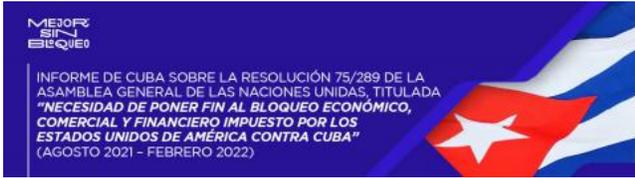


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**Cuba's report on Resolution 75/289 of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".**

(January - July 2021)

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## **Introduction**

The blockade is a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cubans. In a ruthless act of cruelty, during this period the United States has applied, with surgical precision, measures aimed at affecting the most sensitive sectors of Cuban society and creating despair among the people.

This report covers the period from January to July 2021, marked by the beginning of President Joseph Biden's administration in the United States.

During this period, the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba has remained the backbone of U.S. policy towards the island, and has been opportunistically intensified at unprecedented levels in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Disregarding its own electoral promises, the Democratic administration has left intact the more than 240 additional unilateral coercive measures applied against Cuba by its predecessor, Donald Trump.

The intensification of this policy and the economic strangulation against Cuba in the midst of the pandemic have been accompanied by an increase in political, media and communications aggression, and an unprecedented increase in disinformation operations, hugely financed with federal funds from the U.S. budget, part of which are publicly declared and amount to tens of millions of dollars annually. The covert funds that also sustain the campaigns add to this amount.

In open violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, this conduct is aimed at fabricating a political opposition, even at the cost of generating disorder and instability, fracturing the constitutional order and social consensus, encouraging irregular migration, and damaging the conditions of peace and security in which the Cuban people live.

The U.S. government has tried to take advantage of the harsh economic and social conditions generated by the pandemic, and has also resorted to lies, slander, data manipulation and the most diverse methods of unconventional warfare, in order to force a political change in Cuba.

This situation is aggravated by the fact that Cuba remains on the unilateral and illegitimate lists published by the State Department on countries allegedly sponsoring terrorism and countries "not fully cooperating" with the anti-terrorist efforts of the United States, which reinforces the dissuasive and intimidating impact of the blockade and its extraterritorial component.

In the stage under consideration, the relentless persecution by the U.S. government against financial transactions involving Cuba has practically affected all sectors of the economy. This siege has caused closures and/or breaches of contracts, loss of relations with financial entities that usually worked with Cuban entities, indebtedness, delays in sending and receiving funds and goods, among other difficulties.

Because of its declared purpose and the political, legal and administrative framework on which it is based, the blockade qualifies as an act of genocide, by virtue of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention of the Crime of Genocide.

The United States government has declared that the blockade against Cuba “is one of the most comprehensive set of U.S. sanctions on any country”[1]. The unquestionable reality is that this blockade is the most comprehensive, complex and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures ever imposed against any country in history.

The blockade is the main obstacle to Cuba’s development. It hinders the implementation of the Cuba’s National Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030 (PNDES, in its Spanish acronym) and all efforts of the Cuban State to comply with the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

At current prices, the accumulated damages over almost six decades of application of this policy amounts to **USD 150,410,800,000**. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the value of gold on the international market, the blockade has caused quantifiable damages of over **USD 1,326,432,000,000**.

During the first seven months of 2021 alone, the blockade caused losses to Cuba of about **USD 2,557,500,000**, which represents an average loss of over **USD 365,000,000** a month and more than **USD 12,000,000** a day.

Among the causes that led to the relative decrease in the amount of losses provoked by the blockade between January and July 2021, in comparison with those recorded in the previous stage, are the total closure of borders as a result of COVID-19 that completely prevented the tourism performance during this period, and the financial stress faced by the country due to the need to allocate substantial unforeseen additional resources to combat the pandemic, which led to a notable contraction in Cuba’s foreign trade activities in the period under analysis.

However, the cumulative effect of the blockade and its consequences, which have generated a shortages situation in the country, cannot be ignored. The shortages and difficulties in acquiring food, medicines and inputs for the development of economic and productive processes are phenomena that often cannot be quantified, but have an undeniable impact on the daily life of the Cuban people.

The limitations Cuba faces in acquiring foreign currency to import and invest are also incalculable, and constitute enormous obstacles to any initiative undertaken by the country to satisfy the accumulated needs of the population.

Three decades after the first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly against the blockade, the government of the United States persists in ignoring the numerous pronouncements of that international forum calling for an unconditional end to its unilateral and criminal policy of economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

It is neither legal nor ethical for the government of a powerful nation to subject a small nation to an incessant economic war in order to impose a foreign political system on it. It is unacceptable to deprive an entire people of the right to peace, development, well-being and human progress.

## 1. Continuity and intensification of the blockade policy

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### 1.1. ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL BLOCKADE LAWS IN FORCE

The laws and regulations underpinning the blockade remain in force. These are implemented by U.S. government agencies, among them, the Departments of the Treasury and Commerce. The main laws and administrative provisions that establish the blockade policy are set out below:

- *Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 (TWEA)*: Section 5(b) of the TWEA delegated on the chief executive the possibility of applying economic sanctions in times of war or in any other time of national emergency and it prohibited trade with the enemy or allies of the enemy during wartime. In 1977, with the passing of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, the President's power to impose new sanctions in times of national emergency situations was restricted. Nevertheless, the TWEA continued to be applied to Cuba and successive United States presidents have extended its implementation. Under this legislation, the oldest of its type, the U.S. adopted the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) in 1963. Cuba is the only country for which the TWEA remains in force. In September 2021, President Joseph Biden renewed the measures imposed against Cuba under this law.
- *Foreign Assistance Act (1961)* authorizes the President of the United States to establish and maintain a total "embargo" on trade with Cuba and *prohibits* the authorization of any aid to the Cuban government. It also establishes that the U.S. government funds destined for international aid and sent to international organizations may not be used for programs related to Cuba. It prohibits granting any aid under this act or any other benefit covered by any other law to Cuba until the President determines that Cuba has carried out actions directed towards returning to U.S. citizens and companies not less than 50 percent of the value, or just compensation, for the properties nationalized by the Cuban government after the triumph of the Revolution in 1959.
- *Presidential Proclamation 3447*, issued on February 3, 1962 by President John F. Kennedy, decreed the total "embargo" of trade between the United States and Cuba, in compliance with Section 620 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act.
- *Cuban Assets Control Regulations of the Department of the Treasury (1963)*, approved under the Trading with the Enemy Act, stipulated the freezing of all Cuban assets in the United States, the prohibition of all *financial* and commercial transactions unless approved by a license, the prohibition of Cuban exports to the United States; the prohibition, to any natural or legal person of the United States, the prohibition of any natural person or legal entity in the United States from carrying out transactions in U.S. dollars with Cuba, among others.
- *Export Administration Act (1979)*, in its Section 2401 (b) (1) "National Security Control", "Policy Toward Individual Countries", established the Trade Control List in which the U.S. President maintains a number of countries for which special export controls could be set up due to national security considerations. Cuba is included on this list.
- *Export Administration Regulations (EAR, 1979)* established the basis for the general control of export items and goods, in agreement with the *sanctions* imposed by the U.S. government, thus instituting a general policy of denial of licenses for exports and re-exports to Cuba.
- *Cuban Democracy Act or Torricelli Act (1992)* prohibits subsidiaries of U.S. *companies* in third countries from trading in goods with Cuba or Cuban nationals. It prohibits ships from third countries landing in any Cuban ports from entering U.S. territory for 180 days, other than those having license from the Secretary of the Treasury.
- The *Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act or Helms-Burton Act (1996)* codifies the provisions of the blockade and extends its extraterritorial scope, by imposing sanctions on directors of foreign companies that carry out transactions with U.S. properties nationalized in Cuba and the possibility of filing lawsuits in U.S. courts. It also limits the President's prerogatives to suspend the blockade. On May 2, 2019, for the first time since the passing of this Act, the U.S. government announced that lawsuits would be allowed to be filed in U.S. courts and action could be taken with respect thereto under this legislation.
- *Section 211 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for the 1999 fiscal year*

prohibited the acknowledgement by U.S. courts of the rights of Cuban companies to trademarks associated with nationalized properties.

- The *Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act* (2000) authorized the export of agricultural products to Cuba on the condition of cash payment, in advance and without U.S. financing. It prohibited travel to Cuba by U.S. citizens for tourism purposes, defining “tourism” as any activity related to travel to, from, or inside Cuba that would not be expressly authorized under section 515.560 of Title 31 of the Federal Regulations Code. It limited travel to the 12 categories authorized at the time this legislation was enacted.

## **1.2. PRINCIPAL BLOCKADE MEASURES APPLIED FROM JANUARY TO JULY 2021.**

During the January-July 2021 period, the U.S. government kept intact the policy of tightening the blockade unleashed between 2017 and January 2021. The provisions associated with travel to Cuba, remittances and the mechanisms of financial persecution, remained unchanged, as well as their consequent harmful effects on the economy and the lives of Cubans.

Maintaining Cuba on the unilateral and illegitimate lists published by the State Department on countries sponsoring terrorism and nations that “do not fully cooperate” with the anti-terrorist efforts of the United States, reinforced the dissuasive and intimidating impact of the blockade and its extraterritorial component.

The continued full application of the Helms-Burton Act, including the authorization for lawsuits to be filed in U.S. courts under its Title III, further broadened the scope of the scheme hindering Cuba’s economic, commercial and financial relations with third countries.

The main blockade actions recorded during the period under review are set out below:

**On January 1, 2021**, the State Department included the International Financial Bank on the List of Restricted Cuban Entities. The measure became effective on January 8, 2021.

**On January 11, 2021**, the State Department announced the inclusion of Cuba on the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism, an action that entails significant additional economic damages for Cuba.

**On January 14, 2021**, Cuba was placed on the Commerce Department’s List of Foreign Adversaries under Executive Order 13873, signed by President Donald Trump. As a result, the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) were amended to prohibit certain transactions that pose an “undue or unacceptable risk” to U.S. national security in information technology and communications.

**On February 18, 2021**, the Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) announced a settlement to avoid a civil lawsuit with the digital financial services company BitPay, Inc. (Atlanta, Georgia). The settlement included the payment of a penalty by the company in the amount of USD 507,375. The measure was taken because of more than 2000 (two thousand) alleged violations of various “sanctions programs”, including those imposed against Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Sudan, Syria and Crimea.

**On February 24, 2021**, President Biden issued a letter of continuation, for one year, the State of National Emergency with respect to Cuba declared by President William Clinton on March 1, 1996.

**On May 14, 2021**, the State Secretary notified Congress that it had certified Cuba as a country that is “not cooperating fully” with U.S. counterterrorism efforts, pursuant to Section 40A(a) of the Arms Export Control Act and Executive Order 13637. This unjustified and fraudulent action ratifies the inclusion of Cuba on this list, which took place on May 13, 2020. The measure became effective on May 25, 2021, following its publication in the Federal Register.

**On September 7, 2021**, President Biden signed a memorandum to the Secretaries of State and Treasury, extending for 1 year the application of economic measures against Cuba, under the legal framework established in the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917.

### **1.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELMS-BURTON ACT. LAWSUITS FILED.**

Since its entry into force in 1996, the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, also known as Helms-Burton Act, codified the blockade against Cuba and strengthened its extraterritorial scope. In addition to seeking the imposition of a government in Cuba directly subordinated to Washington's interests, this legislation is sought to internationalize the blockade by means of coercive measures against third countries, in order to hinder and interrupt their trade and investment relations with Cuba.

Its Title III allows the former owners of properties that were nationalized in Cuba, including Cuban citizens who eventually became U.S. citizens, the possibility of suing in U.S. courts those natural and legal persons who had any contact with such properties, which the law qualifies as "trafficking". This term includes, according to the legislation itself, anyone who "transfers, distributes, dispenses, brokers, or otherwise disposes of confiscated property; or purchases, receives, obtains control of, or otherwise acquires confiscated property; or improves, invests in, or begins after the date of the enactment of this Act to manage, lease, possess, use, or hold an interest in confiscated property; enters into a commercial arrangement using or otherwise benefiting from confiscated property; or causes, directs, participates in, or profits from, trafficking through another person, without the authorization of any United States national who holds a claim to the property".

With the purpose of suffocating the Cuban economy and increasing the shortages of the population, the Helms-Burton Act has transcended as a mechanism through which the U.S. government exerts illegal and brutal pressures, not only against Cuba, but also against third countries' governments and companies. Its pretensions are illegitimate, in violation of the United Nations Charter and International Law.

The possibility of suing alleged beneficiaries of "trafficking" had been consistently suspended every six months since 1996 by all U.S. presidents, by means of an exception included in the Act that grants them that power. On April 17, 2019, Donald Trump's administration announced that, as of May 2 of the same year, this possibility would be activated, by allowing the courts to take action on the lawsuits filed. This decision has not been reversed by Joseph Biden's administration.

On April 2, 2019, legal proceedings under the Helms-Burton Act were initiated for the first time in 23 years. As of July 31, 2021, a total of 39 lawsuits had been filed, of which 5 were withdrawn and 34 are still ongoing. This policy has affected U.S. and third-country companies that have done or are doing business with Cuba, as well as domestic companies.

The lawsuits filed in U.S. courts in the period from January to July 2021 are listed below:

- **On January 4, 2021**, North American Sugar Industries Inc. filed two lawsuits against the U.S. companies BBC Chartering LLC and **DSV** AIR & SEA Inc. In both cases, the claimant alleged to have been the owner of the land and facilities of Puerto Carupano, in Las Tunas, used by the defendants to ship equipment to be used in the "Herradura Wind Farm" project.
- **On February 17, 2021**, Odette Blanco Fernández and a group of relatives claiming to represent the interests of the Blanco Rossel brothers, filed a lawsuit against the Danish shipping company A.P Moller-Maersk Group and its U.S. subsidiaries Maersk Inc. and Maersk Agency U.S.A Inc. The claimants allege to be owners of a 70-year concession over the company Marítima Mariel S.A and to be owners of the Compañía Azucarera Mariel S.A and the surrounding lands. On this basis, the petitioners claim that the defendants "trafficked" in the confiscated properties. On July 30, 2021, the same petitioners, under the same arguments, filed a claim against the French shipping company CMA CGM S.A and its U.S. subsidiary CMA CGM LLC.
- **On March 1, 2021**, Hilda M. Castañedo Escalón filed a claim against Trafigura Trading LLC (United States), Trafigura Trading LLC (Singapore) and Trafigura Group Pte Ltd (Singapore). The claimant alleges that she is the supposed heir and representative of shareholders of the companies that own the Matahambre mines, the Santa Lucia port terminal in Pinar del Rio, as well as other properties. The claimant asserts that the defendants invest and carry out mining operations using the confiscated properties.

- **On March 5, 2021**, Rancho King Inc. filed a lawsuit against Cuban companies *Empresa Agropecuaria Nuevitas, Empresa Cubana Exportadora de Alimentos y Productos Varios, Empresa Extrahotelera Palmares S.A, Empresa Forestal Integral de Camagüey, Grupo Empresarial Agrícola, Grupo Empresarial Agroforestal, Grupo Empresarial Viajes Cuba, Grupo Internacional de Turoperadores y Agencias de Viajes Havanatur S.A.* and Panamanian company *Havanatur S.A.* The claimant alleges that the defendants use and continue to benefit from the confiscated properties, which include a cattle ranch and associated lands, while producing and marketing charcoal from the marabou that grows naturally on the land.

## 2. The blockade violates the rights of the Cuban people.

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### 2.1. EFFECTS ON THE MOST VULNERABLE SOCIAL SECTORS

The **health sector** has remained one of the hardest hit by the blockade. In the first seven months of 2021 alone, this policy has caused losses of **USD 113,498,300**.

The main damages arised from the impossibility of acquiring medical technology of U.S. origin or with more than 10 percent of its components from that country. Medicines, equipment, medical devices, reagents and other supplies used in medical care have to be obtained in geographically distant markets and on many occasions through intermediaries, with a significant increase in prices. The extraterritorial nature of the blockade hinders the purchase of spare parts, maintenance and replacement of equipment for medical care and research.

This system of unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States against Cuba violates the right to life and health of all Cubans. As a result of this policy, the Cuban people have faced shortages of medicines and medical equipment, including oxygen supplies and pulmonary ventilators, protection kits, spare parts, fuel, electricity, among other indispensable resources for the sustainability of the Cuban health system.

These shortages have an impact not only on the country's ability to cope with COVID-19, but also cause daily difficulties for people to acquire essential medicines on time for the treatment of chronic diseases, such as insulin, antibiotics, painkillers, drugs used to control blood pressure, antihistamines and others.

All the above-mentioned is detrimental to the quality of the services provided to the Cuban population, as it generates delays, waiting lists for specialized medical care, increased hospital stays and other harmful effects.

The following are some examples of the damage caused by the blockade in the care provided by the Cuban health system to vulnerable groups of the population:

- Effects on patients with cardiovascular diseases[2]:

In the period analyzed, the restrictions of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States have had an impact on the deficit of essential medicines for these ailments, as is the case of anticoagulants, furosemide, nitroglycerin and hypotensive drugs.

Direct damages caused to the care of patients with this type of disease:

- An estimated 158,800 Cuban patients are affected by the impossibility of accessing technology for the implantation of percutaneous aortic valves (TAVI). These valves allow patients with severe valvular stenosis to avoid undergoing complex surgeries and long hospital stays, and to have a better quality of life only with a small surgical procedure.

Aortic stenosis is a degenerative disease and 4 to 7 percent of people over 65 years of age suffer from it. Around 30 percent of these patients cannot be operated due to some comorbidity contraindications. Considering that the Cuban population has a high life expectancy and 20 percent are over 80 years of age, access to TAVI valves is a necessity for many patients assisted by the Cuban health system.

