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

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution [74/7](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

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



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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.
2. Pursuant to that request, in a note verbale dated 29 January 2020, the Secretary-General invited Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system to provide information on the implementation of the resolution. A reminder note verbale was sent on 1 April 2020.
3. The present report reproduces the replies from Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations that had been received as at 15 May 2020. Replies received after that date will be reproduced as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Afghanistan

[Original: English]
[14 April 2020]

The Government of Afghanistan has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the latter of which reaffirms, inter alia, the freedom of navigation.

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

Albania

[Original: English]
[11 March 2020]

The Republic of Albania, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 74/7 and does not have or apply any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to that resolution.

Algeria

[Original: Arabic]
[30 March 2020]

By its near-unanimous adoption of resolution 74/7 on the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, the General Assembly has reaffirmed, for the twenty-eighth time in succession, the justness of and the international community’s support for that cause.

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

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

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

In view of the deteriorating situation at the regional and international levels, the demand to end the blockade of Cuba takes on a particular urgency, given the implications it has for establishing security and stability in the region. In that connection, Algeria wishes to draw attention to the principled position that was adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the seventeenth Ministerial Conference of its member States, held in Algiers in May 2014, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. Algeria also draws attention to the positions adopted at the conference of the ministers for foreign affairs of the Movement, held in Venezuela in July 2019, and at the eighteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Baku in October 2019, calling once again for an unconditional end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Andorra

[Original: French]
[17 February 2020]

The Government of the Principality of Andorra has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 74/7. In that regard, the Government of the Principality of Andorra has always voted in favour of resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Angola

[Original: English]
[31 March 2020]

For 28 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States.

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

Not only is this contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, but it has also hindered efforts by the Cuban people to promote their economic and social

development and disrupted normal economic, commercial and financial relations with other countries.

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

Furthermore, concerned about the adverse effects of such measures on the Cuban people, the Republic of Angola: (a) strongly welcomed the adoption, on 7 November 2019, of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”; and (b) reaffirms its commitment to respect, preserve and promote the principles of the Charter and the provisions of international law, as they constitute the essence of multilateralism and a collective effort to maintain international peace and security, economic growth and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Republic of Angola considers the embargo imposed against Cuba a violation of international law and the Charter, in particular, with regard to: (a) the sovereign equality of States; (b) non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs; (c) the freedom of international trade, which is also enshrined in many international legal instruments; and (d) maintaining the blockade in the current situation, especially with the eruption of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, makes it even more inhumane and a stark violation of human rights, as it deprives a country and its people of essential resources to fight this pandemic.

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

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

Antigua and Barbuda

[Original: English]
[20 March 2020]

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

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda expresses its concern about the continued economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, despite the overwhelming support by Member States for General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), previous resolutions against the embargo and relevant international treaties.

Further, in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution [74/7](#), the Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[26 March 2020]

The Government of the Argentine Republic has fully implemented the provisions of General Assembly resolution 74/7 and previous Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

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

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

In line with this position, Argentina supported the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the forty-third annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of 77, held in New York on 27 September 2019. Paragraph 230 reaffirms the call upon the Government of the United States to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba and expresses concern about the extension of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo, including the full implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

Armenia

[Original: English]
[5 February 2020]

There have been no laws or regulations in the national legislation of Armenia of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7 that could adversely affect the economic, social, commercial or financial development of Cuba. Moreover, the Government of the Republic of Armenia has continuously expressed its firm stance in opposition to the policy of economic blockades and closed borders, particularly in the light of the continuing blockade of Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Australia

[Original: English]
[26 February 2020]

The Government of Australia reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 74/7. Since 1996, the Government of Australia has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo on Cuba. Australia has no sanctions or measures against Cuba that restrict trade or investment.

Azerbaijan

[Original: English]
[18 February 2020]

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

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

Bahamas

[Original: English]
[3 March 2020]

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

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

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

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

Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]
[2 April 2020]

The Kingdom of Bahrain, in keeping with the principles and purposes set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, has consistently supported the General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, and reaffirms its support for resolution [74/7](#), adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019.

Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[6 May 2020]

The Government of Bangladesh has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [74/7](#). Bangladesh has consistently supported previous resolutions on this item in the Assembly and has also voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution.

Barbados

[Original: English]
[25 February 2020]

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

Barbados reiterates its support for the most recent resolution on the issue, resolution 74/7, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019, and reaffirms its full implementation at the national level since Barbados has no laws that in any way restrict freedom of trade and navigation with Cuba.

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

Belarus

[Original: Russian]
[11 March 2020]

Belarus views the use of any unilateral restrictive measures to exert pressure on sovereign States Members of the United Nations as an unlawful, unacceptable and outdated instrument of foreign policy.

Belarus remains convinced that every State has the inalienable right to determine its own model of development independently, expresses solidarity with Cuba's battle against arbitrary external pressure, and reaffirms its support for resolution 74/7 and all previous General Assembly resolutions on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Belize

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

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

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

Benin

[Original: French]
[4 March 2020]

On 7 November 2019, Benin took an active part in the adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/7 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

In so doing, Benin was faithful to the principles and values to which it is committed, and which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and to international law.

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

The Government of Benin, which has neither promulgated nor applied any law or regulation of the kind referred to in resolution 74/7, has consistently called for the unilateral measures imposed against Cuba to be lifted forthwith, to enable that country to pursue its socioeconomic development and participate fully in international trade.

The Government of Benin has consistently worked towards the end of the embargo and the repeal of extraterritorial laws whose effects harm not only the Cuban people but also trade relations between Cuba and third countries.

Benin is disappointed by the recent developments in relations between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America, which could undo all that had been achieved in recent years as, much to the satisfaction of the international community, relations between the two countries warmed. Benin therefore calls for continued efforts to normalize diplomatic relations so that the embargo against Cuba might be lifted fully and definitively in the near future.

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

Bhutan

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

The Royal Government of Bhutan has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7 and has consistently supported the resolution in the Assembly and voted in its favour.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

Bosnia and Herzegovina, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, supported General Assembly resolution 74/7, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 74/7 and is ready to develop cooperation with Cuba at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Botswana

[Original: English]
[25 March 2020]

Botswana supports Cuba and the call to lift the economic, social and financial blockade against it. Our Government has never promulgated, applied or enforced any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7, nor does it intend to do so.

As reflected by its vote on the resolution, Botswana is opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures, and in this regard supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba, which has negative consequences for the Cuban people.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[11 March 2020]

Brunei Darussalam has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures that are contrary to the provisions contained in General Assembly resolution 74/7. This is in line with its consistent and principled opposition to the use of unilateral sanctions, in view of their adverse effects on the economic and social development of the affected Member State. As unilateral sanctions are in contravention of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, Brunei Darussalam will continue to reaffirm its support for the General Assembly resolutions calling for an immediate end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]
[23 April 2020]

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

Burkina Faso has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” and once again totally rejects all forms of unilateral coercive measures, which have a negative impact on the enjoyment of human rights and the well-being and prosperity of the peoples concerned.

In accordance with the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, Burkina Faso has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of resolution 74/7, adopted on 7 November 2019.

Burkina Faso takes this opportunity to reaffirm the urgent need for the full lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba, which constitutes a major obstacle to achieving the objectives of economic and social development and promoting the values of peaceful cooperation.

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

Burundi

[Original: French]
[2 March 2020]

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

Cabo Verde

[Original: English]
[19 February 2020]

The Republic of Cabo Verde, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the National Constitution and in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which promotes solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among countries and nations, has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted on 7 November 2019.

