and normalize agricultural trade between the two countries. Financial transactions and shipping impediments raise the costs for other countries to export to Cuba. For example, the modern deep-water port of Mariel, a result of a modernization project financed by Brazil aimed at creating a special economic zone centred near the port, cannot be used because, under United States sanctions, any ship that docks in Cuba cannot enter the United States for six months unless it has a United States waiver.<sup>41</sup> That has considerably increased the costs of imports to the Caribbean island, only 90 miles away from Miami. The Cuban companies responsible for manufacturing food products in the country are forced to import approximately 70 per cent of their raw materials from different markets, namely, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the Dominican Republic, India, Italy, Mexico and Spain. Moreover, so far, as a result of the blockade, Cuba has not been allowed to buy from the United States market, which happens to be very attractive, given its prices and its proximity to Cuba. That market also has a varied offer of raw materials, equipment and materials necessary to modernize production lines.

### **Impacts on the right to education**

The blockade imposed by the United States affects the Cuban programmes aimed at ensuring quality, universal and free education at all levels. The losses are mostly associated with an increase in freight rates for the import of school supplies from third countries, since it is impossible to buy school supplies in the United States.

In the higher education system, the blockade has brought about a host of difficulties that have impaired Cuba's access to the necessary technology and equipment for teaching, scientific research, dissemination of information, adequate remuneration of results, acquisition of school supplies, means and tools, and universities' work and local development.

### **The blockade violates international law because it is applied with extraterritorial effect**

As noted, the embargo not only affects the Cuban people and Cuban commercial and financial transactions, but also the South-South cooperation initiatives that Cuba has been undertaking for decades. Cuba's emergency medical assistance response to the African countries affected by the Ebola crises in West Africa was recognized worldwide and is a great example of solidarity with the international community. Cuban assistance in addressing the health crisis would have been more extensive had it not been for the embargo. The permanent lifting of the embargo will allow Cuba to cooperate more with other developing countries on health, education, environment

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<sup>40</sup> Rebecca Bodenheimer, "Cuba's response to Hurricane Irma puts 'America first-ism' to shame", *Havana Times*, 20 September 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Tim Johnson, "U.S.-Cuba diplomatic thaw puts Mariel port back in spotlight," McClatchy, 21 January 2015.

and agriculture, among other issues. Both developing and developed countries could greatly benefit from Cuba's outstanding experience in biotechnology, for example.

United Nations entities would also benefit from cooperating with Cuban experts on their projects more frequently, considering that in most cases, difficulties resulting from the embargo make it more complicated for the United Nations to recruit Cuban experts, as has been explained by several United Nations entities in previous reports, owing to several complications ranging from issues with payment to travel permits.

The Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 and China, the largest group of developing countries, at their forty-second annual ministerial meeting held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 27 September 2018, reaffirmed once more their strong objection to the embargo.

In the declaration adopted on that occasion,<sup>42</sup> the Ministers of the Group of 77 and China expressed their strongest rejection of the implementation of unilateral coercive measures and reiterated their solidarity with Cuba. The Ministers also reaffirmed their call on the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on that sisterly nation for almost six decades that constituted the main impediment to its full development. At the same time, the Ministers regretted the measures implemented by the Government of the United States since 9 November 2017, which strengthened the blockade.

The Ministers of the Group of 77 and China called upon the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries. The Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the meeting of the General Assembly on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, on 1 November 2018, said that the group regretted that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba for almost six decades remained fully in place and continued to be strengthened. The Group of 77 recalled the positive steps taken from 2015 to 2016 by the previous United States Administration, which were still not enough to put an end to the embargo's impact but did focus on a path leading in the right direction. The current policy of the United States Administration was a setback to the process of normalizing relations between the two countries. The prolonged negative effects of the embargo that the economic sanctions and travel restrictions had had on Cuba and its people were of deep concern for the group. The impact of the United States embargo on the international trade of Cuba amounted to more than \$4 billion from April 2017 to June 2018.<sup>43</sup>

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean the cost of the blockade to the Cuban people is more than \$130 billion at current prices and has left an indelible mark on its economic structure.<sup>44</sup> The Group of 77 and China, for its part, has stated that limited foreign investment and difficulty of access to development credits translated directly into economic hardship and humanitarian effects for the people of Cuba. The Group of 77 also recalled the extensive contribution of Cuba to the international community, particularly through its remarkable provision of medical assistance to countries in need and stated that Cuba's emergency assistance to countries affected by the Ebola crisis in West Africa was a great example of its solidarity with the international community.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> See [A/73/417](#), annex, para. 205.

<sup>43</sup> See [A/73/PV.29](#).

<sup>44</sup> Reuters, "U.S. trade embargo has cost Cuba \$130 billion, U.N. says", 8 May 2018.

<sup>45</sup> See [A/73/PV.29](#).

At the Eighteenth Midterm Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Baku from 3 to 6 April 2018, the Ministers of more than 120 countries, several observer States and international organizations expressed their regret at the measures implemented by the current United States Administration, which strengthened the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and entailed a setback in the process of normalization of the bilateral relations.<sup>46</sup>

On the same occasion, the Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement once again reiterated their call to the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba that constituted a major impediment to its full development. They also urged the President of the United States to use his broad executive powers to substantially modify the embargo which – in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and to the principle of good-neighbourliness – was causing huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. They once again urged strict compliance with General Assembly resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8, 69/5, 70/5, 71/5 and 72/4, and adherence to the fundamental principles of sovereign equality, non-interference and non-intervention as enshrined in the Charter. They expressed deep concern over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba and rejected the reinforcement of the financial measures adopted by the Government of the United States, aimed at tightening the embargo.<sup>47</sup>

At several United Nations conferences and other forums held between June 2015 and April 2018, the use of unilateral coercive measures, including the United States embargo on Cuba, was also rejected. For example, in September 2015, world leaders adopted by consensus General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. In paragraph 30 of the resolution, States were strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

## Conclusions

A more comprehensive analysis of the impact that all current unilateral coercive measures are having on the enjoyment and achievement of human rights would be an important initiative, particularly in relation to the people living in affected countries. That applies in particular to women, the elderly and children, who are all too often the main victims, as in the case of the prohibition regarding medicines and technology for the production of medicines in Cuba and the Islamic Republic of Iran, two countries affected by embargoes imposed by the United States.

The United Nations would be best placed to make such an analysis and assessment on a more regular and substantial basis. In that regard, the appointment of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights by the Human Rights Council, in accordance with its resolution 27/21, was an important step forward.<sup>48</sup> In the resolution, the Council also mandated the conduct of a biennial panel discussion on the issue of unilateral coercive

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<sup>46</sup> See the Final Document of the Eighteenth Midterm Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, para. 557. Available at <http://www.mfa.gov.az/en/news/909/5599>.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> See United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights” (accessed on 12 July 2019).

measures and human rights. The visit of the Special Rapporteur to Sudan has produced important results contributing to the process that led the United States to revisit its policy against that country.

In the light of the adverse impact of the embargo against Cuba on the human rights of its people and its right to development, the South Centre supports the long-standing call of the General Assembly and all developing countries for an end of the embargo against Cuba as soon as possible, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

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