Cuba cannot access these devices, since they are marketed by U.S. companies such as EDWARD LIFESCIENCE (Edwards-SAPIEN Valve) and MEDTRONIC (CoreValve).

- Some 375 patients were affected negatively since it was impossible to acquire permanent pacemakers and there was no access to supplies, parts and/or components of equipment of U.S. origin, necessary for procedures related to cardiac arrhythmias.
- For the same reason, approximately 200 patients could not undergo cardiovascular surgeries due to the shortage of expendable materials, such as hemochron tubes, various drains, mammary clips for myocardial revascularization and others.
- Effects on pediatric patients:
- Dozens of Cuban children are diagnosed every year with Retinopathy of Prematurity, and run the risk of going blind in case they are not cared for with adequate means. Their treatment is limited by the fact that Cuba cannot acquire the IQ 577 Laser System from the IRIDEX CORPORATION U.S. Company, used for the treatment of retinal and glaucoma conditions.
- Cuban children suffering from infantile spinal atrophy could aspire to a better quality of life and higher life expectancy, if Cuba could have access to the medicine Nusinersen, produced only by the U.S. multinational company BIOGEN. This drug has proven to be effective in keeping alive more than half of the children suffering from this fatal disease.
- During the period under review, eight Cuban children with different types of cancer could not receive the most suitable chemotherapy treatment for their disease, and had to resort to second-line protocols, due to difficulties in accessing drugs such as Actinomycin D, Ifosfamide and Procarbazine.
- Cuban children with cardiovascular conditions cannot use biomaterials used in cardiac implants, such as U.S.-made biological heart valves. This situation forces the use of mechanical valves, which require anticoagulant treatment and expose patients to greater complications.
- Newborn and low-birth-weight infants have to undergo complicated surgeries due to the lack of essential devices, such as very low-profile catheters marketed by U.S. firms such as NUMED, BOSTON SCIENTIFIC, COOK.
- Effects to the care provided to pregnant women:
- The research and healthcare-oriented activities of cytogenetics laboratories throughout the country has been affected by difficulties presented in the acquisition of equipment and reagents of vital importance for the Prevention and Detection of Chromosomal Diseases, namely:
- AmnioMAX complete culture medium: used for the culture of prenatal human cells that ensures the chromosomal studies on pregnant women over 37 years of age or those with alterations detected by ultrasound. The cost of these reagents has tripled for Cuba due to the need to acquire them through third countries.
- Demecolcine complete culture medium: used for the culture of prenatal and postnatal human cells. This reagent ensures the provision of the chromosomal diagnosis to the patients studied, both pregnant women and patients with suspected clinical genetic syndromes.

From January to July 2021, the *Empresa Importadora y Exportadora de Productos Médicos* (MEDICUBA S.A.) contacted 65 U.S. companies to inquire about the possibilities of importing medicines, equipment, devices and other supplies necessary for the care of the Cuban people in the national public health system. Of these, 56 did not respond to the Cuban entity's requests, while 3 responded negatively (OWENS & MINOR, INC., MERCURY MEDICAL and ELI LILLY).

As a result, it was not possible to acquire the medicines and equipment marketed by these companies, which would have significantly benefited the Cuban health system. In particular, the company OWENS & MINOR, INC. was asked for horizontal spin centrifuges[3], an equipment required in the laboratories of the health institutions' network; while the company ELI LILLY was asked for Pemetrexed, a chemotherapy drug used to treat non-small cell lung cancer and pleural mesothelioma (a type of cancer that affects the lining of the lungs). As for MERCURY

MEDICAL, this company refused to supply several medical devices necessary for the treatment of Acute Hypoxemic Respiratory Failure (AHRF), Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) and septic shock.

The following drugs and medical equipment are among the ones that could not be acquired in the period under analysis:

- BRISTOL MYERS SQUIBB PHARMACEUTICALS: Nivolumab drug, used for the treatment of metastatic melanoma, lung cancer, Hodgkin's Lymphoma, among others, was requested.
- GENOMA HEALTH PHARMACEUTICALS: the Oncotype DX Breast Cancer Test was requested. The Oncotype DX genomic test analyzes the activity of a group of genes that could affect the behavior and treatment of the disease.
- GENOMIC HEALTH COMPANY: the Oncotype DX Colon Cancer Test was requested. This test helps to individually predict the risk of recurrence in stages II and III of this type of cancer, while determining which type of chemotherapy is suitable for the patient.
- OHMEDA, GENERAL ELECTRIC and HEWLETT PACKARD companies: multipurpose mechanical ventilators for newborns and infants were requested, as well as multipurpose cardiomonitors (including blood pressure monitoring, among other parameters).
- MERCK SHARP & DOHME (MSD) PHARMACEUTICALS: Golimumab (Simponi), the most recently approved biologic drug for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis, conditions in which the immune system attacks the joints causing pain, stiffness and movement restrictions, was requested.
- ONE-LAMBDA COMPANY: was asked for HLA typing kits, essential for determining a kidney transplant candidate's compatibility with potential donors.

**In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic**, which has caused a multidimensional crisis throughout the world, and with the additional burden of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States, the Cuban State has faced enormous obstacles in obtaining the basic resources that are essential to guarantee the functioning of the national health system.

The Biden administration ordered a review of the impact of the unilateral coercive measures that limit States' capacity to face the pandemic. Cuba was excluded from this exercise and, unlike other countries, no modification to the measures in force was announced. With this, the United States intends to ignore the damage caused by the blockade, particularly worsened under the effects of COVID-19.

In 2020, the country invested an estimated USD 102 million not foreseen in the economy plan only in reagents, medical equipment, means of protection, consumables and medicines. During the first half of 2021, this investment amounted to USD 82 million, in the midst of difficulties to access suppliers, obstacles to banking operations, high prices and other inconveniences derived from the U.S. blockade.

From the beginning of the pandemic until mid-2021, it is estimated that Cuba has invested some USD 184 million above what was foreseen in the annual plan to combat COVID-19. This figure does not only cover expenditures on medicines, but also on food, cleaning, electricity, water and other resources necessary to support patient care, both in isolation centers and in the country's hospitals.

The intimidating effect of the persecution against Cuban financial transactions abroad has been the main impediment to the acquisition of medical supplies by the country, as it has hindered commercial relations with several partners and regular suppliers. This situation has generated significant additional expenses, multiple shortages in the national health system.

An example of this was evidenced in March 2021, with the interruption of negotiations for the shipment of a container of disposable syringes to Cuba, when the British bank HSBC informed the supplier that it could not carry out payment transactions destined for the Island.

Likewise, in June 2021, the German-based multinational company MERCK cancelled several contracts with Cuban entities. This situation affected the entry into the country of raw materials essential for the production of drugs included on the Basic List of Medicines, as well as the work of the laboratories of the Center for State Control of Medicines, Medical Equipment and Devices (CECMED, in its Spanish acronym), directly involved in the evaluation of anti-COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

Other examples of the adverse effects of the blockade on Cuba's efforts to combat the pandemic are listed below:

- In the context of COVID-19, it has been necessary to urgently acquire reagents, PCR kits and other materials, not only for the diagnosis of that disease, but also for the research and production of vaccine candidates and Cuban vaccines. The aforementioned and the refusal of traditional suppliers to provide parts and other raw materials to Cuba as a result of the tightening of the blockade, have forced Cuban companies to obtain these products through intermediaries, resulting in significantly higher prices. For this item alone, the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB, in its Spanish acronym), producer of the Cuban anti-COVID-19 Abdala vaccine, has reported damages amounting to USD 580,461.61.
- In the Immunoassay Center (CIE, in its Spanish acronym), the losses amounted to USD 4,554.50 due to the purchase of raw materials at higher prices in other markets and to the impossibility of acquiring them in the United States. This represents an increase of around 60 percent compared to the price in the U.S. market.
- The Finlay Vaccine Institute (IFV, in its Spanish acronym), producer of the Cuban anti-COVID-19 Soberana02 and Soberana Plus vaccines, was unable to acquire resources with more than 10 percent of U.S. components, which has generated difficulties in 32 of its operations, 15 of them corresponding to the purchase of inputs, 7 to reagents, 2 to spare parts, 2 to filtration materials and 6 to equipment from U.S. manufacturers. These inputs had to be purchased mostly through third parties, resulting in significantly higher prices in unit prices and freight.
- If these operations had been carried out directly through U.S. companies, the IFV would have saved some USD 484,691.94 in relation to the unit prices of the products, and USD 10,376.91 for freight. In particular, in case of contracting filtration supplies and reagents acquired through intermediaries due to the impossibility of contracting them directly from the manufacturer, the impact on the company amounted to USD 442,185.23.

In spite of the severe limitations described above, both the national health system and the Cuban scientific community have demonstrated their strength and potential in confronting COVID-19. Proof of this is that Cuba has managed to develop five vaccine candidates against this disease. The Center for State Control of Medicines, Medical Equipment and Devices (CECMED) authorized the emergency use of three of them (Abdala, Soberana 02 and Soberana Plus), turning them into the first anti-COVID-19 vaccines developed in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Additionally, Cuba became the first country in the world to carry out a massive vaccination campaign against COVID-19 in the pediatric population aged 2 to 18 years, thanks to which some 2 million children and adolescents have been vaccinated with their second dose of Soberana 02.

By the end of 2021, 91.6 percent of the Cuban vaccine-eligible population was fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

On the other hand, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of solidarity and international cooperation in addressing global problems. For this reason, and in accordance with its vocation of solidarity and internationalism, Cuba has supported the fight against COVID-19 in more than 40 countries and territories that have requested it, by sending some 5,000 (five thousand) health collaborators grouped in 57 brigades of the "Henry Reeve" International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disasters Situations and Serious Epidemics. They joined the more than 28,000 (twenty-eight thousand) Cuban health collaborators already deployed in 59 nations before the beginning of the pandemic.

At the same time, it is important to note that the country has received more than 500 donations of medical supplies to support its national health system, sent by governments, friends and solidarity organizations and associations of Cubans abroad, for which the Cuban people are deeply grateful. On many occasions, these shipments were hindered and/or slowed down as a result of the restrictions imposed by the blockade. Such is the case of several donations and fundraising campaigns promoted by the solidarity organization "Cubans in the United Kingdom", aimed at supporting anti-COVID-19 vaccination in Cuba, by sending syringes and other supplies. During 2021, these initiatives have been interrupted or blocked on multiple virtual platforms, among which CROWDFUNDER UK, EVENTBRIDE, PAYPAL and GOFUNDME stand out.

#### **Impact on people with disabilities:**

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba continues to be the main obstacle to progress towards the real and effective social inclusion of people with disabilities, since it causes supply shortages and hampers import of materials, equipment and other supplies which are essential to improving their quality of life.

The main impacts of the blockade on these vulnerable groups include the following:

- National wheelchair manufacture has been significantly limited due to difficulties in the procurement of raw materials and spare parts in the U.S. market. Oftentimes, those products must be purchased through intermediaries, resulting in a substantial increase in costs.
- Blind and partially-sighted Cubans cannot benefit from the JAWS screen reader, which allows the visually impaired to interact with computers. The reason is that Cuba cannot purchase or use this software since it was developed by a U.S. company - Henter-Joyce.
- The National Cochlear Implant Program[4], which mainly benefits boys and girls with severe or profound hearing loss, has encountered difficulties in obtaining accessories for these medical devices. In particular, the international courier company DHL refused on two occasions to send to Cuba a donation from COCHLEAR EUROPE LTD, comprising batteries and other components for cochlear implants. The first time they gave no reason, but the second time they stated that their refusal was related to the blockade.

On **June 30, 2021**, the United States blocked the international card of Uruguayan Cecilia Nazzari, when she attempted to make an online payment from Cuba. This is another regrettable example of the implementation of the blockade. Cecilia and her six-year old daughter Aurora Sosa had traveled to Havana to begin the child's treatment in the International Center for Neurologic Restoration (CIREN, in its Spanish acronym). The child suffers from a rare disease that impairs the development of her motor skills.

**The food and agriculture sector** is the foundation for achieving food security and sovereignty, two goals among the priorities of the Cuban government and directly linked to implementation of the National Plan for Food Sovereignty and Nutrition Education (Plan SAN) and to meeting the goals adopted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Despite the substantial resources and efforts invested in this sector by the Cuban government, the blockade's impact in this field is substantial, estimated at USD 369,589,550 between January and July 2021.

Many of those impacts might have been prevented if Cuban companies had access to the U.S. market. To give just one example, the inability of the Spanish-Cuban joint venture BRAVO S.A. to purchase meat directly from the U.S. market caused additional expenditure of around USD 525,200 due to higher prices for freight and other transport costs.

Direct access to the U.S. market would be highly beneficial, given its prices and proximity, since its industries are capable of provisioning Cuban entities with many of the raw materials, supplies and equipment needed for modernizing their production lines.

Moreover, lack of fuel in agricultural and industrial processes, resulting from measures against companies, vessels and shipping lines that carry fuel to Cuba, had a financial impact of USD 5,181,480 during the period.

**Education, sports and culture** are among the sectors of great social influence that have traditionally been affected by the blockade restrictions. During the period under review, the main impacts reported in these fields are related to higher freight costs for products purchased from distant markets, and to difficulties in receiving payment for professional services rendered overseas and in accessing foreign funding sources.

Every year the Cuban government allocates substantial financial, material and human resources to the **education sector**, accounting for 24 percent of the national budget in 2021. This field is affected by the impossibility of accessing the U.S. market or the markets of Latin America and the Caribbean that are dominated by U.S. companies. This hampers the procurement of materials, furniture and equipment which are essential to conducting the education process with the required quality.

Between January and June 2021, the impact of the blockade in this sector amounted to **USD 30,032,550**.

Some specific examples of the main impacts on the education sector during the period considered are listed as follows:

- Special education requires a wide variety of resources to support this activity; shortages directly affect the students' full social inclusion. In particular, the need to acquire specialized equipment from distant markets with the subsequent rise in costs has prevented the procurement of accessories such as electric wheelchairs for physically disabled children who are unable to use conventional wheelchairs due to their underlying pathologies.
- In July 2021, it was learned that the International Trade Department of the British company GECKO ARTS AND MEDIA, which is a routine provider of scholastic materials for Cuban special education, decided to withdraw all guarantees for trade with Cuba due to the blockade restrictions. As a result, any shipment to the Island must be paid for in advance. The company had quoted for two shipments to the Island, but to date no bank has agreed to accept payment from Cuba.
- In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education has used telepresence as a means for developing and participating in scientific events and conferences. The blockade prevents Cuba from accessing some of the main videoconferencing servers currently used, such as Zoom, Skype and Cisco. As a result, in April 2021, the University of Computer Sciences (UCI, in its Spanish acronym) could not participate in the virtual regional meeting of the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP) since it was hosted on a Zoom platform. For the same reason, participation of teachers and specialists in numerous virtual events has been hampered during the period under review.

For over 60 years, the Cuban government, through its National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (INDER, in its Spanish acronym), has demonstrated its resolve to guarantee the practice of sports and physical exercise as a right and duty of the people. However, **the field of sports** has also been affected by the blockade, to the tune of **USD 2,827,515** between January and July 2021.

During the period, the retention has been reported of thousands of dollars earned by Cuban athletes, teams and referees who participated in international events. This is the result of the ferocious financial persecution and pressure on banks by the U.S. government. Because of the blockade:

- Cuban athlete Sergio Reinaldo González Bayard has an amount of USD 28,000 frozen, in prizes he won on the World Beach Volleyball Circuit.[5]
- Cuban referees Ricardo Borroto Iglesias and Lourdes Ester Pérez have not been able to collect USD 9,282 and USD 8,680 respectively for services rendered at various events.
- The Cuban Volleyball Federation has not been able to collect the prizes won by the men's indoor volleyball team during the Challenger tournaments held in Portugal (4th place in 2018) and Slovenia (2nd place in 2019), amounting to USD 7,000.

Moreover, shipments of craft for canoe and kayak racing remain pending, having been purchased and paid for in 2020, because the carrier notified manufacturer PLASTEX of its refusal to transport these products to Cuba. No other carrier willing to do the job has been found to date.

Another factor that repeatedly affects Cuban athletes' participation in international events is the United States' refusal or delay in granting the relevant visas. For this reason, the Cuban men's basketball team could not participate in the qualifying event for the America's Cup 2022, held in Puerto Rico in 2021.

The **culture sector** continues to be considerably affected by the U.S. blockade on Cuba, with losses amounting to **USD 19,155,000** during the period from January to July 2021.

The blockade limits artistic and intellectual promotion of Cuban youth. If there were no restrictions for entry, exhibition and sale of Cuban works in the United States, and no obstacles to establishing links with the artistic community there, Cuban artists would be able to access a wide and dynamic market and, at the same time, contribute to fostering cultural ties between the two nations.

The blockade and the hostile policy of the United States towards Cuba hinder Cuban musicians' access to the visas needed for undertaking tours and concerts in the United States. They are also prevented from enrolling or participating in events hosted in the United States, or entering into contracts or charging for their performances there without the need for intermediaries, which entails a reduction in revenues earned.

All the while, with clear intention and as part of its subversive campaign financed with federal funds, the U.S. government supports any plan to recognize any pseudo-cultural product or performance that discredits the values of the rich Cuban culture and its creators. This affects the marketing of Cuban arts in all circuits of culture, especially in the United States.