Cambodia

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

Cambodia firmly supports resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019.

Noting that the United States blockade against Cuba is contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations, the Royal Government of Cambodia reaffirms its firm position of urging the United States of America to fully respect the resolution by completely lifting its illegal and unjust sanctions against the people and the Government of Cuba and removing all unilateral coercive measures, which are a key obstacle to Cuba’s effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and cause the suffering of the Cuban people.

Stressing the need to uphold the principles of multilateralism and mutual respect, the Royal Government of Cambodia once again reiterates its call for specific action to put an end to such an inhumane and arbitrary policy, which hinders the development of Cuba and goes against the Charter.

Cameroon

[Original: French]
[27 April 2020]

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

In implementation of resolution 74/7 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019, and previous

resolutions on the matter, and in accordance with the above-mentioned principles, Cameroon has never taken legislative or other measures with a view to strengthening or expanding the embargo imposed on Cuba.

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

Canada

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

The Government of Canada reconfirms its support of General Assembly resolution 74/7. Canadian law states that no Canadian corporation shall, in respect of trade or commerce between Canada and Cuba, comply with any extraterritorial measure of the kind referred to in the resolution.

Canada considers the extraterritorial application of unilateral Cuba-related measures to be contrary to international law. Canada is deeply disappointed with the decision by the United States to implement Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act, commonly known as the Helms-Burton Act. The embargo has a negative impact on the living conditions of the Cuban people, as well as on Canadians conducting legitimate trade with and investment in Cuba.

Central African Republic

[Original: English]
[13 March 2020]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba has caused tremendous harm to the Government and people of Cuba in all spheres of activity. The embargo has long been denounced and the General Assembly has adopted several resolutions against it, most recently on 7 November 2019.

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

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

Chad

[Original: French]
[23 March 2020]

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Government of the Republic of Chad reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 74/7 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The embargo is

clearly still in place, seriously penalizing the Cuban people and undermining the country's economic development.

While reiterating the calls from Member States and international organizations, including the African Union, for the complete lifting of the embargo, the Government of Chad, referring also to paragraph 30 of resolution 70/1 on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, calls on States to avoid adopting or applying unilateral economic, financial or commercial measures that are inconsistent with international law or the Charter and that prevent the full realization of economic and social development, especially in developing countries.

The Government of the Republic of Chad urges the Governments of the United States and Cuba to renew talks with a view to rekindling the process embarked upon some years ago, for development that will mutually benefit the people of the two countries and the world as a whole.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[31 January 2020]

Chile has not approved any measures aimed at restricting normal trade and economic relations between Chile and Cuba.

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

China

[Original: English]
[10 March 2020]

For 28 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States and urging all countries to comply with the rules of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and to repeal or nullify any laws and measures whose extraterritorial effects encroach upon the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities and individuals within their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Regrettably, over the years there has been no effective implementation of the resolutions, and the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba has not yet been lifted and has even been strengthened recently. Not only is this contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, it has also caused immense economic and financial losses for Cuba, has hindered efforts by the Cuban people to eradicate poverty, to promote their economic and social development and to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has impaired the right to survival and the right to development of the Cuban people, and has also disrupted the normal economic, commercial and financial relations between Cuba and other countries.

China has always advocated respect for the right of countries to choose their own social system and path of development independently, and has opposed the imposition by military, political, economic or any other means of unilateral sanctions on other countries. China has always strictly abided by and implemented the relevant

resolutions of the General Assembly. China and Cuba maintain sound economic and trade relations and conduct personnel exchanges, and the mutually beneficial and friendly cooperation between the two countries in various areas continues to grow. This is in line with the aspirations of the people of both countries and is also conducive to the economic and social development of Cuba.

Peace, development and cooperation for mutual benefit represent a surging trend of the times. Unilateralism goes against international law and norms governing international relations. China calls upon the United States to lift its embargo against Cuba fully and as soon as possible, and to develop normal inter-State relations with Cuba in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the basic norms governing international relations. This is in line with the shared interests of the United States and Cuba and of the people of those two countries, and will be beneficial to peace and stability throughout the region.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Colombia has not promulgated or applied laws or unilateral measures against Cuba.

Comoros

[Original: French]
[16 March 2020]

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

The Government of the Union of the Comoros regrets that the hostile measures that the United States Administration continues to take are only worsening an already fragile relationship and rekindling tensions.

Accordingly, the Government of the Union of the Comoros supports all measures aimed at the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed on the Cuban Government. It had welcomed past initiatives that helped to ease tensions. It would therefore support any activity in that direction that would allow a resumption of talks and bring the peoples of Cuba and the United States closer together.

Congo

[Original: French]
[24 March 2020]

With regard to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted on 7 November 2019, the Republic of the Congo, condemning the imposition of unilateral sanctions against a Member State and reiterating its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law encouraging good-neighbourly and friendly relations, urges Member States to lift the embargo, which has direct negative

effects on vital socioeconomic sectors and major repercussions for the socioeconomic well-being of the Cuban people.

The Republic of the Congo reiterates its opposition to coercive measures that are not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations and that are inconsistent with the principles of international law or the Charter, given their extraterritorial implications and illegality.

The Republic of the Congo invites the United States and the Republic of Cuba to relaunch the process of rapprochement that had developed in the period from 2014 to 2016 between the two countries in order to gradually normalize their relations, in particular with a view to meeting the many objectives of the United Nations, including the establishment of peace and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The Republic of the Congo reaffirms its strong and unwavering support for the Cuban people and Government.

Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]
[27 March 2020]

In keeping with its absolute commitment to multilateralism and international law, as well as to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular those related to the sovereign equality of States, the self-determination of peoples and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, Costa Rica has historically voted in favour of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly that emphasize the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Accordingly, it reiterates its firm opposition to the embargo and, in particular, to the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996, commonly known as the Helms-Burton Act, which constitutes an obstacle to international trade. Costa Rica, in line with its principles and the pillars of its foreign policy, rejects unilateral and extraterritorial measures taken by any State against another through the unilateral imposition of sanctions by military, political, economic or other means.

In accordance with resolution 74/7 and previous General Assembly resolutions on the topic, Costa Rica has neither applied nor promulgated any law, policy or measure with extraterritorial effects that could affect the sovereignty of other States or freedom of trade and navigation.

Costa Rica recalls that in 2014, the international community had hailed the process of rapprochement between Cuba and the United States and the mutual de-escalation measures designed to improve the bilateral climate that led to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in 2015, historic steps and unprecedented progress in favour of peace and dialogue in the hemisphere. We regret the subsequent cooling of relations between the two countries, as well as the persistence of the embargo and the tightening thereof with the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, along with other recent financial and supply access measures, among other actions. These measures have an undeniably negative impact on the living conditions of the Cuban people, as well as on people from third countries conducting legitimate trade and investment in Cuba.

Costa Rica is firmly convinced that it is only through dialogue, multilateral mechanisms and international law that differences between countries should be addressed. It urges the Governments of Cuba and the United States to strengthen their

dialogue, which will enable all outstanding issues, including the lifting of the embargo, to be resolved.

At the multilateral level, Costa Rica was one of the 187 States Members of the United Nations that supported General Assembly resolution 74/7 in November 2019. This underscores the fact that a significant number of States in the international community are calling for the lifting of a unilateral policy, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and for the economic and social development of a State, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. Costa Rica also spoke during the general debate at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly and endorsed the regional statements made in 2019 by various groups, such as the Group of 77 and China and the Association of Caribbean States.

At the bilateral level, Costa Rica and Cuba continue to strengthen their ties of friendship and cooperation since diplomatic relations were restored on 18 March 2009.

Taking into account the global crisis related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which affects us all equally, Costa Rica, as a peace-loving country, calls on countries to reflect and to overcome all unilateral policies that hinder human well-being, especially that of the most vulnerable, by endangering a basic human right, in this case, the right to health.

Côte d'Ivoire

[Original: French]
[27 March 2020]

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

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire has never promulgated or applied any law or measure of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7 and it has no intention of doing so.

True to its ideals of peace and dialogue in relations between States, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its readiness to work with the entire international community to find appropriate solutions to this issue. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire encourages the parties concerned to focus more on negotiation and dialogue in order to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of the dispute, all the more so since the United States has opened an embassy in Cuba.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[7 July 2020]

Introduction

The present report covers the period from April 2019 to March 2020, which was marked by a serious setback in bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States of America and a gradual tightening of the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

During the reporting period, the numerous regulations and provisions issued by the Government of the United States of America against Cuba reached unprecedented levels of hostility. The ability to file claims under Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996 (Helms-Burton Act), the increased persecution of Cuban financial and commercial transactions, the ban on flights from the United States to all Cuban provinces except Havana, the persecution and intimidation of companies that send fuel supplies to Cuba, and the campaign to discredit Cuban medical cooperation programmes are among the most distinctive examples.

During the reporting period, in contravention of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) and many previous resolutions, around 90 coercive economic actions and measures were imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba, with the intention of intervening in the country's domestic affairs and in clear violation of the freedom of international trade and navigation. Of that total, about half were concrete actions related to the embargo, including fines and other types of sanctions against United States or third-country entities, the addition of Cuban companies to unilateral lists, the extension of laws and proclamations on the embargo, announcements related to the application of Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act, and regulatory changes. Another group of measures was related to the extraterritorial application of the embargo or corresponded to decisions of the United States Department of State against our country.

Particularly alarming are the five packages of measures adopted in 2019 to monitor and impose punitive measures on firms, vessels and shipping companies that transport fuel to Cuba. Illegitimate sanctions were imposed against 27 companies, 54 vessels and three individuals linked to the sector, none of them of United States origin or subject to United States jurisdiction. These aggressive actions by the Government of the United States constitute a qualitative leap in the tightening and application of unconventional measures in peacetime. This is a new, open and brutal violation of the rules and principles on which the system of international relations, including international trade rules, is based. The Government of the United States, with no legal or moral authority to do so, has dedicated itself to threatening and blackmailing the companies that supply fuel to Cuba and transport fuel internationally.

All these measures have a major impact on Cuban economic activities, particularly those related to foreign trade operations and foreign investments. The situation has forced Cuba to take ad hoc emergency measures, which are possible only in an organized country whose people are united in solidarity, and ready to defend themselves from foreign aggression and preserve the social justice that has been achieved. The actions taken are designed to boost the Cuban economy and alleviate the effects of the embargo. They include more than 20 provisions to strengthen socialist State enterprise.

No Cuban citizen or sector of the Cuban economy escapes the effects of the embargo, which hampers the development that any country has the sovereign right to pursue. This unilateral policy is therefore the main obstacle to the implementation of the National Plan for the Economic and Social Development of Cuba until 2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

For Cubans living abroad, the embargo regulations are also daily obstacles that prevent them from opening bank accounts, using certain credit cards or carrying out transactions normally, simply because they are Cuban nationals.

As part of its aggressive escalation, the Government of the United States also put heavy pressure on a group of countries, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to undermine support for the draft resolution against the embargo,

submitted by Cuba to the General Assembly on 6 and 7 November 2019. Despite such manoeuvres and blackmail, the result of the vote showed, once again, the overwhelming support of the international community for the Cuban cause.

The embargo is a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cubans. Because of their stated purpose and the political, legal and administrative framework on which they are based, it constitutes an act of genocide under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the embargo caused Cuba losses of approximately \$5,570,300,000. This represents an increase of around \$1,226,700,000 from the previous period. For the first time, the total amount of the losses caused by this policy in one year exceeded \$5 billion, which illustrates how intense the embargo has now become. The losses calculated do not take into account the actions of the Government of the United States in relation to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, because they continued after the reporting period.

At current prices, the losses accumulated in almost six decades of application of the policy amount to \$144,413,700,000. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the embargo has caused quantifiable losses of more than \$1,098,008,000,000, a figure that is 19 per cent higher than that included in the previous report because of the 18.3 per cent increase in the price of gold.

In that context, the scourge of the COVID-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges for Cuba, and the country's efforts to combat it have been significantly curtailed by the regulations of the United States embargo. The genocidal nature of this policy has been reinforced in the fight against the new coronavirus, since the Government of the United States has used the embargo, in particular its extraterritorial component, deliberately to deprive the Cuban people of pulmonary ventilators, masks, diagnostic kits, protective goggles, suits, gloves, reagents and other items necessary to the management of the disease. The availability of these resources can make the difference between life and death for patients carrying the virus, as well as for the health-care workers who treat them.

That has not been enough for the Government of the United States, which has also launched a crusade to try to discredit and hinder the international medical cooperation offered by Cuba, spreading slander and going to the extreme of demanding that other countries refrain from requesting such cooperation, even during the worldwide health emergency resulting from COVID-19.

Despite its actions, the Government of the United States was not able to prevent, as at 1 July 2020, more than 3,000 Cuban health workers, organized in 38 medical brigades, from contributing to the fight against the pandemic in 28 countries and three Non-Self-Governing Territories. More than 28,000 Cuban health professionals who were already providing services in 59 countries before the COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to those efforts.

In addition, a terrorist attack was carried out against the Embassy of Cuba in the United States on 30 April 2020. The complicit silence of the Government of the United States and its inability to denounce or make a public statement about the attack demonstrate its commitment to inciting violence and messages of hatred against Cuba and its nationals, behaviour that encourages the commission of acts of this nature. The political passivity of the Government of the United States in the face of an attack with an assault rifle on a diplomatic mission in the country's capital calls into question the fulfilment of that Government's obligations under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

On 12 May 2020, the United States Department of State notified Congress of its decision to list a group of countries, including Cuba, among those certified under section 40A (a) of the Arms Export Control Act as “countries not cooperating fully” with United States counter-terrorism efforts in 2019. In doing so, the Government of the United States attempted to conceal its record of State-sponsored terrorism against Cuba, which has been a permanent tool of its aggressive policy towards the island.

Now more than ever, as humanity faces an economic and social crisis accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the dimensions of which no one can predict with any certainty, it is essential for the international community to demand the lifting of the embargo imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba, which is the most complex and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures ever imposed against any country.