Some of the impacts on the culture sector during the period were the following:

- Contracts for artistic presentations by the Record and Musical Edition Company (EGREM, in its Spanish acronym) with U.S. clients, cannot include any clause related to payment, since this could harm the interests of the artists and the companies that represent them. This implies that payment must be effected through third parties, which makes operations more expensive and reduces the revenues earned by the Cuban party. Likewise, trade with third countries becomes more difficult due to the discouraging and intimidating effect of the coercive measures imposed by the United States, in particular the application of sanctions and penalties. These obstacles translate into revenues forgone by EGREM, amounting to **USD 206,330**.
- Geographical relocation of imports by the Cuban Cultural Property Fund (FCBC, in its Spanish acronym) due to the inability to access the U.S. market, entailed expenditures of **USD 780,171.19** in import of raw materials, supplies, equipment and consumables from markets in Europe and Asia.
- The inability to charge in U.S. dollars for performances by Cuban musicians overseas has caused a financial loss of **USD 24,295**. This was because parties abroad have to resort to payment gateways and financial intermediaries who charge service fees, in order to transfer funds to Cuba.
- Currently, cinematographic works that do not include among their credits the technology developed by the U.S. company DOLBY have scant possibilities of entering the international film market. Cuba has no access to this service, which compels Cuban film makers to associate themselves with foreign co-producers in order to acquire the relevant licenses. During the period considered, this caused losses estimated at **USD 100,000**.

## **2.2. Repercussions on economic development**

During 2020 and up to September 2021, the Cuban economy lost 13 percent of its GDP due to the combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world economic crisis and the unprecedented intensification of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States. This situation has proved to be devastating for all fields of the economy with direct consequences on the people's lives.

The country is currently in a gradual process of economic recovery, aimed at resuming the levels of activity lost in the previous two years and increasing the levels of domestic supply. In this respect, the Cuban government has promoted and worked for diversification of the production matrix and for greater participation of state and non-state entrepreneurship.

As noted earlier, the blockade is the main obstacle to the economic and social development of Cuba, a setback for implementation of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES 2030, in its Spanish acronym) and hence, of implementation of Agenda 2030 and its SDGs.

Transforming the costs of the blockade into national capacity to pay, would enable an additional, substantial and sustained financing source that would add greater dynamism to investment programs in strategic sectors identified in the PNDES 2030 plan, whose 6 strategic pillars are coordinated with the 17 SDGs. This would help establish the necessary conditions for gradual and sustained growth of the annual GDP.

In March 2021, a funding proposal for the project Coastal Resilience to Climate Change in Cuba through Ecosystem-based Adaptation - "Mi Costa" was approved by majority of votes and with the sole objection of the United States for political reasons, at the final session of the 28th meeting of the Green Climate Fund. Funding will be provided by the Green Fund amounting to USD 23,927,294 for the first 8 years of the project, to be complemented by an equivalent amount from the Cuban government. These funds will enable project implementation with an adaptive approach based on ecosystems for coastal protection, which will benefit 1.3 million people in 24 boroughs and 7 coastal settlements in the provinces of Pinar del Río, Artemisa, Mayabeque, Ciego de Ávila, Camagüey, Las Tunas and Granma.

The objection by the United States representative to a project for strengthening the national system of adaptation to climate change by a small island developing state such as Cuba is astonishing, given that the current U.S. administration has expressed strong interest in climate change issues.

During the first 7 months of 2021, the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have persisted, and in this context, **Cuba's biotechnology and its pharmaceutical industry** have proved themselves as pillars of national sovereignty. Corporate group BioCubaFarma manufactures drugs, high-technology equipment, and services aimed at improving human health, generating exportable goods and services, and food production with state-of-the-art technology, which represents one of the sensitive sectors of high influence on people and economy.

This sector is not immune to the impacts of the U.S. blockade on Cuba: research, development, manufacture and marketing of its products are affected every year with substantial economic losses. Between January and July 2021, the adverse effects in this field amounted to **USD 102,943,600**, mainly in the form of forgone export revenues and losses due to geographical relocation of trade and monetary effects.

The blockade deprives the U.S. people of receiving, inter alia, the benefits of biotechnological and pharmaceutical products manufactured in Cuba. Internationally recognized drugs such as HEBERPROT-P[6], GAVAC[7] or Proctokinasa[8] cannot be exported to the United States because of the blockade restrictions. It is estimated that the inability to insert these products into the United States market caused losses amounting to USD 97,382,500 in forgone revenues on goods and service exports, on the part of the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) in the period under review.

Between January and July 2021, due to the COVID-19 transmission scenario, Cuba kept its borders closed to international travel for tourism purposes. Travel for humanitarian and commercial purposes was allowed in only few cases. It is consequently not possible to quantify the losses caused during this period in the **tourism sector** by the restrictions imposed on cruise ships entry and on U.S. citizens' travel to Cuba.

Nevertheless, in the period analyzed, the adverse impact of the blockade reported in this field was an estimated **USD 11,873,112**, mainly related to financial/monetary effects and losses due to geographical relocation of trade.

The main reported impacts are listed as follows:

- Prohibition on trade with United States shipping companies compelled Cuban companies to trade with carriers on less financially advantageous terms. Losses generated in this respect are estimated at USD 782,350.
- Travel agency CUBATUR has reported monetary/financial losses amounting to USD 28,510, due to expenditure on banking services and exchange rate fluctuations. For the same reasons, travel agency CUBANACÁN and the CARACOL company reported losses estimated at USD 94,089 and USD 125,324, respectively.
- Many websites known as world leaders in promotion and distribution of tourist products are blocked for Cuba due to the sanctions imposed by the United States. In particular, Cuban travel agencies cannot use Global Distribution Systems (GDS) GALILEO WORLDSPAN and SABRE (main GDS in North America, including Canada). A large number of Cuban hotels have been eliminated from websites such as TRIVAGO, EXPEDIA and BOOKING.COM. This basically limits access and visibility of tourism products by retail agencies from other countries that operate with SABRE and GALILEO. It also limits the scope for sales to end customers.
- It is impossible for Cuban tourism institutions to access online promotional campaigns. For instance, payment is required in the case of campaigns operated on Facebook, but no Cuban company has Visa or MasterCard to cover this publicity, because of the blockade.

In the case of the **non-State sector**, the blockade restrictions significantly affect the activity of Cuban entrepreneurs, business owners and cooperative members. This policy greatly alters their daily operations and limits their capacity to operate successfully.

Travel restrictions on U.S. citizens remain in force. This will continue to limit the flow of visitors to the Island; of which the number of international flights and visitor arrivals, including tourists, has been rising gradually, as from November 15, 2021.

These restrictions have caused significant reductions of the demand for goods and services by the non-State sector in recent years. Meanwhile, suspension of consular services between the two countries has limited Cuban entrepreneurs' ability to travel to the United States and purchase directly the supplies they need for their business.

Cuban entrepreneurs have had to endure the closing of their bank accounts in the United States, which has made their financial operations more difficult and expensive. Coercive measures applied against financial institutions in recent years have caused several payment and e-commerce platforms such as PayPal and Airbnb to refuse to provide their services to these businessmen.

Economic detriment and losses caused by the blockade to the **communications and computing sector, including telecommunications** in Cuba during the period from January to July 2021 are estimated at **USD 37,520,578**.

These have mostly been related to constraint and prohibition on the provision of technology and equipment manufactured under license or using components produced in the United States, which entails the need to resort to other, much more distant markets; monetary/financial losses caused by exchange rate fluctuations and the banks' refusal to engage in transactions with Cuba; impacts on production and services due to rising costs of equipment repair, that cannot be effected directly by the U.S. equipment provider or manufacturer; and difficulties in accessing IT tools that are essential for training in and production of local software.

The blockade is the main obstacle to a better flow of information and broader access to the internet and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by the Cuban people. The policy undermines the development of communications in Cuba by hampering connectivity and making it more expensive, conditioning access to platforms and technologies, and using cyberspace for attempts to overthrow the country's political and legal system.

The main limitations reported in this field are the following:

- Companies that manufacture equipment with components from the United States or have a strong presence in this market, constantly face a series of restrictions on their operations with Cuba. This has led to rising costs and has made logistical operations more complex for the Cuban phone company (ETECSA), causing losses estimated at USD

26,611,000.

- Since interconnections with international operators cannot be made directly in the United States, where the main interconnection nodes are located, ETECSA is forced to extend the international network with nodes in the United Kingdom, Jamaica and Venezuela, requiring expenditures of USD 8,145,800.
- For Cuban software developers, mostly young people, the blockade means the inability to upload products and applications created for the Android operating system, to Google Play. In order to register as developer on this platform and upload an application, a minimum fee is required, which cannot be paid since money transfers with U.S. banks cannot be conducted from Cuba. Even if such payments were possible, Cuban developers would still not be able to receive the revenues earned per download of their application from Google Play, since they would need an account with an online payment processor able to conduct the transfer, such as PayPal. This is precluded by the blockade restrictions.
- This sector was also affected by the restrictions imposed on access from Cuba to digital platforms such as Zoom, Cisco Webex, Interprefy, amongst others, impeding participation on equal terms by Cuban representatives in numerous international virtual events.

During the period considered, the losses caused by the blockade to **Cuban industry** are estimated at **USD 13,864,800**. These are mainly related to revenues foregone on exports of goods and services, geographical relocation of trade (rising costs, freight and insurance, inventories, etc.), exchange rate fluctuations and losses due to the technology blockade.

Some of the most significant examples are the following:

- The Light Industrial Products Retailing and Import-Export Company (ENCOMIL) reported forgone revenues on exports estimated at USD 246,484.90, because of the refusal by banks NATWEST BANK of London (as agreed in the contract) and CAIXABEN and METROBANK (used by the client) to transfer money to Cuba, as a result of the financial persecution by the United States.
- Prohibition on use of the U.S. dollar as payment currency compels Cuban institutions to use the euro and other currencies in their international transactions. This generates additional expenses in currency exchange and commissions that must be paid to banks for these operations. For this reason alone, the Recycling and the Chemical Industry Business Groups have reported losses of USD 1,113,829.73 and USD 2,222,190.49 respectively.
- The Cuban company ACINOX COMERCIAL has no access to the U.S. transnational corporations with high presence in the metal products market. Neither can it purchase the raw materials, parts and metals required for its activity in the United States, resulting in a 15 percent increase in costs, since it has to purchase these products in Europe and Asia. During the period analyzed, the total imports amounted to USD 20,147,095.62. It is estimated that USD 3,022,064.34 would have been saved if these products had been acquired in the U.S. market.
- In 2021, the Trading Company BK Import/Export[9] requested a quotation from the German company MASTERFLEX GROUP, to acquire water hoses for a fruit juice processing plant in Cuba. This company replied that its U.S. subsidiary was responsible for all company operations in Central America and that, given the U.S. legislation, this subsidiary could not supply any product to any Cuban institution.

Because of the blockade, the **construction sector** continues to face serious difficulties in accessing construction technologies that are more effective, lighter, and consume fewer basic materials and energy components. In the period between January and July 2021, this field reported losses of **USD 22,793,000**.

Some of the impacts reported in the construction sector during the period analyzed are listed as follows:

- The national housing authority reported losses estimated at USD 17.5 million due to the inability to access more effective materials and technology. If this amount were saved, the National Housing Program would be implemented in a more rapid and effective way.

- Cuba's Ministry of Construction reported USD 3.7 million as forgone revenue on export of goods. This was influenced by two main factors:
- Refusal by FIRST CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL BANK to transfer money to Cuba from the client TRY ISLAND LTD., in the Cayman Islands, for fear of financial persecution by the United States of banks that establish relations with Cuba.
- Clinker production for export was significantly affected by the lack of stability in the supply of Petcoke, which is the result of the sanctions applied in recent years on companies that supply fuel to Cuba.
- Because of the intimidating effect of the blockade, Construction Business Group (GECONS) reported losses estimated at USD 1.3 million due to the inability to enter into International Business Agreements with foreign companies.

During the period from January to July 2021, losses caused by the blockade to the **transportation sector** amounted to **USD 31,278,520**.

Some examples of the impacts of this policy in the period are the following:

- The Cuban company *Cubana de Aviación S.A.* reported forgone revenues of USD 7,062,498.78, due to the non-renewal of a cargo aircraft lease contract. This led to cessation of all cargo operations planned for the Mexico City, Cancun, Dominican Republic, Colombia and Ecuador routes, and to significant reduction in the frequencies of flights to Panama.
- There remain difficulties in carrying non-commercial cargo sent to Cubans from their relatives and friends in the United States. Currently, a large proportion of this cargo arrives in Cuba through third countries, which increases transportation costs and causes significant delays affecting the Cuban recipients.
- Restrictions imposed by the Torricelli Act give rise to difficulties in obtaining bids for vessel operations and lead to higher operating charges in Cuban ports. A large proportion of vessels coming from Europe, Asia, and South America transship in other Caribbean ports, causing delays due to longer crossing times. Considering the volume of containers, it is estimated that approximately USD 6 million would be saved on freight charges, Bunker Adjustment Factor and reduced storage needs, if the blockade ceased to exist.

In the **energy and mining sector**, the adverse impacts during the period analyzed are estimated at **USD 136,063,043**. Cuba has faced enormous difficulties in maintaining electricity generation, due to the tense situation imposed by the blockade. The economic blockade has aggravated the financial constraints and limitations on obtaining credits for repairs at the country's thermal power stations and on acquiring necessary technology.

In addition, the measures adopted during the Donald Trump administration in 2019 to prevent fuel delivery to Cuba remain in full force. This situation brings great difficulties to the country since lack of fuel affects all production processes and sectors of the economy; in particular, supplies needed to maintain the national power system, as well as numerous basic services to the people, such as power supply, cooking, and public transport.

The United States government intimidates and persecutes those companies that provide fuel to Cuba. The foreign suppliers portfolio has consequently been reduced, and those that maintained their contracts with Cuba have substantially increased their prices to reflect the country risk. This is a measure of non-conventional warfare applied in times of apparent peace against the people of a country upon which the United States has not formally declared war.

The main examples of the blockade impacts on this sector during the period are the following:

- The Cuban company Unión Cuba Petróleo (CUPET) reported losses of USD 17,391,640 in forgone revenues on export of goods and services. Since 2019, shipping companies and tankers that carried fuel to Cuba have been included in the OFAC's Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List (SDN). A Cuban fuel import/export company was also included in this list, which caused all its providers to refuse to join the company's business portfolio.
- **Despite the fact that the United States is the largest producer and exporter of sulfuric**

acid worldwide, Cuba must acquire this product from Canadian ports. This results in an increase of approximately 20 percent in freight costs, causing losses estimated at USD 5,041,000.

- The Cuban company MOA NICKEL reported an impact amounting to USD 953,300 in freight costs. This company imports liquefied petroleum gas and its suppliers portfolio has also been limited by the United States persecution of companies that trade with Cuba.

### 2.3. UNQUANTIFIABLE HARM TO HUMAN BEINGS

The impacts of the blockade cannot be addressed without considering the serious human detriment this policy causes, aimed at creating uncertainty in the minds of Cubans, thwarting their hopes for development and inciting civil unrest. Such human harm cannot be quantified, but it is nonetheless real and substantial.

The blockade seeks to destroy a social project that was built from the start for the benefit of the underprivileged, by using hardship as a means of triggering social upheaval.

Cubans at home and abroad suffer the devastating consequences of the blockade. Several generations have been born and lived under siege by this illegal policy, brutally and intentionally applied to assail the most sensitive economic and social sectors.

Evidence of this is the infamous memorandum of the then Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs of the United States Department of State, Lester Mallory, who wrote the following on April 6, 1960:

*"The majority of Cubans support Castro... The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship... every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba... a line of action which, while as adroit and inconspicuous as possible, makes the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government."*

Since then, the strategy of the United States towards Cuba has been to cause deprivation of resources, hence chaos, defenselessness, unrest, and the dissatisfaction of Cubans with their living conditions, while frustrating their legitimate aspirations to prosperity and development.

The United States government cannot represent itself as the Cuban people's benefactor, while condemning it to suffering, despair and instability in the supply of essential products and basic necessities, which translates into long waiting lines that exhaust Cubans, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The United States' narrative is hypocritical, since it seeks to hold the Cuban government responsible for the impacts of its criminal blockade on the Island.

The psychological impact and anxiety generated by the blockade among the Cuban people reach far beyond any number. It is not possible to put a monetary value on the distress of a Cuban who is excluded from access to basic medicines because a U.S. institution refuses to send necessary supplies for their production, or a mother who learns that her son suffering from cancer cannot access the latest cytostatic treatment. It is not possible to measure despair caused by the inability to receive donations or purchase essential products for sectors with high social influence, because some U.S. entity holds shares in the companies involved in transporting them and fear becoming the target of punitive measures.

There is no method for quantifying the powerlessness of an engineer who cannot obtain the software needed for his professional activity, or a student who cannot access websites of academic interest.

Neither can the frustration of scientists, academics, artists and other Cuban professionals be measured, when they see thwarted the prospects of development, exchange with their counterparts overseas, participation in international events or presentation of the results of their work.

The impacts on Cuban families and their ties with Cubans resident abroad are unmeasurable. The United States is responsible for the obstacles to remittances, the difficulties in provision of consular services and their relocation to third countries, producing dissatisfaction and distress, hindering the family reunion process and building walls where hundreds of thousands of voices worldwide fight to build bridges of love.

### 3. Effects on the external sector of the Cuban economy

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#### 3.1. IMPACTS ON FOREIGN TRADE

Adverse effects of the blockade on Cuban foreign trade during the period from January to July 2021, amounted to **USD 923,829,755.13**. Persecution of Cuban financial transactions, along with an unprecedented campaign of intimidation against banks that do business with Cuba have heavily affected the country's foreign trade.

As in previous years, most losses are in the form of forgone revenues on exports of goods and services, estimated at USD 361,370,800. This does not include the impact of the blockade on tourism, due to the nearly total reduction of worldwide travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the context of the pandemic, the inability to access the U.S. import market has caused substantial losses to the Cuban economy. These are estimated at USD 256,233,656 between January and July 2021. This amount surpasses by 48.6 percent that reported during the period between April 2019 and March 2020, despite being a shorter period (only 7 months).