I. Continuity and tightening of the embargo policy

1.1 The embargo laws remain in force

The successive measures applied against Cuba and the repeated amendments made to the Cuban Assets Control Regulations by the Government of the United States during the reporting period confirm that the laws and regulations that support the embargo policy remain in force. The State and government agencies of the United States, including the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Commerce, strictly enforce the congressional laws and administrative provisions that establish the embargo policy. The main such laws and provisions are as follows:

- The Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 provided, in its section 5 (b), that the President could impose economic sanctions in time of war or any other national emergency, and prohibited trading with the enemy or with allies of the enemy during hostilities. In 1977, through the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, the powers of the President to impose new sanctions with reference to national emergencies were restricted. However, the Trading with the Enemy Act continued to apply to Cuba, and successive United States presidents have extended its application. Under the Act, the oldest of its kind, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations were adopted in 1963. Cuba is the only country for which the Act remains in force. In 2017, 2018 and 2019, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, renewed the sanctions against Cuba under the terms of the Act.
- Under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the United States President was authorized to establish and maintain a total embargo upon trade with Cuba, and the granting of any aid to the Government of Cuba was prohibited. In addition, United States government funds earmarked for international aid and provided to international agencies could not be used for programmes involving Cuba. No assistance or benefit mentioned in the Act or any other Act could be granted to Cuba, until such time as the President determined that Cuba had taken action to return to United States citizens and entities no less than 50 per cent of the value of the properties nationalized by the Government of Cuba following the triumph of the Revolution, or to provide equitable compensation for such properties.
- In Proclamation 3447, issued on 3 February 1962, President John F. Kennedy decreed a total embargo on trade between the United States and Cuba, pursuant to section 620 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act.
- In the Cuban Assets Control Regulations of 1963, issued by the Department of the Treasury, all Cuban assets in the United States were frozen, all financial and commercial transactions were prohibited unless they were approved by a licence, Cuban exports to the United States were prohibited, and any natural or

legal person of the United States or third parties was prohibited from conducting transactions in United States dollars with Cuba, among other provisions.

- Section 2401 (b) (1), “National security controls”, “Policy toward individual countries”, of the Export Administration Act of 1979 established the Commerce Control List, on which the United States President keeps a number of countries on which special export controls may be imposed for reasons of national security. Cuba is included on that list.
- In the Export Administration Regulations of 1979, the grounds for general controls over export items and goods were established in accordance with the sanctions imposed by the Government of the United States. Under the Regulations, a general policy of denying exports and re-exports to Cuba was established.
- In the Cuban Democracy Act (Torricelli Act) of 1992, the subsidiaries of United States companies in third countries were prohibited from trading in goods with Cuba or with Cuban nationals. Third-country vessels that had visited a Cuban port were banned from entering United States territory within 180 days without a licence from the Secretary of the Treasury.
- In the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996, or Helms-Burton Act, the provisions of the embargo were codified and its extraterritorial scope was expanded through the imposition of penalties on directors of foreign companies conducting transactions involving United States property nationalized in Cuba and through the possibility that claims could be filed in United States courts. The President’s prerogatives to lift the embargo were also limited. For the first time in history, on 2 May 2019, the Government of the United States announced that the filing of claims would be allowed in United States courts under the Act.
- Section 211 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999 prohibited United States courts from recognizing the rights of Cuban companies to trademarks associated with nationalized property.
- In the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, the export of agricultural products to Cuba was authorized, on condition that payment was made in cash and in advance, and without United States financing. Travel to Cuba by United States persons for tourist activities was prohibited, with tourist activity defined as any activity involving travel to, from or within Cuba that was not explicitly authorized under Title 31, section 515.560, of the Code of Federal Regulations. In other words, when the Act was passed, travel was limited to the 12 categories authorized.

1.2 Principal embargo actions taken between April 2019 and March 2020

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the United States Department of the Treasury and Department of Commerce, in accordance with the policy of hostility proclaimed by the Government of President Donald Trump, introduced regulatory changes under the embargo laws against Cuba. In addition to the effects of those changes, mainly in the travel and financial sectors, mechanisms were established to persecute Cuban operations in third countries, persecution that had a highly dissuasive and intimidating effect on foreign counterparts, with consequent damage to the Cuban economy.

During the reporting period, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) imposed 12 penalties on United States and third-country entities for violating the Cuban Assets Control Regulations. The amount of these penalties was more than \$2,403,985,125.

The main embargo actions taken during the reporting period were the following:

- On 5 April 2019, OFAC included 34 vessels owned by the Venezuelan oil company Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) and two other foreign companies in its Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, for sending crude oil to Cuba.
- On 9 April 2019, OFAC imposed a penalty on Standard Chartered, a banking and financial institution based in the United Kingdom. The bank had to pay \$639,023,750 for apparent violations of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations and other sanctions programmes.
- On 11 April 2019, OFAC imposed penalties on the oil companies 2H Offshore and Acteon Group, based in the United Kingdom, for violations of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations. The amounts payable by the two entities were \$227,500 and \$213,866, respectively.
- On 12 April 2019, OFAC imposed penalties on four companies and nine vessels operating in the Venezuelan oil sector, some of which were alleged to have transported oil to Cuba.
- On 15 April 2019, OFAC imposed penalties in an amount of \$1.3 billion on subsidiaries of the financial and banking company UniCredit in Austria, Germany and Italy. The subsidiaries had allegedly made bank transfers that violated the Cuban Assets Control Regulations.
- On 17 April 2019, the Secretary of State of the United States, Mike Pompeo, announced the full activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, as from 2 May 2019. That made it possible for action to be taken in United States courts in response to claims filed under the Act against foreign investors maintaining commercial relations with Cuba.
- On 24 April 2019, the Department of State updated the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba by including 5 new entities, for a total of 216. In July, a further update was announced, with the addition of 2 new entities, for a total of 218. The List was updated for a third time on 19 November 2019, with the inclusion of 5 new entities, bringing the total to 223.
- On 4 June 2019, OFAC and the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce announced regulatory changes in policy towards Cuba, mainly aimed at the travel sector. The measures included the elimination of people-to-people travel and the implementation of a policy of denial of licences for passenger transport (cruises), recreational vessels and private aircraft. It was also stipulated that United States nationals travelling to Cuba for reasons that fell into any of the 12 authorized categories could not conduct direct financial transactions with companies included in the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba.
- On 13 June 2019, OFAC imposed penalties on the United States companies Expedia Group, Hotelbeds and Cubasphere for violations of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations. The three penalties were for transactions related to travel or travel services to Cuba.
- On 3 July 2019, the Department of the Treasury included the Cuban company Cubametales in the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, because of the entity's involvement in the import of oil from Venezuela.
- On 6 September 2019, OFAC updated the Cuban Assets Control Regulations by imposing a limit of \$1,000 per quarter on family remittances, eliminating donative (non-family) remittances and suspending Cuba-related transfers

originating and terminating outside the United States (known as U-turn financial transactions).