Prohibition on the use of U.S. dollars in international financial transactions compels Cuban companies to use currencies other than dollars in their operations. This has led to additional expenditures estimated at USD 161,562,899 in currency exchange fluctuations.

Coercive economic measures that were applied against Cuba in order to intensify the blockade during the Donald Trump administration, and currently remain in full force, pose a dissuasive and intimidating effect on foreign companies and businessmen wishing to establish commercial relations with Cuban institutions. This, along with increasing refusals by banks to process bank operations related to Cuba has caused losses of USD 89,402,781.

Given the inability to export to the United States as a result of the blockade restrictions and prohibitions, losses reported in the Cuban agriculture sector amount to USD 112,481,130. The institutions most affected are HABANOS S.A. and Internacional Cubana de Tabacos, S.A, which have reported losses of millions of dollars due to the inability to place Cuban tobacco products in the U.S. market, which is one of the largest worldwide in this regard<sup>[10]</sup>.

In the case of CUBAZUCAR, the value of potential exports to the United States is estimated at USD 33,349,768 for the period between January and July of 2021, taking into account the 95,850 tons that Cuba placed in the world market during this period.

In the case of other brands and exports, such as the CUBITA and Caracolillo coffee brands, Rum Caney, Rum Varadero, and charcoal, the inability to export to the United States compels Cuban companies to seek customers in distant markets, such as Europe, which increases the costs of the whole trading process.

Freight and insurance cost overruns that arise due to geographical relocation of trade to distant regions continue to cause serious detriment to the Cuban economy. During the period, losses were estimated at USD 43,548,077. In addition, the need to resort to commercial intermediaries with the consequent increase in costs, caused losses estimated at USD 5,843,500.

The following table summarizes the impacts of the blockade on Cuban exports during the period from January to July 2021:

Impacts due to:	USD
Inability to access the U.S. market	256,233,656.30
Use of intermediaries/rise in product costs	5,843,500.00
Increase in freight & insurance costs	43,548,077.45
Export revenues foregone	361,370,800.00
Country risk/increase in financing costs	5,868,041.00
Prohibition on use of U.S. dollars	161,562,899.38
Other impacts*	89,402,781.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>923,829,755.13</b>

[1] Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), File entitled "Economic Sanctions: Agencies Face Competing Priorities in Enforcing the U.S. Embargo on Cuba", Washington, 2017.

[2] In 2020, cardiovascular diseases constituted the leading cause of death in Cuba, with a rate of 267.3 per 100 thousand inhabitants (2020 Statistical Yearbook of the Ministry of Public Health)

[3] The Horizontal Spin Centrifuge is a medical equipment that rotates a sample to accelerate the decantation or sedimentation of its components or phases (usually a solid and a liquid), depending on the density.

[4] In Cuba there has been a National Cochlear Implant Program since 1998 that has benefitted over 500 people, most of them children suffering from severe or profound hearing loss.

[5] This athlete, along with his partner Nivaldo Nadhir Díaz Gómez, represented Cuba in the following events (inter alia): Olympic Games Rio 2016 (Quarterfinal, 5th place), World Championships (Round of Sixteen in 2017), Pan American Games (3rd place in 2015). Won the Bronze medal in Quinzhou, Chinese city hosting phase No. 21 of World Beach Volleyball Circuit (2017).

[6] Only drug of its kind for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcer.

[7] Vaccine developed for tick control in cattle.

[8] Drug for the treatment of acute hemorrhoids.

[9] This company imports and exports products and services, as well as raw materials, equipment and other inputs for production and projects by companies of the metal-mechanical sector and their opening to foreign markets.

[10] It is estimated that the premium tobacco market comprises nearly 435 million units. Of these, around 290 million units are sold in the United States; this country is consequently the most important market for premium tobacco (accounting for 66 percent of the world market)

 (<https://www.tumblr.com/cubaminrex>)

 (<https://www.youtube.com/cubaminrex>)

### **3.2. ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE FINANCIAL AND BANKING SECTORS**

(<https://www.facebook.com/cubaminrex>)

 (<https://www.tiktok.com/photos/cubaminrex>) The period between January and July 2021 was marked by a ruthless persecution of Cuba's transactions with third countries. Monetary-banking damages in this period amount to **USD**

 (<https://www.instagram.com/cubaminrex>) **167,800,000.**

In this regard, damages associated with restrictions on the use of U.S. dollars in commercial and financial transactions overseas remain in place, as well as the refusal by foreign banks to provide services to Cuba. This situation has been aggravated in recent years by the imposition of OFAC coercive measures to U.S. and third-country entities, due to alleged violations under the blockade policy.

The inclusion of Cuba on the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism in January 2021, unilaterally issued by the United States Department of State, aggravated the consequences of the blockade by increasing the country's difficulties to participate in the international trade, conduct financial operations and purchase basic supplies.

In such period, as a result of this measure numerous banks canceled operations with Cuba, including transfers for the purchase of food, medicine and goods for the people. All of this happened in the midst of a battle waged by Cuba against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, several Cuban diplomatic missions overseas lost their relation with banks that traditionally provided services to them for fear of the U.S. government's retaliation. This situation affects the operation and sustenance of Cuban embassies and staff members. Likewise, this impeded the payment of Cuba's financial contributions to various international and regional organizations.

The tightening of the extra-territorial application of the blockade in the financial sector affects natural persons as well. Reports pile up about Cuban residents abroad, who are victims worldwide of their banks refusing to operate and make transactions linked to Cuba.

Obstacles and limitations for Cuba's banking operations remain in force, particularly returns and refusals of transactions made by European Banks, alleging reasons relating to internal policy or compliance.

The U.S. government in turn prevents third-country banks from operating accounts in U.S. dollars held by Cuba or Cuban nationals. It also prohibits the use of its currency or dollar accounts in transactions between third-country and Cuban nationals. All of this result in huge losses by the fluctuation of exchange rates between the U.S. currency and those from third countries in which charges and payments are made, as well as additional fees.

On June 10, 2021, the Cuban banking and financial system was forced to temporarily suspend cash deposits in U.S. dollars after having been collected in Cuba, due to obstacles imposed by the United States in regards to the use of dollars in transactions.

Among the main repercussions caused by the blockade policy on the Cuban banking and financial sector between January and July 2021, the following examples can be highlighted:

- **Refusal to provide banking services:**

In 7 months only, 381 actions made by foreign banks, which affected the Cuban banking system, were registered (44 banks in Europe, 38 in America and 11 in the rest of the world). In these operations, **24,588,193.39 euros[1]** were involved, which evidences the financial flows that were impacted by the dissuasive effect of the blockade.

During this period, an average of 54 actions per month executed by foreign banks, which affected the Cuban banking and financial sector, were registered. This amount is more than twice the average of actions registered on a monthly basis in the previous two periods. (**Chart 1**).

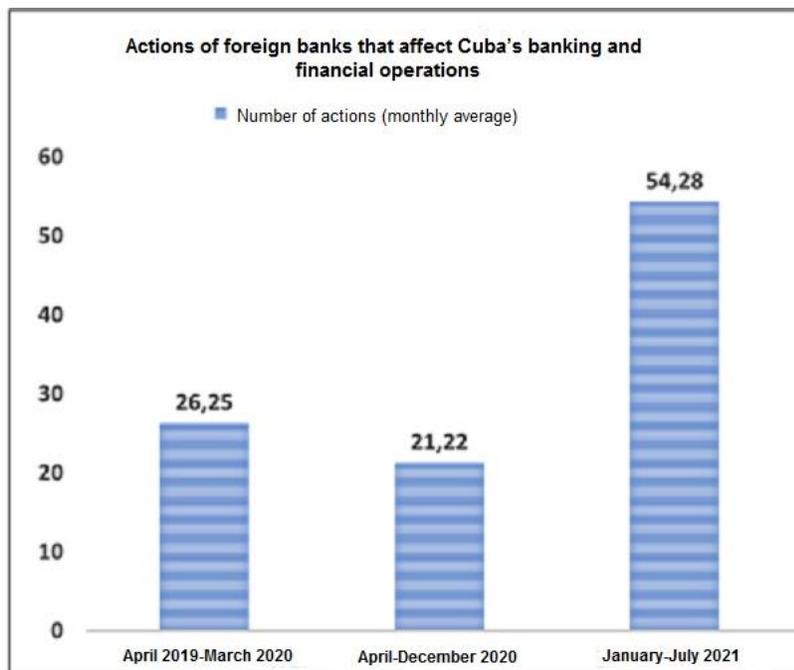


Chart 1

[1] This amount is expressed in euros since it is the currency Cuba operates with in the foreign banking system due to the prohibition of the use of US dollar.

Among these actions were the refusal to open or close accounts; refusal to make transfers of funds from/to Cuba and provide other banking services; cancellation or denial by foreign banks to request SWIFT[1] or RMA[2] passwords; return and cancellation of banking operations and correspondent agreements.

These examples evidence the impediments faced by Cuban banks almost on a daily basis in order to manage operations of the country. It is increasingly frequent the refusal by foreign banks to work with Cuba, alleging U.S. sanctions against the Island, internal policy compliance or other reasons.

Additionally, it is estimated that, between January and July 2021, the average monthly costs for commission fees demanded to Cuba by foreign banks in order to recover costs derived from returns of transfers doubled (USD 2,176.84 per month) compared to those registered between April and December 2020 (USD 902.82 per month).

- **Access to foreign financing under extremely onerous conditions**

Cuba has historically faced this situation as a result of the economic, commercial and financial war imposed by the United States, which has been intensified in recent years. Cuban banking and business entities continue to pay interest rates higher than those established by the market or paid by other countries for similar operations to obtain external financing. This is caused by the imposition of high rates as a result of the country risk classification applied to Cuba, which is the main element to determine feasibility and costs of financial operations, increased due to the blockade.

- **Difficulties with sending and receiving banking documents through courier agencies.**

There are still difficulties with DHL services, so the following adverse effects remain in force:

- The same guarantees and safety are not provided when banking documents are delivered through means other than DHL and SWIFT.
- Documentary remittances are sent in copies via e-mail, including shipping documents and not the originals that should be received directly through DHL.
- Cuban importers must seek other alternatives to receive documents and carry out customs procedures in order to release merchandise from ports, resulting in delays in this process and in the delivery of goods in the internal economy.

- **Adverse effects on the services provided to the population**

The inclusion by the United States of FINCIMEX and American International Services (AIS) on the List of Restricted Cuban Entities in June and September 2020, and the impossibility to process remittances through these entities eliminated the main formal channels to send remittances, which posed greater difficulties for Cuban families in both countries, already strongly affected by the pandemic.

In order to illustrate these effects, it has been taken as an example the amount of money that used to be transferred to the population in this regard under the agreement between FINCIMEX and *Sociedad Mercantil Cubana Casas de Cambio S.A. (CADECA)*[3] (Cuban Mercantile Society of Exchange Offices). By this means only, in 2020 an average of USD 6,504,490 in remittances to natural persons was processed monthly. This number was drastically reduced to zero from December 2020 on, as a result of unilateral sanctions by the United States on FINCIMEX. In light of this information, it is estimated that, during the first seven months of 2021, approximately **USD 45,531,430** were not transferred to the population. This evidences the far-reaching effects on the Cuban family, even if it does not convey all the damage caused by the measures imposed against FINCIMEX.

## **4. The blockade violates International Law. Extraterritorial implementation**

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### **4.1. ADVERSE EFFECTS ON CUBAN ENTITIES**

**On January 11 and 12, 2021**, the Kazakh company LLP “Best Tour Travel” made two transfers to the Cuban Enterprise CUBADEPORTES S.A. through BANK CENTER CREDIT for lodging and transportation services provided to athletes of the Olympic Boxing Team of Kazakhstan, who would visit Cuba on from 14 to 29 January. The blockade prevented the funds from being received in the recipient’s account. In this regard, BANK CENTER CREDIT alleged that on **January 21** they had received a communication from their correspondent bank, BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON, informing them that the payments had been blocked pursuant to U.S. sanctions currently in force against the Cuban government.

**On February 9, 2021** the Cuban Mission in Fiji was notified by Bred Bank-Fiji of the closing of its accounts held in said entity, based on the impacts of the sanctions imposed on Cuba. From that date on, actions have been taken with other banking entities based in Fiji to open new accounts to no avail. In the face of this situation, the Cuban Embassy is unable to receive payments for consular services provided.

**On March 9, 2021**, the advisor to *Grupo Alto Cedro*, a company that, jointly with PECUNIA CARDS E.D.E., S.L., provides point of sale (POS) services to Cuban consulates in Spain, informed that MASTERCARD had informed PECUNIA CARDS E.D.E., S.L. of the immediate suspension of cards in the aforementioned terminals. The request is based on a MASTERCARD internal rule globally enforced, whereby as a result of the blockade, they are prevented from providing services or collaborating with entities linked to the Cuban government.

**On March 18, 2021**, it was known that the ABU DHABI STEM CELL CENTER’s Chief Financial Officer requested the Chief of the Cuban Medical Brigade in the United Arab Emirates to seek another agent bank to make payments to Cuba for the services rendered by the Cuban health collaborators in that country. The justification provided was that as a result of the blockade the German DEUTSCHE BANK, acting as an agent bank until that moment, refused to continue operating as such.

**On March 19, 2021**, SCOTIABANK informed the Cuban Educational Brigade’s office in the Bahamas that from March 26 they were unable to make any transfer to Cuba from the account held by the Brigade at this financial institution. Several Cuban pharmacists who work under agreements entered into by the Public Hospitals Authority (PHA) and *Servicios Médicos Cubanos* (Cuban Medical Services), whose work is essential for the pharmaceutical services rendered at Princess Margaret hospital, received similar notifications too[4].

**On March 26**, it was known that branch offices of SCOTIABANK were taking action against Cuban persons and entities in various Caribbean countries as a consequence of an alert made by OFAC to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI), a Canadian government's regulatory agency. OFAC, specifically requested OSFI to audit all operations made by Canadian banks with Cuba, taking into consideration that sanctions against Cuba remain unchanged.

**On June 1, 2021**, the Secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty Organization (CTBTO) informed the Cuban Embassy in Austria that the donation of equipment for the setting up of a National Data Center in Cuba was on hold, because the shipping company contracted for their transportation had suddenly communicated that they were unable to accomplish the task agreed due to sanctions imposed by the United States against the island nation.

**On July 13, 2021**, it was known of the decision by bank *Société Générale* to close accounts held by the Cuban Embassy in France within 60 days. This action violates the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations in respect to the impact on the proper operation of a diplomatic mission. It also contravenes Rule No. 2271/96 adopted by the European Council on November 22, 1996, and infringes the spirit and letter of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement signed between Cuba, the European Union and its member states.

In recent years, as a consequence of the financial persecution by the United States government against Cuba, the National Assembly of the People's Power has faced difficulties to pay membership fees to the main international bodies it is a member of, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), a situation that has seriously limited the Cuban participation in these organizations.

- IPU membership fees corresponding to 2019, 2020 and 2021 could not be paid. Several actions have been taken directly with the Organization in conjunction with the Cuban mission to International Bodies based in Geneva, but it has been unsuccessful due to the denial by Swiss bank UBS S.A. to accept transfers from Cuba.
- PARLATINO membership fees corresponding to 2020 and 2021 could not be paid. Actions were taken directly with PARLATINO, but no positive outcome has been reached due to the bank's reluctance to accept transfers from Cuba because of the blockade.

## **4.2. OTHER EXTRATERRITORIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS**

**January 2021:** Stephan Praetorius, Director General of HABANOS NORDIC, informed the Cuban Embassy to Estonia (based in Finland) that SWEDBANK Estonia had started to block payments from clients using this bank, directed to the new financial partner PS INTERNATIONAL AB. The reasons given by SWEDBANK Estonia were that such payments contravened their risk policy. The bank also claimed that transfers relating to the company were not in line with the principles and objectives of the implementation of international sanctions.

The lawyers that represent HABANOS NORDIC sent a memorandum on the arbitrary application of international financial sanctions in the banking sector of Estonia and the inadequate implementation of sanctions (dated January 18, 2021) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, whereby it was denounced what had taken place and the illegality of the restrictions imposed on the company by SWEDBANK. Among other elements, the communication stated as follows:

- SWEDBANK activities are contrary to the principle of free movement of goods, services and capital stated in Article 26 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and infringes the free enterprise system protected by Article 31 of the Constitution of Estonia.
- TFEU Article 29 also states that products coming from a third-country shall be considered to be in free circulation in a Member State if the import formalities have been complied and the customs duties have been charged. Such requirements are enforced by the Estonian Tax and Customs Board and if they are duly complied, SWEDBANK has no legal grounds to restrict the circulation of tobacco-based products supplied by HABANOS NORDIC.

**On February 5, 2021**, the Director General of the Argentinian company ALL FOODS, a regular provider of grains and flour to Cuba, notified the Cuban Embassy in Buenos Aires about the refusal by Santander Bank (Uruguay) to process payments from a supply operation of alfalfa flour. The operator of Santander Business Banking (Uruguay) notified in writing about the return of the relevant funds to the Cuban bank BICSA due to this financial entity is instructed not to receive funds from companies of the Cuban state. This measure brings about additional constraints to regular providers to Cuba, since this not only prevents them from receiving the necessary funds timely, but also forces them to seek alternative ways for receiving them.

**In April 2021**, it was known that the transfer made by the solidarity organization “Cubans in the United Kingdom”, based in the United Kingdom, to *Estrella de Cuba* Association of Cuban Residents in Germany to contribute to the purchase of medical supplies was withheld by the bank, which led to its accounts being placed under investigation.

**May 2021**, the Cuban Embassy in Jamaica made two transfers to SCOTIABANK to execute a payment for Cuba’s membership fee to the International Seabed Authority (ISA). Both transfers were rejected by the bank claiming that as from April 1, 2021 the entity decided not to continue providing payment services to or from Cuba for the accounts of their clients.