- On 13 September 2019, President Trump extended the Trading with the Enemy Act for another year for Cuba.
- On 17 September 2019, OFAC included three individuals (two Colombians and one Italian) and 17 companies (12 Colombian, 4 Panamanian and 1 Italian) in the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, alleging that they were involved in transporting oil to Cuba.
- On 24 September 2019, OFAC included in the List four companies (three Panamanian and one Cypriot) and four vessels related to the transport of Venezuelan oil to Cuba.
- On 1 October 2019, OFAC imposed a penalty of \$2,718,581 on the company General Electric, which has its head office in Boston, Massachusetts, United States, for apparent violations of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations.
- On 18 October 2019, the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce announced amendments of the Export Administration Regulations. The new measures included a general policy of denying licences for the leasing of aircraft to Cuban State airlines, the prevention of the re-export to Cuba of foreign items more than 10 per cent of whose components are from the United States, the revision of the licence exception “support for the Cuban people” so that certain donations to the Government of Cuba and the Communist Party of Cuba could not be made, the removal of the authorization for the export of promotional items that generally benefited the Government of Cuba, and the imposition of new restrictions on the export of telecommunications-related goods.
- On 25 October 2019, the United States Department of Transportation announced the suspension of all flights by United States airlines from the United States to Cuba, except to José Martí International Airport in Havana. Through the measure, which took effect on 10 December, all United States flights to nine Cuban airports were suspended.
- In October 2019, senior managers of the Spanish hotel chain Meliá Hotels International, including the Chief Executive Officer, received notifications from the Department of State in which they were informed that they were prohibited from entering the United States, as a result of the application of Title IV of the Helms-Burton Act.
- On 26 November 2019, OFAC announced the inclusion of the Cuban company Corporación Panamericana in the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List.
- On 3 December 2019, OFAC announced in an official statement the inclusion of six vessels (one Panamanian and the others Venezuelan) on the List for transporting crude oil to Cuba.
- On 9 December 2019, OFAC announced the application of coercive measures against the Allianz Global Risks United States Insurance Company, based in the United States, and Chubb, based in Switzerland, in amounts of \$170,535 and \$66,212, respectively. The measures resulted from apparent violations of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, for conducting transactions and other operations related to the insurance of travel to Cuba.
- On 10 January 2019, the Department of Transportation announced the suspension of all charter flights between the United States and Cuba, except

those to José Martí International Airport in Havana. In addition, a limit was imposed on the number of charter flights to that airport.

- On 25 February 2020, President Trump issued a notice extending by one year the state of national emergency with respect to Cuba, declared by President William Clinton on 1 March 1996.
- On 26 February 2020, new regulations of the United States company Western Union, under which remittances could not be sent to Cuba from third countries, entered into force.

1.3 Application of the Helms-Burton Act: claims filed

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

Under Title III of the Act, former owners of property that was nationalized in Cuba, including Cuban citizens who ultimately became United States citizens, can file claims in United States courts against those who had any contact with such property; such contact is described as "trafficking" in the Act. The term applies, according to the Act itself, to anyone who transfers, distributes, dispenses, brokers or otherwise disposes of confiscated property; who purchases, receives, acquires or otherwise obtains control of such property; who improves, invests in or begins, after the date of enactment of the Act, to manage, lease, possess, use or hold an interest in such property; who enters into a commercial arrangement using or otherwise benefiting from such property; or who causes, directs, participates in or profits from trafficking as described above by another person, or otherwise engages in trafficking through another person, without the authorization of any United States national who holds a claim to the property.

The possibility of filing a claim against the alleged beneficiaries of "trafficking" was consistently suspended every six months from 1996 by all Presidents of the United States, including President Trump himself. With the aim of strangling the Cuban economy and increasing shortages among the population, the Helms-Burton Act has emerged as a mechanism for the Government of the United States to exert brutal and illegal pressure against not only Cuba but also third countries and their Governments and companies. Its purposes are illegitimate and run counter to international law.

For the first time in 23 years, on 2 May 2019, legal proceedings were initiated under the Act. As at 31 March 2020, a total of 25 claims had been filed, of which 3 had been withdrawn and 22 were pending. The policy has affected United States and third-country companies that have done or are doing business with Cuba. The following are some examples:

- On 27 August 2019, five new claims were filed against cruise companies, namely, the Swiss company MSC Cruises and its United States subsidiary, and the United States companies Royal Caribbean Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings. Claims were also filed against the latter two companies by a person who claimed to own some quays in the port of Santiago de Cuba.
- On 26 September 2019, claims were filed in a court in Miami, United States, against the technology and logistics company Amazon and the company Fogo Charcoal.

- On 30 September 2019, a claim was filed against the United States companies TripAdvisor, Orbitz, Trip Network, CheapTickets and Kayak, as well as the Netherlands company Booking.com, in the United States District Court for the District of Delaware. The plaintiff alleges that he is the heir to nationalized land in Varadero, related to hotels operated by the companies Iberostar, Meliá, Blau and Starfish, which are in the database of the aforementioned online reservation companies. A few days later, on 4 October 2019, the plaintiff filed another claim in the District Court for the District of Delaware against the companies Visa and Mastercard, alleging that they facilitated payments or transactions by credit card at those hotels.
- On 14 January 2020, a claim was filed against the French company Pernod Ricard in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. The plaintiff claims to be the heir to the Coñac Cueto company, which was nationalized in 1963. The claim is based on the defendant's alleged proprietary rights to the Havana Club brand.
- On 17 April 2020, a claim was filed in the District Court for the Southern District of Florida against the Canadian company Teck Resources. The plaintiffs claim that the company has been operating various mines in and around El Cobre since 1996.

It should be noted that Cuba, as part of a legitimate process of economic and social transformation, which included the property regime, carried out a series of nationalizations in accordance with existing international law. In addition, the Government of Cuba compensated all Cuban citizens whose property was not expropriated as a result of criminal conduct that violated the legal system, and those who did not engage in such conduct because of the nationalizations.

With regard to foreign nationals whose property was nationalized, Cuba concluded comprehensive compensation agreements with all States whose nationals were affected, except the United States, whose Government refused to engage in a process of negotiation with a view to compensation arrangements that would be fair to its nationals.

Under Act No. 80, on the reaffirmation of Cuban dignity and sovereignty, approved by the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba in December 1996, United States laws are not applicable and have no legal value or effect on Cuban territory. In the Act, the willingness of the Government of Cuba to seek adequate and fair compensation for property expropriated from natural and legal persons who at that time held United States citizenship or nationality is reaffirmed. Moreover, full guarantees are offered to foreign investors in Cuba, and article 5 states that the Government can adopt the additional provisions, measures and facilities necessary for the complete protection of current and potential foreign investments in Cuba and the defence of legitimate interests related to those investments against actions resulting from the Helms-Burton Act.

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

II. The embargo violates the rights of the Cuban people

2.1 Social impact

As previously stated, the embargo constitutes the main obstacle to the implementation of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development and the 2030 Agenda, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Cuba.

Even such sectors as health and education, in which our country has achieved internationally recognized results, are not exempt from severe damage caused by the United States policy against the island.

The Government of Cuba has consistently attached high priority to the health sector and, in 2019, allocated 27.5 per cent of budgeted social spending to the area. Despite the efforts made to ensure that all citizens have access to free, high-quality care, protection and recovery services, the impact of the embargo on the sector is substantial. Between April 2019 and March 2020, the policy caused losses of approximately \$160,260,880 in the area. The accumulated losses in almost six decades of implementation of the policy amount to \$3,074,033,738 in the health sector.

Under the embargo, access is denied to medical technologies that are of United States origin or contain more than 10 per cent of United States components; that situation adversely affects the health care provided to Cubans. In many cases, new technologies that allow more accurate diagnosis and treatment, and faster recovery of patients with less invasive interventions, cannot be obtained. The policy also affects the implementation of important national health programmes, such as those for the care of mothers and children, intensive care and comprehensive cancer control, and various other programmes, including for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

The adverse effects of the embargo are aggravated and made crueler in the current fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy puts additional pressure on our public health system by making it difficult to acquire materials, equipment and other items that are urgently needed to save lives.

In March 2020, for example, the Chinese company Alibaba made a donation of mechanical pulmonary ventilators, diagnostic kits, masks and other medical supplies needed to combat COVID-19; the donation could not be brought into Cuban territory. The contracted transport company refused to send the cargo to Cuba on the grounds that its main shareholder was a United States company and that it was therefore subject to the embargo regulations.