**On May 6, 2021**, the closing of accounts in Euros (EUR), pound sterling (GBP) and Japanese yen (JPY) held by HAVIN BANK at BANCO SABADELL branch office in London was effective. This measure affects primarily British entities that conduct commercial operations with Cuba, since funds were received through said branch office to later be transferred to Cuban banks, and payments were made to British companies in GBP. Likewise, remittances sent to Cuba for natural persons through HAVIN BANK were affected.

## 5. World opposition to the blockade

### **5.1. OPPOSITION IN THE UNITED STATES**

During the reporting period, demonstrations of broad international support towards Cuba in the fight against the blockade continued. Statements, media actions, resolutions and other initiatives in rejection to the economic blockade emerged from different sectors in the United States. Cultural, academic, religious, environmental, solidarity civil society representatives, and business groups, non-governmental organizations, lawmakers and members of political groups in that country expressed their disagreement in maintaining the blockade.

Apart from denouncing the blockade policy as a whole, the majority of these efforts focused on urging the United States government to change its course in the policy towards Cuba and initiate a new path in the bilateral relationship. Numerous requests to President Biden were registered to make use of his executive powers to eliminate coercive measures imposed during the Trump administration.

Many initiatives stressed the need to lift the blockade and relax its regulations in the face of the profound impact of these restrictions and prohibitions to combat COVID-19.

Some examples of the opposition to the blockade within the United States during the term under consideration are set out below:

- **On January 4, 2021**, the San Francisco Labor Council approved a resolution to foster medical collaboration with Cuba and combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The text urges the Federal Congress and the United States President to lift restrictions regarding travels to Cuba and the import of medical supplies.
- **On January 14, 2021**, the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba made public a letter addressed to President Biden, where the organization encouraged the incoming administration to normalize the bilateral relationship and support Congress’ actions to lift the blockade. Among other aspects, early actions were also demanded to waive Title III of Helms-Burton Act, as an important step for the agricultural sector in the United States and for businesses in general.

- **On January 19, 2021**, James McGovern, Democratic Congressman for Massachusetts and Chairman of the House Committee on Rules, sent a letter to President Biden in which he urged the President to act quickly to reverse the damage caused by Trump to the bilateral relationship and to promote new ties. Among the actions requested was the elimination of restrictions on travel, exchange and trade.
- **On January 19, 2021**, the U.S. Seattle City Council approved a Resolution in favor of cooperating with Cuba to combat COVID-19, while it encouraged the Biden administration to lift the blockade against the island.
- **On January 24, 2021**, Cuban emigrants in Key West paid tribute to José Martí on the occasion of his 168th birth anniversary. During this event, the blockade against Cuba and the inclusion of Cuba on the Department of State List of State Sponsors of Terrorism was condemned. The event was attended by Teri Johnston, city mayor.
- **In January, 2021**, U.S. actor Tyrese Gibson posted on his social Instagram account a message encouraging the Biden administration to lift the blockade on Cuba. In his post, Gibson referred to the rapprochement with Cuba, as one of the main accomplishments of President Barack Obama.
- **On January 12, 2021**, Bishop David J. Malloy, President of the International Justice and Peace Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops made public a statement against the designation of Cuba by the U.S. government as a state sponsor of terrorism. In the message, this organization reaffirmed its support to the full lifting of the blockade against Cuba.
- **On January 28, 2021**, the U.S. academician William LeoGrande published an article in the South Florida South-Sentinel, in favor of a rapid action by the Biden administration to restore the bilateral relationship, which included the elimination of the blockade regulations imposed by the Trump administration.
- **On January 29, 2021**, the organization Alliance for Cuba Engagement and Respect (ACERE) issued a statement on social media in which they urged the Biden administration to eliminate the restrictions on remittances and travel to Cuba. In the text, they favored also the beginning of a new era of mutual respect and understanding between the two countries.
- **On January 31, 2021**, car and bicycle caravan rallies were held in Miami, Nueva York, Los Angeles and Seattle to demand the end of the blockade against Cuba and support closer ties between the two countries. The initiative was organized by the project *Puentes de Amor* (Bridges of Love).
- **On February 4, 2021**, Senator Ron Wyden, Democrat for Oregon, introduced a bill on trade between Cuba and the United States in 2021. This initiative sought to fully repeal the blockade policy and establish normal trade relations. The text would repeal the major statutes that codify sanctions against Cuba, including the Helms-Burton Act and the Cuban Democracy Act (Lorricelli Act), as well as other provisions that affect trade, investment and travel. The bill was co-sponsored by democratic Senators Patrick Leahy (Vermont), Richard Durbin (Illinois) and Jeff Merkley (Oregon).
- **On February 7, 2021**, Senator Patrick Leahy, Democrat for Vermont, posted on his Twitter account on the need to lift the blockade on Cuba and described it as a policy that makes Cubans lives even more difficult.
- **On February 7, 2021**, the organization *Family Farm Defenders*, based in Madison, Wisconsin, made public a letter sent to President Biden, in which they encouraged him to allow collaboration between Cuba and the United States to tackle the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The text also favored the end of economic sanctions and travels restrictions on Cuba.
- **On February 8, 2021**, Cuban-Americans gathered on social networks under the name of Asuntos Cubanos (Cuban Affairs), jointly with the *Asociación Cultural José Martí USA* (José Martí Cultural Association), based in Miami, and the organization *Emigración Patriótica* of the United States, sent a letter to President Joe Biden, in which they favored a new approach in the policy towards Cuba. The letter urged the new administration to lift the blockade, since it represents the main obstacle for the Cuban economy to grow and the main obstacle for the full enjoyment of human rights in Cuba.

- **On February 9, 2021**, the Democratic Socialists of America's International Committee posted on its twitter account in favor of a legislative initiative of democrat Senator Ron Wyden to eliminate the blockade on Cuba. The organization noted that Cuba must insert itself in the international trade without restrictions and that the elimination of the Helms-Burton Act and other sanctions against Cuba must be a priority for Biden administration.
- **February 10, 2021**, a total of 56 organizations of the U.S. civil society, including Cuban-American groups, relevant academic, religious, human rights, environmental, and business organizations sent a letter to President Biden to encourage the implementation of a new rapprochement policy with Cuba. The text favors the removal of restrictions imposed by Trump and calls upon the complete lifting of the blockade.
- **On February 17, 2021**, a total of 17 churches and religious organizations in the United States sent a letter to President Biden in which they urged him to fulfill his commitment to reverse Trump's policies that hurt Cubans and their families. The letter calls for the exclusion of Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism, the repeal of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, and the lifting of the blockade.
- **On February 17, 2021**, the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity based in Oakland, California, published an open letter sent to President Biden that calls for the U.S. government to adopt a new rapprochement policy towards Cuba. The document urged the U.S. President to lift the blockade on Cuba and all extraterritorial sanctions, prohibitions and laws against Cuba.
- **February 23, 2021**, the Chicago City Council, in Illinois, unanimously approved a resolution that requests the U.S. government to cease the economic blockade against Cuba. The text states that the full reestablishment of trade and travels between the two countries would be of great interest for both parties, and that the city would benefit from the export of agricultural and industrial products to Cuba.
- **February 25, 2021**, a group of six democrat Senators sent a letter to the Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in which they encouraged him to reverse Donald Trump's policy towards Cuba. Among other elements, the Senators called for the lifting of restrictions on travel, remittances and the functioning of their respective diplomatic missions. The letter was signed by Patrick Leahy (Vermont), Ron Wyden (Oregon), Sheldon Whitehouse (Rhode Island), Chris Van Hollen (Maryland), Martin Heinrich (New Mexico) and Mark R. Warner (Virginia).
- **On February 26, 2021**, the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) held a video conference titled "Mapping out change: The United States and Cuba: A new policy of engagement", which called for the lifting of the blockade restrictions on Cuba. Among those participating were Congressman James McGovern (Massachusetts), academician William LeoGrande, WOLA's director Geoff Thale, and María José Espinosa, Acting Executive Director of the Center for Democracy in the Americas (CDA).
- **On February 28, 2021**, several demonstrations took place in the United States and Canada demanding an end to the blockade against Cuba. Demonstrations were part of the 8th edition of "Puentes de Amor" caravans In U.S. cities such as Miami, Seattle, Nueva York, Los Angeles, Washington DC, and Minneapolis.
- **On March 2, 2021**, the Codepink organization held a video conference titled "Peace with Cuba", in which the new administration was urged to lift the blockade. As part of the initiative, the organization called for the support to the draft legislation "United States-Cuba trade Act of 2021", introduced on February 4, 2021 by Ron Wyden, democrat Senator for Oregon.
- **On March 3, 2021**, a total of 79 democratic congressmen sent a letter to President Biden, in which they asked him to immediately reverse the "Trump administration's cruel policies towards Cuba" and resume the mutually beneficial dialogue with the Cuban government. In addition to requesting the adoption of initial steps regarding travel, remittances, and other issues, the letter urges an end to the economic blockade against Cuba. The original sponsors of this letter were Bobby Rush (Illinois), Steve Cohen (Tennessee), Barbara Lee (California) and Gwen Moore (Wisconsin).
- **On March 9, 2021**, the organization Latin America Working Group initiated an online petition to President Biden to request the re-establishment of ties with Cuba. The text urged to take rapid and comprehensive measures to lift the restrictions imposed by

Trump, as well as to end the blockade on Cuba and fully normalize bilateral relations.

- **On March 15, 2021**, the Cambridge City Council, Massachusetts, approved a resolution that urges the U.S. government to lift the blockade on Cuba and resume the rapprochement policy between the two countries.
- **On March 17, 2021**, Patrick Leahy, democrat Senator for Vermont, made a public statement in which he affirmed that engagement is the only “logical choice” for the policy towards Cuba. In the text, he criticized the approach of conditioning the Cuban government to advance in the bilateral relationship and such situation would perpetuate a “policy that has hurt, not helped the Cuban people”.
- **On March 18, 2021**, the democrat Congressman James McGovern (Massachusetts) issued a statement in support of a change of policy towards Cuba during a session of the House of Representatives. McGovern urged President Biden to take action in a rapid and comprehensive manner to restore relations between the United States and Cuba, to eliminate restrictions on travel, remittances and financial transactions, and on educational, scientific, environmental and cultural exchanges.
- **On March 26, 2021**, the Minneapolis City Hall, Minnesota, unanimously approved a resolution that favors medical and scientific collaboration with Cuba. The text also asks the Congress and President Biden to revert Cuba’s designation as a state sponsor of terrorism, to fully re-establish diplomatic relations with Cuba, as well as to “end the decades-long economic blockade”.
- **On March 28, 2021**, caravans and demonstrations were organized to demand the end of the blockade in various cities of the United States such as Miami, Tampa, Washington D.C., New York, San Francisco, Detroit, Las Vegas and Los Angeles. These initiatives were part of a worldwide event, featuring the participation of thousands of cities in many countries.
- **On April 13, 2021**, Wayne County Commission approved a resolution that called on the Biden administration to reestablish cooperative relationship with Cuba. The text criticizes the reverse in the bilateral ties, promoted by the Trump administration and calls for the end of the blockade.
- **On April 22, 2021**, Milwaukee County Board, Wisconsin, approved a resolution that called on the lifting of the blockade and the beginning of a process to “normalize” the relations between Cuba and the United States.
- **On April 25, 2021**, caravans were organized to demand the end of the blockade, in more than ten U.S. states and cities such as New York, Seattle, California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Alabama, Washington D.C., Indiana, and Tampa. The initiative was launched by the “*Puentes de Amor*” project, which urges for the engagement between the two countries to be reassumed.
- **On May 3, 2021**, it was known that a total of 16 churches and religious and humanitarian organizations sent a letter to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury, by which they exposed the negative consequences of the restrictions imposed by the Donald Trump administration on the Cuban people. In this letter they made recommendations for the Biden administration to resume the engagement with Cuba and called for the lifting of the blockade.
- **On May 5, 2021**, several U.S. organizations sponsored a “tweet”, an initiative on twitter to demand the resume of consular services offered by U.S. Embassy in Cuba and the lifting of the blockade. *Puentes de Amor* Project, *Alianza Martiana* (Marti Alliance), *PazAmor* association and Foundation for Normalization of U.S.-Cuba Relations (ForNorm), were the main sponsors of this initiative.
- **On May 5, 2021**, a total of 36 organizations linked to the U.S. agricultural, academic, ecological and civil society sectors sent a letter to President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris in which they favored the resumption of engagement with Cuba. The letter urged to take executive action to roll back the measures imposed by the Donald Trump administration and fully lift the blockade on Cuba.
- **On May 19, 2021**, democrat Senator Amy Klobuchar introduced a bill intended to lift most of the blockade provisions on Cuba. Senator Klobuchar posted on twitter that the text should be approved to do away with that failed policy once and for all. This initiative was

co-sponsored by Senators Patrick Leahy (Democrat for Vermont), Jerry Moran (Republican for Kansas), Christopher Murphy (Democrat for Connecticut), and Elizabeth Warren (Democrat for Massachusetts).

- **On May 28, 2021**, democrat Congressman Bobby Rush (Illinois) introduced in House of Representatives a bill that proposes the elimination of the blockade (H.R.3625).
- **On May 30, 2021**, as part of the Third World Caravan of Solidarity with Cuba, demonstrations took place in several cities of the United States to demand the end of the blockade on the island. The initiatives took place in Miami, Tampa, Albuquerque, Albany, Atlanta, Detroit, Las Vegas, New Haven, New York, Milwaukee, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and Seattle.
- **On May 30, 2021**, the Illinois House of Representatives approved a resolution that calls upon the Federal Congress to lift the blockade on Cuba and eliminate restrictions on travel. This initiative also urges President Biden to resume exchanges with Cuba and the increase of diplomatic staff in both countries.
- **On June 2, 2021**, five senators sent a letter to the Secretary of State Antony Blinken, urging him to resume the dialogue with the Cuban government on environmental issues, as well as to revert policies applied by the previous administration that limit scientific and professional exchanges. This letter was signed by democrat members of the Senate: Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (Rhode Island), Senator Patrick Leahy (Vermont), Senator Ron Wyden (Oregon), Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley (Oregon) and Senator Chris Van Hollen (Maryland).
- **On June 7, 2021**, the coalition ACERE published a letter addressed to President Biden in which the alliance urges him to abstain in the vote against the blockade policy at the United Nations on June 23. This letter was also sent to Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, and signed by 139 non-governmental organizations.
- **On June 8, 2021**, the Baltimore City Council adopted a resolution in which the U.S. government is requested to eliminate the blockade on Cuba.
- **On June 24, 2021**, the U.S. non-governmental organization CodePink published on their website a petition calling upon President Biden to listen to the world and end the blockade against Cuba. This initiative makes reference to the support by 184 countries in the most recent vote against the blockade at the UN, and urges President Biden to keep the promises he made during his campaign trail and revert Trump's measures against Cuba.
- **On June 29, 2021**, actor Danny Glover published an op-ed in *The Nation*, under the title "Biden's Failure to End Trump's War on Cuba is Threatening Lives". The article decries the inaction by the Biden administration with respect to Cuba and highlights the need to lift the blockade on the island.
- **On July 1, 2021**, the non-governmental organization *Knowledge Ecology International* (KEI) sent a memorandum to various U.S. agencies requesting clarification on whether the blockade applies to activities and agreements relating to combating COVID-19. The text criticizes the negative effects of the blockade during the pandemic, with emphasis on the Cuban vaccine development program.
- **On July 12, 2021**, independent senator for Vermont, Bernie Sanders, posted on Twitter a message on the need put an end to the unilateral blockade of the United States against Cuba, which "has only hurt, not helped, the Cuban people".
- **On July 14, 2021**, the organization Center for Democracy in the Americas (CDA) issued a declaration in which Biden administration was urged to take measures for the benefit of the Cuban people. The text requested to modify restrictions on travel, remittances, banking relations, the minimum percentage of U.S.-made parts for imports, among other measures.
- **On July 15, 2021**, the U.S. Congressional Progressive Caucus published a statement calling on the Biden administration for the complete and immediate repeal of the blockade on Cuba. The text describes the blockade as one of the greatest failures of U.S. foreign policy in modern history.
- **On July 19, 2021**, the organization Latin American Working Group published a message

on Twitter describing the blockade as an “economic warfare” and urged to reverse the “maximum pressure” policy, imposed by the Donald Trump administration against Cuba.

- **On July 22, 2021**, an electronic billboard with a message against the blockade on Cuba was set up in a building located at Union Square in New York, United States. This action was promoted by U.S. organizations Codepink and The People’s Forum, as part of the campaign “Let Cuba Live”.
- **On July 23, 2021**, more than 400 politicians, intellectuals, clergy men, artists, personalities and activists worldwide signed a letter addressed to President Biden, in which they urged him to eliminate the blockade against Cuba and start a new path in the bilateral relationship. The letter entitled “Let Cuba Live” was published in The New York Times. The text asks for the immediate repeal of the 243 coercive measures imposed during the Donald Trump administration and criticizes the enforcement of stifling policies in the midst of a pandemic. The letter was also signed by intellectual Noam Chomsky, film maker Oliver Stone and actors Danny Glover, Jane Fonda and Susan Sarandon, among other U.S. personalities.
- **On July 23, 2021**, democrat Congressman Jesús “Chuy” García, of Illinois, submitted an amendment in the House of Representatives to eliminate restrictions on remittances sent to Cuba. In his comments to Newsweek, Garcia noted the importance to resume remittances and described that a decision in that area is a significant first step to lift the blockade imposed by the United States on the island nation.
- **On July 23, 2021**, democrat Congressman Hank Johnson of Georgia, published an op-ed in The Washington Diplomat, in which he criticized the blockade policy kept by different U.S. administrations against Cuba. In the article, Congressman Johnson referred to the hardships generated by the blockade for Cubans and called for an engagement policy between both countries.
- **On July 28, 2021**, a total of 37 civil society organizations in the United States sent a letter to President Biden, in which they requested to take measures to resume the remittance flow, to lift restriction on the shipping of medicines and to remove hurdles in the financial transactions that limit the delivery of humanitarian aid.

## 5.2. Opposition by the international community

The increasing and overwhelming support by the international community to Cuba is evidently demonstrated in its efforts to achieve the lifting of the blockade.

There have been many voices around the world in favor of the cessation of this inhumane policy. During the period covered by this report, numerous statements were made in favor of its immediate and unconditional lifting.

**Between April and June, 2021**, more than 300 actions in solidarity with Cuba and rejection of the blockade were registered, among which, statements by important personalities and the caravans against the blockade carried out in different countries stand out.

Out of such actions, 14 took place in the United States, 61 in the main multilateral venues where Cuba is represented, 72 in Europe and Canada, 86 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 50 in Sub-Saharan Africa, 8 in Northern Africa and the Middle East, and 23 in Asia and Oceania. Five international caravan demonstrations and rallies against the blockade, held in 117 cities in more than 40 countries, are worthy of note.

Some of the most relevant international actions against the blockade between January and July, 2021 will be listed below:

- **On January 9, 2021**, in the context of the 26th International Rosa Luxemburg Conference held online, the working group *Cuba Sí* of the German party Die Linke, presented the European campaign of solidarity named “Unblock Cuba”. This campaign lasted up to the day of the vote on the Cuban resolution against the blockade in the framework of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, and was intended to give a greater visibility to the damage caused by this policy, not only to the Cuban people, but also to third-country citizens. Nearly one hundred organizations from 27 European countries

actively participated in this 2021 campaign.

- **On January 20, 2021**, a group of Danish personalities, politicians and organizations, led by the Dano-Cuba Friendship Association sent an open letter to the U.S. president to end the blockade against Cuba and establish normal relations with the island nation. The letter states that this policy should have been lifted long time ago, for it hurts people inside and outside Cuba; it violates the UN Charter and the International Law, so it is therefore inhumane, illegal and unproductive.
- **On February 7, 2021**, on the 34th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), held online, the "Resolution on the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America" was approved. The text expresses serious concern about the continuous enforcement of the blockade and reaffirms the AU support to the resolution on this issue, approved every year at the UN General Assembly. In addition, it regrets the regressions in the relations between Cuba and the United States, and urges the latter to lift the longstanding and unjustifiable sanctions. It also denounces the negative impact of the extra-territorial implementation of the Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, as well as the aggravated impact of the blockade in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **On February 17, 2021**, The Latin America and the Caribbean Continental Solidarity with Cuba Movement published an open letter addressed to the president of the United States demanding the immediate end of the blockade and the removal of Cuba from the U.S. government's List of Countries Sponsoring Terrorism. The letter also calls for the restoration of diplomatic and commercial relations between the two countries, without pressure or interference, based on mutual respect and the international laws for the peaceful coexistence of peoples.
- The Declaration of the 21st Political Council of ALBA, held online on **March 1, 2021**, calls for the immediate and unconditional end of the blockade imposed against Cuba by the United States and demands an end to the scope for filing lawsuits in U.S. courts under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. The document also acknowledges Cuba's contribution to the pandemic response, despite the complex circumstances caused by the tightening of the blockade and Washington's campaign to discredit and sabotage Cuba's medical cooperation, which has benefitted millions of people in multiple countries and territories.
- **On March 4, 2021**, Alena Douhan, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, and Obiora C. Okafor, Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity, issued a press release attesting that the sanctions authorized by the U.S. on the basis of announced states of emergency violate a wide range of human rights in China, Cuba, Haiti, Iran, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Syria, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and other countries around the world, including rights to freedom of movement, of association, to due process (such as a fair trial) and the presumption of innocence, as well as economic and social rights and the very right to life. The experts also underlined that the United States has imposed secondary sanctions on those who interact with sanctioned persons and/or governments.
- **On March 8, 2021**, the Board of the Solidarity Network with Cuba in Germany (*Netzwerk Cuba*), an association that represents almost 40 solidarity organizations, sent a letter to the president and vice-president of the United States, Joseph Biden and Kamala Harris, calling for an end to the U.S. blockade on Cuba, which was published as a press release. The text calls on the U.S. authorities to recognize Cuba's independence and sovereignty and to establish a civilized policy towards Cuba.
- **On March 9, 2021**, the National Council (Lower Chamber) of the Swiss Parliament approved a document put forward by its Foreign Policy Committee, urging the Swiss government to work within the United Nations to put more pressure on the U.S. administration to end the blockade against Cuba. The text had been previously approved by the Committee in early November 2020, following an "Unblock Cuba" petition launched by the Swiss-Cuba Association and MediCuba Switzerland, and six other solidarity organizations.
- **On March 18, 2021**, Dr. Patrick Herminie, leader of the United Seychelles party, sent a letter to the Cuban Embassy in his country expressing support and solidarity with Cuba and rejection of the blockade imposed by the United States. In the letter, he also

recognizes the support provided by the Cuban people to a small nation like Seychelles. On the same date, United Seychelles issued a statement reiterating their condemnation of the blockade, calling this policy a systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people and the “worst act of economic aggression in the history of humanity.”

- **On March 24, 2021**, members of the European Parliament’s Friendship and Solidarity Group with the People of Cuba sent a letter to U.S. President Joseph Biden, urging him to repeal the sanctions imposed by his predecessor Donald Trump on Cuba. In the letter, they also seek his support for the immediate elimination of the blockade, since this policy is the main obstacle to Cuba’s development and normalization of the relations between the two countries. The letter also acknowledges that the efforts of the Cuban government to fight COVID-19 have been significantly hampered by the blockade regulations. The text also refers to Cuba’s solidarity during the pandemic, reflected in the deployment of medical brigades in several countries and territories.
- **On April 14, 2021**, Italy’s Senate passed a motion calling on the Italian government to act with other EU member states to reinforce international pressures aimed at the effective lifting of the blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba. The document asserts that this policy is illegal, breaches International Law and causes serious detriment to the Cuban people, a situation worsened by COVID-19. The letter also highlights the aid provided by Cuba to Italy in a spirit of solidarity in March 2020, with the sending of medical brigades to help fight the pandemic.
- **On April 15, 2021**, an international campaign was launched to raise funds to purchase syringes to send to Cuba for the vaccination against COVID-19 of all the Cuban population. In Spain, this campaign was promoted by the SODEPAZ organization and supported by the State Movement of Solidarity with Cuba (“MESC”), an organization that represents some 40 groups friendly to Cuba. The campaign ran until June 23, when the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution against the blockade.
- **On April 27, 2021**, the Dominican Parliament approved a motion calling for the end of the blockade and removal of Cuba from Washington’s List of States Sponsoring Terrorism. Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, said this was a historic motion as it was the first time a resolution of this nature had been put forward in the parliament of his country.
- **On May 8, 2021**, the Council for Foreign Relations and the Community (COFCOR) of the Caribbean Community - CARICOM expressed their concern at the serious adverse impact of the U.S. blockade on Cuba.
- **On May 25, 2021**, the NGO OXFAM International presented in Havana its report “The right to live without a blockade: The impact of the U.S. blockade on the Cuban population and on women’s lives.” In this document, the U.S. government is called upon to end this criminal policy, move forward on the normalization of relations with Cuba and ensure the immediate lifting of the sanctions that impede Cuba from buying the materials and other supplies needed to fight COVID-19. In the report, it is also recommended resuming the presidential executive order of October 2016 for the “normalization of the relations with Cuba”, removing Cuba from the List of States Sponsoring Terrorism; suspending Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, repealing the 2017 presidential memorandum on national security tightening the policy towards Cuba, eliminating the limitations on remittances and travel and reopening diplomatic services. **On May 27**, an online forum was held to present this report to the international community, with the support of personalities and organizations from Cuba, the United States and the United Nations.
- **On May 29, 2021**, a parliamentary hearing in favor of the lifting of the blockade was held in Havana, convened by the committees for Foreign Relations, Constitutional and Legal Affairs, and Sports and Health, of the National Assembly of the People’s Power. The hearing was attended by Beatriz Paredes, senator from Mexico and head of the Committee of Foreign Relations for Latin America and the Caribbean, who voiced the solidarity of the Mexican people and firmly rejected the unilateral policy of the United States, which she said “violates the human rights of millions of Cubans.”

This opinion was reiterated by Dimitrios Papadimoulis, vice-president of the European Parliament, who called the blockade an outdated and inhumane practice, condemned for decades by the majority of the UN General Assembly. Robert Fico, former prime minister of

Slovakia, also expressed his rejection of this absurd U.S. policy against Cuba. He also conveyed his gratitude to the thousands of Cuban medics and paramedics who are helping in the global struggle against COVID-19.

- **In June 2021**, a group of over 60 personalities in the fields of culture, science and German society backed a petition to the German government to intensify actions aimed at ending the U.S. blockade and promoting cooperation by Germany in Cuba's development.
- **On June 2, 2021**, the Council (Senate) of the Russian Federation issued a statement on the need to lift the U.S. blockade on Cuba. The document also affirmed that this policy violates International Law and goes against the efforts of the international community to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. It also calls on Washington to respect the position of almost every nation and review its policy towards Cuba, to the benefit of both Cuban and U.S. citizens.
- **On June 3, 2021**, an online seminar concerning the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the national health system of certain countries and on the wellbeing of women, children and people in vulnerable situations, was held under the sponsorship of the permanent missions to the UN of Belarus, Bolivia, China, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Russia, Syria, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. The event was attended by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures, Alena Douhan, who emphasized in her speech the deleterious effect of these measures on the national health systems of the affected countries, aggravated during the pandemic.
- **On June 20, 2021**, representatives from several South African political, trade union and youth organizations[5], headed by the political parties composing the Government Alliance in that country, sent a memorandum to the U.S. Embassy in South Africa demanding the immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic blockade against Cuba. The document was read in public on June 20 in front of the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, rounding off a mass caravan against the blockade organized by political forces in solidarity with Cuba in the country, in the run up to the vote on the Cuban resolution against the blockade in the UN General Assembly on June 23.
- **On June 23, 2021**, the United Nations General Assembly passed for the twenty-ninth consecutive time, the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", which received votes in favor by 184 member states.

During the debate and passing of the Cuban resolution, 51 speakers backed the lifting of the blockade. Six were representatives of regional and sub-regional organizations for political coordination: the Group of the 77 plus China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group, CARICOM, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Islamic Cooperation Organization.

- **On June 24, 2021**, in the opening remarks at the party's 21st Congress, Dimitris Koutsoumpas, the General Secretary of Greece's Communist Party (KKE), expressed the party's solidarity with the Cuban people and condemned the criminal blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba. He also noted the victory at the UN General Assembly in the vote on the Cuban resolution.
- **On June 29, 2021**, Jamaica's House of Representatives approved a motion in support of the resolution submitted by Cuba to the UN General Assembly entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". In this motion, the Jamaican Parliament called the blockade a violation of International Law, of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and of the rules regulating international trade and freedom of navigation. It also noted the intensification of the blockade's impact by the pandemic and the negative effects of this policy for Jamaica's national interests, due to the extraterritorial implementation of U.S. laws that affect its relations with Cuba.
- **On July 1, 2021**, Belgium's House of Representatives adopted a resolution to relaunch trans-Atlantic relations after the U.S. elections. In item 29 of the resolution, it requests the Belgian federal government to urge the United States to lift the blockade on Cuba.
- At the 112th session of the Council of Ministers of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) held online on **July 7 and 8, 2021**, a "Resolution on the

Economic, Commercial and Financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" was adopted. In this resolution, the OACPS urges Washington to end this policy and voices its opposition to activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and its extraterritorial effects. It also notes that the blockade is the main obstacle to implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in Cuba.

- On **July 27, 2021**, the Food Justice international NGO issued a press release asserting that the blockade compromises the right to food of the Cuban people and has led the country to the verge of a food crisis. In the press release, it is reported that, in spite of the efforts of the Cuban authorities and society to generate resilient systems, the blockade hinders implementation of the changes needed to mitigate the effects of climate change. It also calls on the European Union to urgently press for the lifting of this policy.
- On **August 11, 2021**, a group of experts and special rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council issued a communiqué denouncing the unilateral sanctions imposed against countries such as Cuba, Iran, Syria and Venezuela, which violate their right to development. It also asserts that such sanctions jeopardize the health of entire populations and are an obstacle to provision of the goods needed for economic development, cause the wastage of natural resources, undermine environmental sustainability and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It adds that activities essential to the development of every country are hindered when unilateral sanctions are imposed. The experts also called on the countries that impose these types of sanctions to lift or at least minimize these, so as to ensure that neither the rule of law or human rights are affected.

Between June and July 2021, Cuba was the target of an intense political and media campaign, orchestrated and financed by the U.S. government and Florida's political machinery to destabilize the country, discredit the government, incite to violence and promote hatred among Cubans.

In order to achieve these goals, Washington and radical groups in Florida sought to take advantage of the complex economic situation in Cuba, caused by the combination of an unprecedented tightening of the blockade and the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. They promoted violence, social agitation, internal disorder and criminal activities with the aim of presenting Cuba as a country in chaos and in need of foreign intervention.

Numerous actors of the international community denounced this maneuver against Cuba, expressed their solidarity with the Cuban government and people, and urged the U.S. government to lift the economic blockade imposed against the Island and opportunistically tightened during the pandemic.

Notable remarks in this regard included the following:

- On **July 12, 2021**, Mexican president Andrés Manuel López Obrador expressed his solidarity with the Cuban people, rejecting U.S. interference and calling for the lifting of the blockade on Cuba, which he called inhumane and against International Law. He also spoke in favor of the Cuban people solving their internal conflicts and condemned the media campaign to discredit the Cuban government. On **July 24**, at the opening of the Meeting of Foreign Relations Ministers of the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States (CELAC), the Mexican leader reiterated his condemnation of the blockade, calling it a "medieval action," and characterized Cuba as an example of resistance.
- Also on **July 12**, the UK-based Cuba Solidarity Campaign issued a declaration condemning the attitude of U.S. politicians and right-wing groups, supporters of the blockade, who called for the establishment of a so-called "humanitarian corridor" in Cuba a pretext for the United States to intervene. The text also underlines that anyone genuinely interested in helping the Cuban people should, on the contrary, call on the U.S. government to ease the sanctions against Cuba.
- On **July 12**, the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation described as "unacceptable" the interference of the United States in Cuba's internal affairs and any other foreign action seeking to destabilize the situation in the island.
- On **July 13**, the Brazilian theologian Frei Betto published an article entitled *¡Cuba resiste!* (Cuba, resist!), in which he denounces America's financial, economic, commercial and

energy-sector persecution of Cuba, and its intention to provoke social unrest in the country and launch “humanitarian missions” that translate into military intervention and interference.

- **On July 14**, the American Association of Jurists (AAJ) issued a statement denouncing the media campaign that spread lies and disinformation about Cuba, and statements by U.S President Joe Biden suggesting an alleged humanitarian intervention. The AAJ called on the U.S. government to respect Cuba’s sovereignty under the UN Charter, lift the blockade and respect the will of the overwhelming majority of the international community, demonstrated by the resolutions on the need to end the blockade, passed by the UN General Assembly.
- **On July 19**, Argentinean Nobel Peace Prize laureate Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, wrote to U.S. President Joseph Biden, averring that Cuba is no threat to any country in the world and demanding an end to the blockade.
- **On July 20, 2021**, French academic and essayist Salim Lamrani urged the U.S. government and President Joseph Biden, to listen to the demands of the international community and their own public opinion, and accept the fact that Cuba is a sovereign, independent country with the right to choose its own destiny; they should also respect International Law and lift the economic sanctions against Cuba.
- **On July 28**, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and current chairman of CARICOM, Gaston Browne, sent a letter to the U.S. President reiterating that regional organization’s rejection of the U.S. blockade against Cuba and demanding respect for all the rights of the Cuban state and the Cuban people.

[1] Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT).

[2] SWIFT or RMA messaging passwords are the basis for the development of banking operations, since these are used by banks to make electronic transfers (money transfers) and conduct interbank communications. SWIFT codes are essential to guarantee the safety and agility of operations and is a basic requirement to open accounts in third country Banks.

[3] CADECA is a financial institution which serves to comply with the monetary policy in Cuba since 1994. It facilitates the sale and purchase for natural and juridical persons of national and foreign currencies, among others.

[4] It is important to highlight that all transfers and operations relating to the work of Cuban professors and health professionals in the Bahamas have been transparent and legal, based on agreements signed by the relevant Cuban institutions and ministries with their Bahamian counterparts. With these actions, SCOTIABANK jeopardize the compliance of such agreements.

[5] Namely, the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the South African National Civilian Organization (SANCO), the Friends of Cuba Society (FOCUS), the National Association of Democrat Lawyers (NADEL), the African National Congress of the Women’s League (ANCWL), the Youth Communist League of South Africa (YCLSA) and the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL).

## Conclusions

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The impacts of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the U.S. government against Cuba and its effects on the daily life of every Cuban, go beyond the mere interpretation of numerical data.

There is not a single aspect of the social and economic life in Cuba that is immune to the impacts. Several generations of Cuban men and women have been born and have lived under the siege of this criminal policy that violates the rights of the population and affects the

wellbeing and the paradigm of development every Cuban aspires to.

Understanding the essence of the blockade inevitably implies understanding the purpose of this policy: namely, to stifle the Cuban economy and subjugate the Cuban people through hunger and necessity. Every element of this web of unilateral coercive measures intentionally pursues this aim. It is an act of economic warfare in peacetime.

The deliberate and opportunistic tightening of the blockade against Cuba in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic shows the deeply cruel and inhumane nature of this policy.