Another regrettable example was that of the Swiss companies Imtmedical and Acutronic Medical Systems, which refused to deliver to Cuba high-tech mechanical pulmonary ventilators that are essential to the treatment of patients affected by the new coronavirus. The two companies, which are considered world leaders in the development and manufacture of such medical equipment, have done business with Cuba in the past. Both were acquired by the company Vyaire Medical, which has its head office in Illinois, United States, and have therefore been forced to suspend all commercial relations with our country.

Also in April 2020, the Swiss banks UBS, Banque Cler and Basler Kantonalbank refused to transfer donations made by the Swiss solidarity organizations MediCuba-Suiza and Asociación Suiza-Cuba, simply because the name of the island was mentioned in the transaction record. The donations were intended to support the emergency relief project #CubavsCovid19, which sought to raise funds to send reagents for diagnostic tests and protective equipment needed in efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government of the United States, on the other hand, with its decision to attack Cuban medical cooperation, threatens the enjoyment of the right to health of millions of human beings who have benefited from the work of Cuban doctors in various parts of the world. During the reporting period, the damage caused to the bilateral agreements signed by Cuba with several countries in the Americas has seriously affected the health care of 67 million people. The international community

has recognized on many occasions the professionalism and altruism of the more than 400,000 Cuban health workers who, over 60 years, have accomplished missions in 164 nations.

The campaign of the Government of the United States to discredit Cuban medical cooperation would be immoral under any circumstances, but is particularly offensive to Cuba and the world during a global pandemic such as that caused by COVID-19. In this scenario, while the current United States Administration is assailing the island with criticism and accusations, more than 30 Cuban medical brigades have been sent to various countries and territories affected by the coronavirus, to help fight the disease. Cuba is convinced that what are needed at the moment are cooperation and solidarity, and is therefore also sharing the results of scientific research with other countries, as in the case of the drug recombinant interferon alpha-2b, which has proved effective in the treatment of COVID-19.

As stated in previous reports, Cuba is denied the right to acquire the technologies, raw materials, reagents, diagnostic tools, medicines, devices, equipment and spare parts necessary to improve the functioning of its public health system. Not having the right medicine or technology to treat a disease in time to save a life causes suffering and despair for patients and their families. That pain can never be quantified.

During the reporting period, the company MediCuba, which imports and exports medical products, contacted the seven companies in its supplier portfolio¹ and 50 other companies. In February 2020, when MediCuba asked its suppliers to update the documentation in order to continue commercial relations, five of the companies did not respond. Only Eli Lilly and Bayer issued responses; Eli Lilly refused to continue as a MediCuba supplier, while Bayer said that it needed to apply for a new licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control for new contracts. MediCuba was therefore forced to conclude contracts on other markets for the contraceptive mesigyna and the drug loperamide (for controlling the symptoms of acute and chronic diarrhoea). That situation resulted in a significant shortage of those drugs in our country and, therefore, significant additional costs.

The following are other examples of the damage caused to the health sector by the embargo during the reporting period:

- On 16 July 2019, the airline Emirates refused a shipment of the drug carbidopa/levodopa, bought under contract by MediCuba from the Indian manufacturer and supplier Apex Drug House, arguing that it could not transport goods whose destination was Cuba. The situation considerably delayed the delivery of the shipment, and other commercial alternatives had to be urgently sought. Carbidopa/levodopa is used to treat such symptoms of Parkinson's disease as muscle stiffness, tremors, spasms and poor muscle control.
- On 30 August 2019, the Indian company Sanzyme refused to accept the shipping documents for a MediCuba commercial operation related to the purchase of the drug progesterone in 50 mg doses; that refusal delayed the shipment and delivery of the drug. Progesterone is used in the assisted reproduction programme to prevent premature birth or the threat of miscarriage, and for the treatment of premenstrual syndrome and hormonal imbalance in women, including amenorrhoea and dysfunctional uterine bleeding.
- On 3 December 2019, the company Nutricia refused to deliver to the MediCuba supplier an order for nutritional supplements and medical foods specifically for

¹ The companies are Eli Lilly and Company, Varian, Radiology Oncology Systems (ROS), General Electric (GE), Mercury Medical, Masimo and Bayer.

the dietary management of disorders and diseases, because of the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. Nutricia is a multinational company that is established in the Netherlands and operates through such well-known trademarks as Nutricia, Cow and Gate, Milupa, SHS International and GNC.

- During the reporting period, MediCuba contacted 50 United States companies to enquire about the possibility of importing medicines, equipment and other items needed for our public health system. The vast majority of the companies did not respond, and three of them (the Waters Corporation, DexCom and the United States subsidiary of Royal Philips) answered by claiming that they could not establish commercial links with Cuban entities because of the embargo.
- Royal Philips was asked for 80 units of the CVX-300 excimer laser system, used for coronary angioplasty, also known as percutaneous coronary intervention, a minimally invasive procedure used to open obstructed arteries in the heart. The company responded that it was not in a position to establish commercial relations with MediCuba because of the regulatory and export control restrictions imposed by the Government of the United States.
- Most of the companies contacted by MediCuba did not respond to its requests. As a result, medicines and equipment that are marketed by those companies and would have been of great benefit to the Cuban health system, particularly in areas such as oncology and paediatrics, could not be acquired. The medicines and equipment requested included the following:
 - Abiraterone acetate, for the treatment of castration-resistant prostate cancer, was requested from Janssen Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson. No reply was received.
 - Palbociclib, for the treatment of hormone-sensitive metastatic breast cancer, sunitinib, for the treatment of metastatic renal carcinoma, and crizotinib, for the treatment of lung cancer, were requested from the pharmaceutical company Pfizer. No reply was received.
 - Pembrolizumab, an anti-PD-L1 antibody for the treatment of metastatic melanoma, lung cancer, bladder cancer, Hodgkin's lymphoma and other diseases, was requested from Merck Sharp and Dohme Corporation, as was golimumab, the most advanced biological medicine for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis, conditions in which the immune system attacks the joints, causing pain, stiffness and limited movement. No reply was received.
 - Brentuximab vedotin, for the treatment of refractory Hodgkin's lymphoma after transplants, was requested from Seattle Genetics. No reply was received.
 - Arterial and venous paediatric lines, hydrophobic filters, temporary haemodialysis catheters of French sizes 6 and 6.5 for small children, paediatric dialysers, 500 cc dialysis bags and Tenckhoff catheters of between 25 and 28 cm, for newborns and infants with acute renal failure, were requested from Baxter. No reply was received.
 - The United States company NanoString Technologies was contacted regarding the acquisition of equipment with Illumina technology, which allows the sequencing of the entire genome of a malignant tumour and the definition of molecular changes related to specific treatments, and is also used for the molecular diagnosis of other diseases. No reply was received.

The embargo has heart-rending effects on persons with disabilities, a vulnerable population group that suffers acutely from the restrictions imposed under the United States policy.

- Cuba is forbidden from acquiring hearing aids with state-of-the-art technology, including batteries and spare parts, since they always contain United States components. It is almost impossible to obtain various types of alarm equipment for deaf people, including baby monitors, alarm clocks, wristwatches and doorbell lights, since more than 10 per cent of the material in the most affordable equipment is of United States origin.
- A donation made by the United States organization Joni and Friends could not be delivered to more than 400 members of the Asociación Cubana de Limitados Físico-Motores (Cuban Association of Persons with Physical and Motor Disabilities) in the provinces of Holguín and Ciego de Ávila, because of the restrictions on travel from the United States to Cuba.

The food and agriculture sector is the basis for achieving food security and sovereignty, two goals that are among the priorities of the Government of Cuba and are directly linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Although the Cuban State allocates considerable resources and efforts to the sector, and while the production of food to meet the demands of the population is a priority, the effects of the embargo in this area are considerable. Between April 2019 and March 2020, losses of approximately \$428,894,637 were recorded.

Many of those losses would have been avoided if Cuban companies had had access to the United States market. Such access would be most beneficial, given the prices and proximity of that market, and taking into account the fact that United States industries are capable of supplying Cuban entities with many of the materials, including raw materials, and much of the equipment needed to modernize their production lines.

The following are examples of losses caused in the sector:

- The Cuban company Bravo was unable to buy 2,700 tons of meat on the United States market, at a price of \$2,213 per ton. It was forced to turn to other suppliers with higher prices, incurring additional costs of about \$1,296,000.
- The food importing company Empresa Comercializadora de Alimentos, Alimport, incurred significant losses because of the high prices of frozen chicken on markets that were geographically more distant than the United States market, to which it had no access during the reporting period. The prices per ton of frozen chicken on the markets to which Alimport had access are between \$350 and \$600 more than on the United States market.

The difficulties in supplying fuel to Cuba, as a result of the persecution unleashed by the Government of the United States during the reporting period, caused interruptions in the production cycles of various agrifood entities and in farming, as shown by the following examples:

- At the Los Portales factory, in Pinar del Río province, production was at a standstill for 77 days, since the warehouses were full of finished products but the fuel needed to transport those products was unavailable. As a result, at least 2 million cases of soft drinks and water were not produced and marketed, resulting in a loss of \$10.9 million.
- In November and December 2019, 12,399 hectares of rice could not be planted because fuel was unavailable. Consequently, 30,130 tons of rice were not produced for consumption. Similarly, more than 195,000 tons of food were not

produced. In addition, more than 2 million litres of milk and 481 tons of meat were not produced, which adversely affected the diet of the Cuban people.

The education, sport and culture sectors also have a great social impact and have traditionally been affected by the embargo restrictions. During the reporting period, as in previous years, the main losses in those areas were related to additional freight payments for the transport of products purchased on distant markets, obstacles to the receipt of payment for professional services provided abroad and difficulties in accessing external financing. In addition, the measures taken by the Government of the United States resulted in limitations associated with fuel shortages.

Free, inclusive education services, to which the Cuban State allocated 23.7 per cent of the social expenditure budgeted for 2020, are affected, as a result of the embargo, by various shortcomings and insufficiencies that limit the teaching and learning processes at the various educational levels. Between April 2019 and March 2020, the losses in the sector are estimated at \$21,226,000.

Among the main effects on the education sector during the reporting period are the following:

- All levels of education were affected in the 2019/20 school year, with difficulties in the transport of workers and students owing to fuel shortages. That situation resulted in a readjustment of syllabuses, curricula and teaching hours. A total of 52 educational institutions were affected. At more than 100 boarding schools, because of fuel shortages, the period that students spent at home was extended to 45 days.
- In higher education, the main effects were related to problems in obtaining technology and equipment for teaching and scientific research, and to foregone income from services provided, among other factors that hindered the development of academic and scientific activity at Cuban universities and research centres. An example is the case of the University of Las Tunas, which did not receive planned funding in an amount of \$444,000 for the second phase of the international project for renewable energy technologies and training for local development in Las Tunas, conducted by the university and the Cuomo Foundation. The amount was deposited in the counterparty bank for transfer to Cuba. The operation was blocked by a bank and the funds remain withheld. The project consists in the use and exploitation of the renewable energy sources of Las Tunas province, for the local development of rural and coastal communities.

The area of sport, one of the greatest achievements of the Cuban Revolution, has not been spared the ravages of the embargo policy. The ability of the company Cubadeportes to import sports equipment made by United States brands, many of which must be used under the official regulations of international sports federations, has been reduced. The losses in the area of sport between April 2019 and March 2020 are estimated at approximately \$9,955,000.

Below are some of the most significant effects during the reporting period.

- At the end of 2019, Cubadeportes reported accounts receivable in an amount of more than half a million dollars. That situation was caused by serious difficulties in obtaining payment for services rendered, as a result of the financial persecution, by the Government of the United States, of third-country banks that conduct operations with Cuban entities.
- On 8 April 2019, the Government of the United States announced its decision to cancel the agreement signed in December 2018 between Major League Baseball and the Cuban Baseball Federation, on the grounds that trade with entities associated with the Government of Cuba is prohibited under current

United States law. The announcement came less than two weeks after the start of the 2019 baseball season, and only a few days after the Cuban Baseball Federation had released the names of 34 Cuban players considered eligible to sign with Major League Baseball.

- In previous years, Cuba had been obliged to participate as a guest country in the Caribbean Series, because of the opposition of the United States to accepting it as a full member of the Caribbean Professional Baseball Confederation. Although an agreement between the Government of the United States and the Confederation was expected by 2019, the hostile escalation against Cuba prevented the Cuban team from participating in the Caribbean Series held in February 2020 in Puerto Rico. It was also announced that Cuba would not be able to participate in next year's Series, which will be held in Mexico.

The area of culture continues to be affected by the implementation of the United States embargo policy against Cuba. Between April 2019 and March 2020, losses of around \$22,150,000 were recorded.

For almost sixty years, under the policy of the Government of the United States, the circulation of Cuban art around the world has been blocked, Cuban artistic activity has been persecuted and criticized, and that Government's strategy of isolation has been extended to large international information corporations and art distribution circuits. At the same time, the Government of the United States has tried to highlight and give legitimacy to anti-Cuban products, and has promoted people who appear to be artists but are totally unknown, in order to discredit the work of the true exponents of Cuban culture, the vast majority of whom live and work in Cuba.

Among the main effects on the culture sector during the reporting period are the following:

- Film marketing has been significantly affected by the fact that Cuban films cannot be shown in the United States. If Cuban film industry representatives had attended the American Film Market in Los Angeles, United States, a gateway to the film market and the market of potential buyers for home video outlets and institutions on the non-commercial circuit, it is estimated that the industry could have earned income of, at a minimum, around \$260,000.
- The Cuban Music Copyright Agency has lost about \$19,428 in royalties, as some companies with accounts in banks with United States interests or participation have withheld funds and refuse to make transfers to Cuban banks.
- Because some clients of the music recording and publishing company Empresa de Grabaciones y Ediciones Musicales, such as Cubamusic.com, from Italy, World Circuit Records and Plaza Mayor Company, both from the United Kingdom, and Ultra Records, from the United States, experienced difficulties in making direct payments, the Cuban entity did not receive all the revenue billed during the reporting period.

2.2 Impact on economic development

As previously stated, the embargo is the main obstacle to the economic development of Cuba, the implementation of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development and, therefore, the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, there was a dramatic increase in the losses caused by the embargo in the production and service sectors; those losses reached \$610,200,000. That figure is 7.7 times higher than during the previous reporting period. The increase was due mainly to the unprecedented and aggressive measures

taken by the Government of the United States to stifle the Cuban economy, particularly by hindering the supply of fuel to the island.

Eliminating the costs of the embargo would increase the country's payment capacity and provide an additional, substantial and sustained source of financing that would invigorate the investment programmes linked to the strategic sectors defined in the National Plan for Economic and Social Development. In that way, the necessary conditions would be created to achieve gradually the sustained growth of annual gross domestic product.