From January to July 2021, the current U.S. administration kept and strictly implemented the 240-plus additional measures against Cuba imposed by its predecessor. Under the pretext of a prolonged review of his policy towards Cuba, Biden's administration applies the blockade with full rigor, even in times of a pandemic. The election promises to repeal these measures have now proven to be false.

The sanctions have severely affected the functioning of the Cuban economy by reducing export revenues, access to fuels, medicines and medical supplies and by causing the draining of supplies and creating shortages that affect the daily life of a population in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the period reviewed, the blockade has caused losses to Cuba in the order of approximately **USD 2,557,500,000**. This represents an average impact of over **USD 365 million** a month and over **USD 12 million** a day.

At current prices, the losses accumulated during six decades of applying this policy amount to **USD 150,410,800,000**. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the blockade has caused quantifiable losses of over **USD 1,326,432,000,000**.

The blockade is the principal obstacle to Cuba's economic and social development, to implementation of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development and to meeting the aims and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Likewise, its extraterritorial effects complicate Cuba's relations with third countries.

The blockade is a blatant violation of the UN Charter and International Law, including the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, respect for self-determination and independence, among other rights. It is also a massive, blatant and systematic violation of the human rights of Cuban men and women.

While the government of the United States persists in arrogantly ignoring the twenty-nine resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly calling for an end to the blockade, there is a growing clamor within the U.S. and in the entire world to put an end to this policy immediately and unconditionally.

In this context of extraordinary complexity, Cuba and the Cuban people are profoundly grateful for the demonstrations of solidarity and international support, and are confident they can continue to count on the backing of the international community, in their legitimate demand for an end to the blockade.

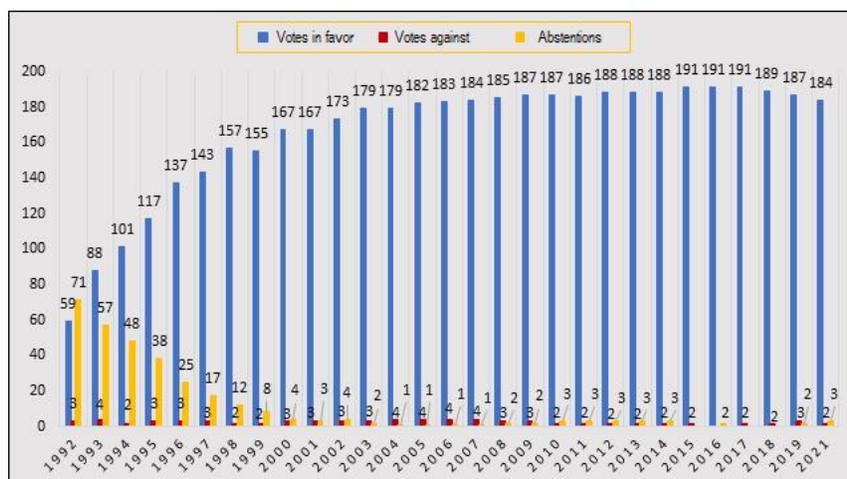
## **Annexes**

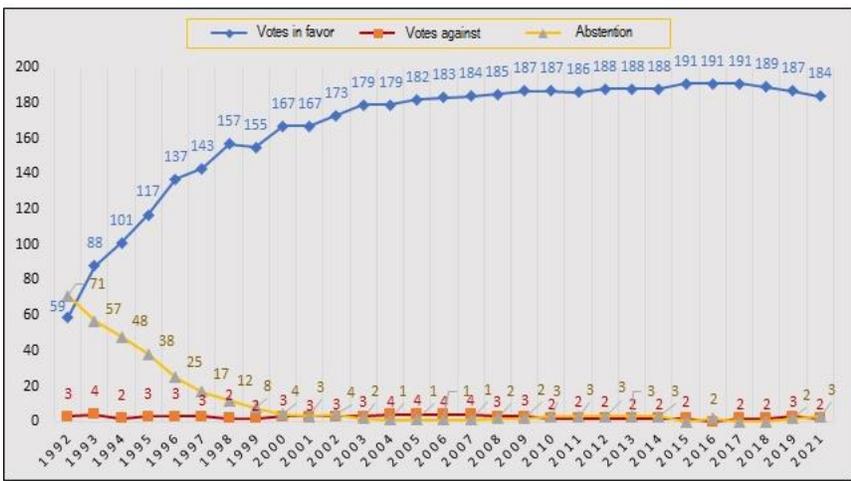
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### **I. Summary chart of the losses quantified by sector in the period January - July 2021**

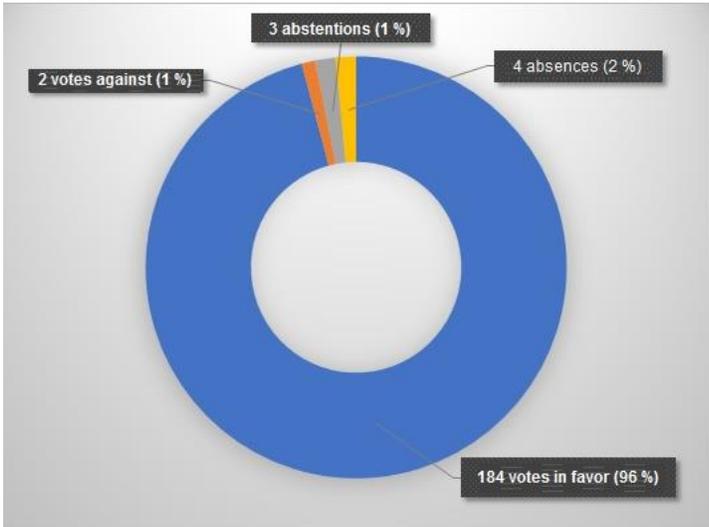
Sector	Losses reported (in U.S. dollars)
Health	113,498,300
Education	30,032,550
Sports	2,827,515
Culture	19,155,000
Biotechnological and pharmaceutical industry	102,943,600
Tourism	11,873,112
Communications & Computing Sector including telecommunications	37,520,578
Industry	13,864,800
Construction	22,793,000
Transport	31,278,520
Energy and mining	136,063,043
External sector	923,829,755.13
Banking and financial sector	167,800,000

**II. History of the voting on the United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” (1992-2021).**





**III. Voting on the resolution against the blockade at the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly on June 23, 2021 (proportion of votes in favor, votes against, absences and abstentions).**



**IV. Member states and observers, and international bodies which sent their contributions to the Report of the General Secretary on compliance with Resolution A/RES/74/7 "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba"**

**Member and Observer States (160)**

1. Afghanistan	43. Ecuador	84. Malawi	122. San Marino
2. Albania	44. Egypt	85. Malaysia	123. São Tomé and Príncipe
3. Algeria	45. El Salvador	86. Maldives	124. Saudi Arabia
4. Andorra	46. Equatorial Guinea	87. Mali	125. Senegal
5. Angola	47. Eritrea	88. Mauritania	126. Serbia
6. Antigua and Barbuda	48. Eswatini	89. Mauritius	127. Seychelles
7. Argentina	49. Ethiopia	90. Mexico	128. Sierra Leone
8. Armenia	50. European Union	91. Monaco	129. Singapore
9. Australia	51. Fiji	92. Mongolia	130. Solomon Islands
10. Azerbaijan	52. Gabon	93. Montenegro	131. Somalia
11. Bahamas	53. Gambia	94. Morocco	132. South Africa
12. Bahrain	54. Georgia	95. Mozambique	133. South Sudan
13. Bangladesh	55. Ghana	96. Myanmar	134. Sri Lanka
14. Barbados	56. Grenada	97. Namibia	135. Sudan
15. Belarus	57. Guatemala	98. Nauru	136. Suriname
16. Belize	58. Guinea	99. Nepal	137. Switzerland
17. Benin	59. Guinea-Bissau	100. New Zealand	138. Syria
18. Bhutan	60. Guyana	101. Nicaragua	139. Tajikistan
19. Bosnia and Herzegovina	61. Haiti	102. Niger	140. Tanzania
20. Botswana	62. Holy See	103. Nigeria	141. Thailand
21. Brunei Darussalam	63. Honduras	104. North Macedonia	142. Timor-Leste
22. Burkina Faso	64. Iceland	105. Norway	143. Togo
23. Burundi	65. India	106. Oman	144. Tonga
24. Cabo Verde	66. Indonesia	107. Pakistan	145. Trinidad and Tobago
25. Cambodia	67. Iran	108. Palestine	146. Tunisia
26. Cameroon	68. Iraq	109. Panama	147. Turkey
27. Canada	69. Jamaica	110. Papua New Guinea	148. Turkmenistan
28. Central African Republic	70. Japan	111. Paraguay	149. Tuvalu
29. Chad	71. Jordan	112. Peru	150. Uganda
30. Chile	72. Kazakhstan	113. Philippines	151. United Arab Emirates
31. China	73. Kenya	114. Qatar	152. United Kingdom
32. Colombia	74. Kirgizstan	115. Republic of Korea	153. Uruguay
33. Comoros	75. Kiribati	116. Russia	154. Uzbekistan
34. Congo	76. Kuwait	117. Rwanda	155. Vanuatu
35. Costa Rica	77. Laos	118. Saint Kitts and Nevis	156. Venezuela
36. Côte d'Ivoire	78. Lebanon	119. Saint Lucia	157. Vietnam
37. Cuba	79. Lesotho	120. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	158. Yemen
38. D.P.R. Korea	80. Liberia	121. Samoa	159. Zambia
39. D.R. Congo	81. Libya		160. Zimbabwe
40. Djibouti	82. Liechtenstein		
41. Dominica	83. Madagascar		
42. Dominican Republic			

**International organizations (34)**

1. CTBTO (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization)	17. UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
2. ECLAC (Regional Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)	18. UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)
3. FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)	19. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
4. IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency)	20. UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)
5. ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization)	21. UN-HABITAT (United Nations Human Settlements Programme)
6. ICPO (International Civil Protection Organization)	22. UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
7. IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development)	23. UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)
8. ILO (International Labor Organization)	24. UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization)
9. IMO (International Maritime Organization)	25. UNISDR (United Nations Office for Disaster and Risk Reduction)
10. IOM (International Organization for Migration)	26. UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)
11. IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union)	27. UNOOSA (United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs)
12. ITU (International Telecommunication Union)	28. UPU (Universal Postal Union)
13. Office of the Resident Coordinator or Country Team	29. WFP (World Food Programme)
14. OHCHR (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights)	30. WHO (World Health Organization)
15. South Center	31. WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization)
16. UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)	32. WMO (World Meteorological Organization)
	33. WTO (World Tourism Organization)
	34. WTO (World Trade Organization)

**V. Heads of delegation who spoke about the U.S. blockade against Cuba during the general debate in the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (September 2021)**

1. **Bahamas.** Philip Edward Davis, Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

2. **Belarus.** Vladimir Makei, Minister of Foreign Affairs.
3. **Belize.** John Briceño, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment.
4. **Benin.** Mariam Chabi Talata, Vice-President.
5. **Bolivia.** Luis Alberto Arce Catacora, President.
6. **Burkina Faso.** Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, Faso President and President of the Council of Ministers
7. **Chad.** Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, Head of the Transitional Military Council, President and Head of State
8. **Costa Rica.** Carlos Alvarado Quesada, President
9. **Dominica.** Kenneth Darrow, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Business and Diaspora Relations.
10. **Gambia.** Isatou Touray, Vice-President.
11. **Gabon.** Ali Bongo Ondimba, President
12. **Grenada.** Oliver Joseph, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Business and CARICOM Affairs.
13. **Guinea.** Mr. Aly Diane, Permanent Representative to the UN.
14. **Equatorial Guinea.** Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President and Head of State.
15. **Solomon Islands.** Manasseh Sogavare, Prime Minister.
16. **Jamaica.** Andrew Holness, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Economic Growth and Job Creation.
17. **Laos.** Phankham Viphavanh, Prime Minister.
18. **Lesotho.** Moeketsi Majoro, Prime Minister.
19. **Mexico,** Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon, Foreign Secretary.
20. **Namibia.** Hage Geingob, President
21. **Nicaragua.** Mr. Denis Moncada Colindres, Minister for Foreign Affairs.
22. **Republic of the Congo.** Jean-Claude Gakosso, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Francophonie and Congolese Abroad.
23. **Democratic People's Republic of Korea.** Mr. Kim Song, Permanent Representative to the UN.
24. **Russia.** Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Minister.
25. **Saint Kitts and Nevis.** Dr. Timothy Harris, Prime Minister and Minister for Sustainable Development, National Security, People Empowerment and Constituency Empowerment.
26. **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.** Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister, Minister for Finance, the Public Service, National Security, Legal Affairs and Grenadines Affairs.
27. **Saint Lucia.** Philip Joseph Pierre, Prime Minister for Finance, Economic Development and Youth Economy.
28. **Syria.** Faisal Mekdad, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates.
29. **South Africa.** Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President
30. **Suriname.** Chandrikapersad Santokhi, President
31. **Timor-Leste.** Karlito Nunes, Permanent Representative to the UN.
32. **Trinidad and Tobago.** Amery Browne, Minister for Foreign and CARICOM Affairs.
33. **Tuvalu.** Kausea Natano, Prime Minister.
34. **Venezuela.** Nicolás Maduro Moros, President
35. **Vietnam.** Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President

**VI. Countries where public actions to denounce the blockade were carried out in the period January-July 2021.**

VI. Countries where public actions to denounce the blockade were carried out in the period January-July 2021.

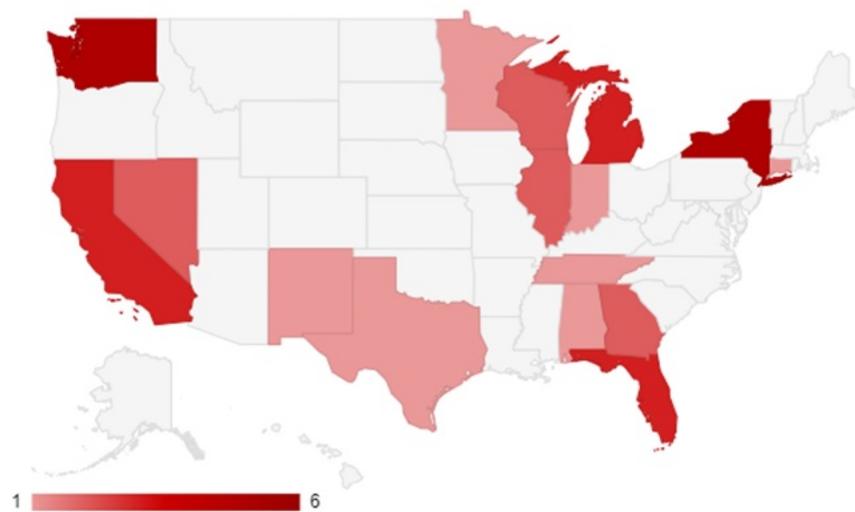
<i>Country</i>	<i>No. of actions</i>
Albania	1
Angola	3
Antigua and Barbuda	13
Argentina	65
Armenia	1
Australia	11
Austria	7
Azerbaijan	10
Bahamas	3
Bangladesh	1
Barbados	12
Belarus	7
Belgium	16
Belize	8
Benin	1
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	35
Botswana	2
Brazil	33
Bulgaria	9
Burkina Faso	2
Cabo Verde	1
Cambodia	32
Canada	21
Chad	1
Chile	14
China	37
Colombia	23
Congo	1
Costa Rica	16
Croatia	1
Cuba	80
Cyprus	5
Czechia	13
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	8
Democratic Republic of the Congo	3
Denmark	19
Djibouti	1
Dominica	11

<b>Country</b>	<b>No. of actions</b>
Dominican Republic	16
Ecuador	33
Egypt	3
El Salvador	23
Equatorial Guinea	1
Eswatini	1
Ethiopia	1
Fiji	1
Finland	9
France	10
Gabon	1
Gambia	25
Germany	24
Ghana	2
Greece	23
Grenada	15
Guatemala	17
Guinea	1
Guinea-Bissau	2
Guyana	3
Haiti	6
Honduras	6
Hungary	14
India	16
Indonesia	17
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	10
Ireland	49
Italy	18
Jamaica	17
Japan	14
Jordan	2
Kazakhstan	8
Kenya	5
Kyrgyzstan	1
Lao People's Democratic Republic	17
Lebanon	5
Lesotho	1
Liberia	3
Luxembourg	3
Malaysia	2
Mali	6
Mexico	63

<b>Country</b>	<b>No. of actions</b>
Morocco	1
Mozambique	2
Namibia	8
Nepal	2
Netherlands	6
New Zealand	11
Nicaragua	60
Niger	2
Nigeria	1
North Macedonia	1
Norway	7
Pakistan	3
Panama	26
Paraguay	15
Peru	16
Philippines	5
Poland	15
Portugal	16
Republic of Moldova	2
Romania	4
Russian Federation	25
Saint Kitts and Nevis	3
Saint Lucia	3
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	4
Senegal	3
Serbia	19
Seychelles	1
Sierra Leone	2
Singapore	5
Slovakia	16
Solomon Islands	1
South Africa	21
Spain	49
Sri Lanka	9
Suriname	2
Sweden	15
Switzerland	10
Syrian Arab Republic	7
Tajikistan	1
Thailand	9
Timor-Leste	4
Togo	3

<b>Country</b>	<b>No. of actions</b>
Trinidad and Tobago	13
Tunisia	2
Turkey	27
Tuvalu	1
Uganda	2
Ukraine	30
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	21
United Republic of Tanzania	2
United States of America	97
Uruguay	16
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	80
Viet Nam	10
Zambia	5
Zimbabwe	2
Holy See	1
State of Palestine	3

VII. "Bridges of love" caravans against the blockade launched in the United States (January-July 2021).



### Archivos

Informe bloqueo enero a julio 2021 español.pdf

(<http://cubaminrex.cu/sites/default/files/2022-10/Informe%20bloqueo%20enero%20a%20julio%202021%20espa%C3%B1ol.pdf>)

Cuba's Report on Resolution 75289 of the United Nations General Assembly\_0.pdf

([http://cubaminrex.cu/sites/default/files/2022-10/Cuba%27s%20Report%20on%20Resolution%2075289%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20General%20Assembly\\_0.pdf](http://cubaminrex.cu/sites/default/files/2022-10/Cuba%27s%20Report%20on%20Resolution%2075289%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20General%20Assembly_0.pdf))

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(<http://cpi.cubaminrex.cu/>)

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(<http://www.isri.cu/>)

International Policy Research Institute (CIPI in its Spanish-language abbreviation)  
(<http://www.cipi.cu/>)

Cubaminrex (previous)  
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Red Cuba  
(<https://www.redcuba.cu/>)

Cuban Commission of UNESCO (<http://www.cncu.cu/>)

Cuban United Nations Association (ACNU)  
(<http://caricom.cubaminrex.cu;target=>)

Ventana Política [Political Window]  
(<http://www.ventanapolitica.cu>)

Pensando América [Thinking of the Americas]  
(<http://www.pensandoamericas.com/>)



(<http://www.minrex.gob.cu/es/principales-resultados-de-la-politica-exterior-cubana>)



(<https://cubaminrex.cu/en/cubas-report-cubas-report-resolution-75289-united-nations-general-assembly>)



(<http://www.minrex.gob.cu/sites/default/files/Informe%20Cuba%20EPU%202018.pdf>)



(documentos-de-interes)

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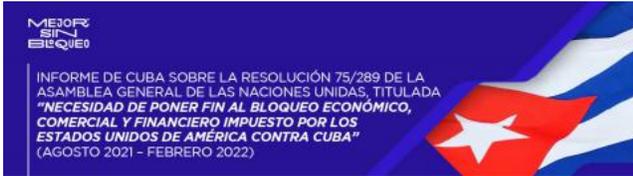


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### **Update to the Report of Cuba on resolution 75/289 of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" (August 2021 - February 2022)**

This document contains an update on Cuba's response to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 75/289, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

It includes the main effects caused by the blockade on Cuba from August 2021 to February 2022.

The combined effects of a multidimensional crisis at a global level in the energy, food, environmental and transportation sectors, and the accumulated impact of two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, have shaped a complex international context.

Inserted in this reality, Cuba has had to face, on top of that, the unprecedented tightening of the U.S. blockade, which includes additional very aggressive measures imposed during the administration of Donald Trump and which, for the most part, are still in force as a continuation of the policy of maximum pressure against the country.

Since 2019, the blockade has escalated to a qualitatively more harmful and inhumane dimension, with a reinforced extraterritorial component.

The lawsuits filed under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the persecution of companies, ships and shipping companies that send fuel supplies to the country, the arbitrary and unjustified inclusion of Cuba on the State Department's List of State Sponsors of Terrorism, the attack on all sources of income and foreign currency entering the country, the intimidation of third parties and the reinforcement of pressure on governments, banking institutions and businessmen around the world, have been consolidated as an essential part of the U.S. strategy to isolate Cuba and provoke economic disruption.

The continued full application of the Helms-Burton Act, including the authorization to file lawsuits in U.S. courts under its Title III, further expanded the scheme to hinder Cuba's economic, commercial and financial relations with third countries. As of the end of July 2022, 37 lawsuits were pending in U.S. courts under this extraterritorial law.

Cuba's permanence on the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism has reinforced the deterrent and intimidating impact of the blockade, as well as the country's difficulties in engaging in international trade and financial operations. This has resulted in the closing of contracts, loss of relations with banking entities that usually worked with Cuba, indebtedness, delays in the sending and receiving of funds and goods, among other difficulties, with incalculable costs and consequences for the Cuban people and economy.

Under conditions of a true economic war, the U.S. government has unleashed a pernicious media campaign in an attempt to destabilize the country. They resort to lies, slander, manipulation of data, images and the most diverse methods of unconventional warfare, to generate political destabilization and the so-called "regime change", in clear violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

They have appealed to the feelings of intentionally targeted audiences. They placed our children, youth and artists at the center of the media barrage. They promoted artificial leaders, fabricated pretexts for the failed rehearsal of a humanitarian intervention, encouraged irregular migration and displayed a misleading narrative in order to position the false image of a government in crisis, repressive and unstable, incapable of responding to the demands of its population.

For these activities, the U.S. government has allocated approximately \$20 million annually. The programs are operated under Section 109 of the Helms-Burton Act, which authorizes the U.S. President to provide assistance and other support to individuals and non-governmental organizations in support of Cuba's "democratization" efforts.

The measures on Cuba announced last 16 May by the administration of Joseph Biden regarding the coercive design imposed during Donald Trump's term of office are very limited in nature. In essence, they include the following provisions:

- Gradual and limited resumption of immigrant visa procedures at the U.S. Embassy in Havana for specific categories.
- Authorization of regular and charter flights to and from nine international airports in the country, in addition to Havana.
- Elimination of the limit of 3,600 annual flight frequencies to Havana and authorization of private charter flights to the entire country.
- Authorization of "people-to-people" group travel, under the general license for educational travel.
- Elimination of the \$1,000 per quarter limit on family remittances and authorization of non-family remittances.

These regulations do not address the most harmful aspects of the blockade nor do they reverse the most aggressive measures adopted by the Donald Trump's administration.

The prohibition on regular bilateral trade and on importing goods containing more than 10 percent of U.S. components from third countries remains unchanged. The List of Restricted Cuban Entities and the Prohibited Accommodations List, the actions to prevent the transfer of fuel, as well as the inclusion of Cuba on the State Department's List of State Sponsors of Terrorism remain in force.

The ban on the use of the U.S. dollar in Cuba's international transactions is maintained, as well as the impossibility of using the U.S. financial system to carry out such transactions, when the origin and destination of the transfers is a Cuban entity and a third country.

All of this generates substantial losses due to variations in exchange rates between the U.S. currency and the currencies of third countries in which collections and payments are made, as well as other additional costs.

For U.S. citizens, travel to Cuba is still prohibited. It is only possible to do so by means of licenses established in the regulatory framework of the blockade, with numerous restrictions. The measures do not authorize individual "people-to-people" educational trips, an important limitation that requires travel in groups and under the auspices, supervision and legal responsibility of a U.S. organization.

Similarly, the resumption of immigration services at the U.S. Embassy in Havana has so far been gradual and very limited. The U.S. Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana, remains the main consular processing center for Cuba. This affects citizens and families of both countries and contributes to stimulating irregular emigration.

Regarding remittances, it remains impossible to carry out these transactions through formal and institutional channels, while U.S. processing entities are prohibited from conducting transactions with Cuban companies included in the Restricted Entities List.

The current U.S. government presents these administrative regulations as "support for the Cuban people"; however, its hostile and demagogic actions contradict any real interest in resuming the path initiated during the presidency of Barack Obama, which led to notable advances in the bilateral relationship.

The determination to generate material shortages, scarcity, sow discouragement, dissatisfaction and cause damage to the Cuban people, as well as to hinder the possibilities of economic progress in a scenario of serious global crisis, persists.

Between August 2021 and February 2022 alone, this policy caused losses to Cuba in the order of **3.8 billion dollars**, a figure 49 percent higher than that reported in the previous period (January-July 2021). This record amount, in just seven months, is a reflection of the intensified impact of the blockade on Cuban exports, mainly in the tourism sector, the merciless persecution of the country's banking-financial operations, the costs of geographic relocation of trade, the effects on production and services provided to the population and the obstacles to access advanced technologies.

It is estimated that the GDP could have grown by 4.5 percent in those seven months if the blockade had not existed, which projected to one year represents around 8 percent.

Taking into account the damage reported between January-July 2021, in the first 14 months of Joseph Biden's administration alone, the damages caused by the blockade reached more than **6.3 billion dollars**, which represents an impact of more than **454 million dollars** a month and more than **15 million dollars** a day.

At current prices, the accumulated damages during six decades of application of this policy amount to over **154 billion dollars**. Taking into account the behavior of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the blockade has caused quantifiable damages of more than **1.391 trillion dollars**.

As a result, the performance of the Cuban economy has experienced extraordinary pressure that is manifested in industry, services, retail trade, food and medicine shortages and the deterioration of the level of consumption and general welfare of the population.

In recent months, work has been systematically carried out in the search for energy stability under very complex conditions, as the availability of generating plants has been limited due to the lack of fuel, spare parts and other essential resources for their repair and maintenance. The few suppliers that have decided to keep supplying Cuba with these products have increased their prices considerably according to the country risk.

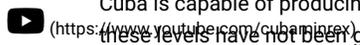
Between August 2021 and February 2022 alone, damages to the energy and mining sector amounted to more than **185 million dollars**. This figure exceeds by almost 50 million dollars the one reported between January and July 2021.

The data do not illustrate the true impact of these affectations on the daily life of Cubans, nor the constant stress generated by the intermittent interruptions to the electric service, despite the government's will and effort to achieve a prompt and effective solution to this problem.

During this period, the German company *Brüel & Kjær Vibro GmbH*, supplier of the technology for the vibration monitoring systems of the thermal turbines of the National Electric Union, stated that it would not enter into contracts with the Cuban importing company ENERGOIMPORT if the latter did not make all the payments in advance, while its bank recommended it not to operate with Cuba due to the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

In October 2021, the French supplier CNIM informed the trading company DEVEXPORT that it could not continue with the contracts for spare parts for the *Antonio Guiteras* Thermoelectric Power Plant since, after an internal financial restructuring, the Group had committed not to finance, facilitate or develop activities with any country subject to the sanctions of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and the U.S. State Department.

The blockade violates the right to life and health of all Cubans. The impact of this policy is reflected in the shortage of essential products for the consumption of the population, as well as the difficulties of the national industry to acquire the necessary supplies for the production of pharmaceuticals and other essential services.



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Cuba is capable of producing more than 60 percent of its basic list of medicines; however, these levels have not been guaranteed for months due to the impact of the blockade on the country's payment capacity, the impossibility of accessing medical technologies with more than 10 percent of US components, the need to resort to alternative transportation routes with a high additional cost and the growing refusal of financial and banking institutions in various countries to process transactions with Cuba, which has prevented transactions with suppliers of these goods.

This is illustrated by the impossibility of making a purchase of insulin from the Danish company *Novo Nordisk*, due to the refusal of the Danske Bank to accept bank transfers. The bank alleged that it could not receive funds from the *Banco Financiero Internacional* (BFI), since it is a Cuban entity sanctioned by OFAC.

In the midst of the confrontation with COVID-19, the blockade hindered the arrival of syringes to the country to support the vaccination process. Negotiations with a foreign supplier had to be interrupted because the British bank HSBC informed the supplier that it could not carry out payment transactions destined for Cuba.

During the major pandemic peak in the country in 2021, not a single measure of blockade relief was applied. This policy hindered the arrival of donations; the acquisition of cylinders, spare parts and other components necessary for the supply of medical oxygen; in addition to the purchase and transportation of materials indispensable for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of this disease, as well as for the research, production and evaluation of vaccine candidates and Cuban COVID-19 vaccines.

As a result of the blockade, the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB), producer of the Cuban COVID-19 vaccine *Abdala*, reported losses of over **190 million dollars**. For the *Finlay* Vaccine Institute (IFV), producer of the *Soberana 02* and *Soberana Plus* vaccines, this policy generated difficulties in 20 operations, 11 corresponding to supplies, 6 to reagents and 3 to equipment from U.S. manufacturers.

Clinical studies of autoimmune diseases, such as psoriasis, multiple sclerosis, as well as neurodegenerative diseases, have not been able to start because the necessary drugs, which are therapeutic standards in the world, are not available for Cuban patients.

These severe limitations are detrimental to the quality of the services provided to the Cuban population, as they generate delays, waiting lists to receive specialized medical care, increased hospital stays and other negative effects.

Between August 2021 and February 2022, the effects on production and services in the agricultural sector, the obstacles in monetary-financial operations, the additional costs due to the geographic relocation of trade and other obstacles to acquire technologies and fuels, seriously impacted the production and acquisition of food in Cuba, generating damages of more than **270 million dollars** in the area of agriculture.

At this stage, a considerable group of banks refused to process payments to suppliers of the Cuban food importer ALIMPORT for products such as soybeans, vegetable fat, pork feed, and sausages, among others.

In addition to the above, there are the obstacles associated with maritime transportation that have an impact on our entire logistics chain. In this regard, the MSC shipping company, which transported a considerable volume of our cargoes, mainly from ALIMPORT, has continued not to provide service, which has hindered operations with traditional markets.

Due to the lack of fuel, irrigation, land preparation, phytosanitary protection and the movement of agricultural personnel have been increasingly affected. Similarly, difficulties persist in the acquisition and/or repair of equipment necessary for the agricultural and pre-industrial process and transportation in general.

During the period analyzed, the Cuban company TRANSIMPORT made 518 requests for automotive equipment, tractors, batteries, engines, forklifts, parts and pieces, among others. It only received 9 percent of the demands made to foreign suppliers.

The blockade affects the Cuban private enterprise as much as the state enterprise. There are plenty of examples of computer tools that are not accessible to national developers just because they are Cuban. They are also hindered from accessing external financial mechanisms, opening bank accounts abroad and the possibility of using payment and e-commerce platforms that are forbidden to Cuba.

The impact of the blockade is not only limited to the Cuban reality. By means of pressure and the use of scandalously anti-democratic and interfering practices, Washington seeks to make the rest of the countries and international organizations abide by its political decisions regarding Cuba.

In November 2021, it was known that the U.S. Embassy in Vienna sent a letter to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), explicitly requesting that the funds allocated by its government to the organization for nuclear security activities not be used in cooperation projects with Cuba.

During the period, a total of 100 foreign banks were identified as being involved in 261 actions of closing accounts and established banking contracts, returning transactions, refusing to create accounts, canceling passwords for the exchange of financial information through the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), among others. As a consequence, the effects on the banking-financial sector amounted to **260.8 million dollars**, a figure that exceeds by 93 million dollars the one reported between January and July 2021.

Likewise, dozens of Cuban diplomatic missions in the world have lost their relationship with the banks that traditionally provide them with services, due to their fear of reprisals from the U.S. government.

As a result, the country has encountered obstacles in paying its contributions to various international and regional organizations, despite the Cuban government's willingness to honor its financial commitments.

In mid-2021, the *Société Générale Bank* decided to close the accounts of the permanent delegation of Cuba to UNESCO and the Cuban Embassy to the French Republic, which has substantially affected the normal functioning of both diplomatic offices. The announcement of the definitive closure of the aforementioned accounts is part of the blockade policy towards Cuba, while at the same time it violates Regulation No. 2271/96 adopted by the European Council to counteract its extraterritorial effects.

Another example was made known in January of this year, when the Dutch multinational bank *Internationale Nederlanden Groep* decided to block all donations to the Progressive International delegation that was to travel to our country as part of an initiative to support access to vaccines against COVID-19 worldwide. The bank claimed that the decision was made on the basis of risk assessments in light of the U.S. sanctions imposed on Cuba.

The digital lodging platform Airbnb Payments, Inc. had to pay in early 2022 a fine of 91,172 dollars imposed by OFAC, for accepting payments from Americans who traveled to Cuba outside the categories authorized by the White House.

Former President Barack Obama's own Deputy National Security Advisor, Ben Rhodes, described the fine as "stupid, counterproductive and Trumpian" for denying Americans the ability to facilitate income directly to Cubans and establish connections between the two peoples.

Recently, the country experienced moments of extreme anguish and tension as a result of a major fire at the supertanker base in the province of Matanzas, which caused regrettable human and material losses. While dozens of nations, friends and Cubans living abroad showed their solidarity with Cuba, the blockade continued to hinder the arrival of international aid to the country.

The National Association of Italy-Cuba Friendship was unable to make a transfer to the account of the International Financial Bank (BFI, by its Spanish initials) destined for donations in case of emergency because the BPM bank and the Milan branch of *Banca Etica* alleged that the BFI was on the list of entities sanctioned by the US State Department.

The blockade constitutes a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people.

It is an act of economic warfare in times of peace. It represents the main hindrance on the economic and social development of the country, as well as on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

Its pretensions are illegitimate and illegal, in violation of the United Nations Charter and international law.

The limited changes announced on 16 May 2022, responded to the continuous denunciation of the Cuban people and government, to the constant demands within the U.S. society and the community of Cubans living abroad to put an end to the blockade, as well as to the almost unanimous position of the countries of the world in rejection of this cruel system of unilateral coercive measures.

Three decades after the first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly against the blockade, the US government persists in ignoring the numerous pronouncements of that international forum calling for the elimination, without conditions, of its failed, unilateral and criminal policy against Cuba.

In this context of special complexity, Cuba and its people are deeply grateful for the expressions of solidarity received, and trust that they will continue to count on the support of the international community in their legitimate demand to put an end to this unjust policy.

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(http://archivo.cubaminrex.cu/ )
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- International Policy Research  
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- Cuban Commission of  
UNESCO (http://www.cncu.cu/)
- Cuban United Nations  
Association (ACNU)  
(http://caricom.cubaminrex.cu;  
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- Ventana Política [Political  
Window]  
(http://www.ventanapolitica.cu)
- Pensando América [Thinking  
of the Americas]  
(http://www.pensandoamericas.com)

## Interesting Documents



(http://www.minrex.gob.cu/es/principales  
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(https://cubaminrex.cu/en/cubas-report-  
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(http://www.minrex.gob.cu/sites/default/f  
01/Informe%20Cuba%20EPU%202018.pdf)



(documentos-de-interes)

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Thursday, October 20, 2022 - 16:36

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