At the beginning of 2020, as part of its policy of harassment to prevent the economic development of our country, the Government of the United States took unprecedented action in the evaluation of the proposed programmes of Cuba for cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The objective of this manoeuvre was to hinder the adoption of the Cuba programmes of those United Nations system entities for the period 2020–2024, in a way that would directly affect the island's efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the coming years.

Once again, Cuba was supported by a large group of countries that rejected the attempts of the United States to politicize those entities' work and allowed the Cuban cooperation programmes to be approved by consensus and without amendments.

The embargo directly affects the right of Cuba to development. No branch of the Cuban economy escapes the effects of the policy.

The biopharmaceutical industry, a strategic sector of the Cuban economy, is not spared the damage caused by the embargo, and every year it is affected in terms of the research, development, production and marketing of its products, leading to considerable economic losses. Between April 2019 and March 2020, losses of around \$161 million were recorded.

The tightening of the embargo policy during that period not only limited academic and scientific exchange, but also deprived the people of the United States of the benefits of internationally recognized biotechnological and pharmaceutical products developed in Cuba.

This last point is illustrated by the examples below:

- The Centro de Ingeniería Genética y Biotecnología (Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology) reports that income was foregone owing to the non-export to the United States of the drug heberprot-P, the only one of its kind in the world for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers. If a mere 8 per cent of the patients in the United States who develop an advanced diabetic foot ulcer each year took the medication, Cuba would have recorded income of \$114,912,000 in 2019.
- Proctokinase, a drug for the treatment of acute hemorrhoids, has also been of interest in terms of marketing in the United States. It is estimated that around 5 million United States citizens would benefit from this Cuban product. On the assumption that the drug could have achieved 5 per cent penetration of the United States market, it is estimated that \$10 million have potentially been lost.
- Another Cuban biotechnology product that could be of great interest to United States companies, especially those that produce and trade in cattle and related products, is the gavac vaccine against cattle tick. The losses owing to the fact that this product is not exported to the United States are estimated at \$1,125,000.

The sector has also been significantly affected by the additional costs arising from the geographical relocation of trade and the need to use intermediaries to acquire products of United States origin, as shown by the following examples:

- The Instituto Finlay de Vacunas (Finlay Institute of Vaccines) reported that, in 15 operations conducted during the reporting period, goods of United States origin had to be imported through third-country suppliers. The total amount of the operations was \$894,693. If the operations had been conducted through a United States company, the institute would have saved approximately \$178,938.
- The Centro de Neurociencia de Cuba (Cuban Neuroscience Centre) has incurred high costs because it has needed to use an intermediary to acquire products of United States origin on other markets. Because of the nature of the purchases, the intermediary increases the costs of these operations by 20 per cent. During the reporting period, the additional expenditure recorded by the Centre was \$213,942 for these purchases alone.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the United States embargo against Cuba continued to affect Cuban tourism in areas related to travel, services, operations and logistical insurance, resulting in losses of around \$1,888,386,675.

In particular, the imposition of new measures by the United States Department of State to regulate the travel of United States nationals to Cuba, including the ban on scheduled and charter flights to the island's international airports, except José Martí International Airport in Havana, is equivalent to a reduction of approximately 420,000 visitors from the United States, with a corresponding negative effect on revenue collection.

If the embargo did not exist, it is estimated that the annual number of United States visitors to Cuba could reach at least 2 million, which would make the United States the main market in terms of travellers to the island. If we subtract from that figure the 251,621 people who did in fact travel to Cuba during the reporting period, it can be calculated that approximately 1,748,379 people did not travel to the island from the United States because of the embargo. If those people had been able to visit Cuba, the Cuban tourism industry would have earned an estimated amount of around \$1.798 billion from the United States market.

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

- Up to 4 June 2019, the number of visitors arriving in Cuba on cruise ships increased by 35 per cent. The following day, the measure taken by the Government of the United States to prohibit the entry of United States cruise ships to Cuban ports entered into force, and it is estimated that the actual effect at the end of 2019 was that about 727,819 cruise ship passengers did not travel to the country. The Cruise Lines International Association estimated that a total of 800,000 reservations were affected, which adversely impacted the income obtained from such travel. The measure had a considerable impact on the Cuban economy, since, in a period of only six months, from July to December 2019, \$12,356,941 were lost.
- The elimination of licences for people-to-people travel, together with other measures restricting travel to Cuba, contributed to a decrease in the number of passengers to whom services were provided on land, both in groups and as individuals, with a consequent decrease in income to the country. At the Havanatur Celimar travel agency alone, revenue was \$9 million lower than in 2018 because of the reduction in the number of United States visitors.
- The Cubatur travel agency suffered monetary and financial losses amounting to \$616,742 as a result of costs related to banking services and exchange rate

fluctuations, the closure of bank accounts in third countries, the withholding of funds and the cancellation of credit card processing services.

- The Havanatur international group of tour operators and travel agencies, which also faced all the above-mentioned monetary and financial effects, reported, in addition, that its agencies in Canada had suffered losses related to credit card processing. Credit card companies charged the agencies a rate of 3.79 per cent, which is 1.6 per cent more than the average charged to other tour operators located in Canada. In total, Havanatur lost \$21,426,557.

The economic damage caused by the embargo to the information and communications technology sector, including telecommunications in Cuba, between April 2019 and March 2020, is estimated at \$64,274,042. As in previous years, the telecommunications company Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba continues to be the hardest-hit entity, accounting for approximately 97 per cent of total losses.

The embargo is the main obstacle to a better flow of information and wider access to the Internet and information and communication technologies among Cubans. By making connectivity in the country difficult and expensive, imposing conditions on access to platforms and technologies, and using cyberspace to try to subvert the Cuban political and legal system, the policy is adversely affecting the development of communications in Cuba.

Among the main effects in the sector are the following:

- The Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba cannot make interconnections with international operators directly in United States territory, where the main interconnection nodes are located, and is therefore obliged to extend the international network through nodes in Jamaica, the United Kingdom and Venezuela. The situation results in additional costs of around \$10,637,200.
- As a result of the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, American Airlines decided to suspend the direct postal service between the United States and Cuba. As a result, the Cuban post office, Grupo Empresarial Correos de Cuba, had to look for an alternative to ensure universal postal service in the country, and decided to direct mail to the United States through Panama, as an intermediary country. That action increased the rates, which represented losses for the Cuban postal operator of \$6,736.
- On 11 September 2019, while the President of the Republic of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, was making a statement on the causes of the country's difficult energy situation, the social network Twitter blocked the official accounts of some of the main media outlets on the island – namely, Mesa Redonda, Cubadebate and Granma – and of the Ministry of Communications and other Cuban press outlets and journalists. The measure was primarily intended to prevent the dissemination of the President's message on Twitter and to hinder declarations on and discussion of the matter among users.
- In addition to the effects of the embargo on the communications sector, Cuban representatives have, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, faced many difficulties in participating in meetings and other virtual events convened by United Nations system entities, because the access of Cuba to several of the digital platforms used for such purposes, such as the applications Zoom and Microsoft Teams, is limited.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the losses caused by the embargo to Cuban industry amounted to \$95,529,125. Some of the most significant effects in this sector are related to lost earnings from exports of goods and services, as shown by the following examples:

- The main exportable item of the Cuban company Acinox Comercial is the steel billet. The inability to access the United States market has caused damage to the company, since the price of steel billets in the United States is generally higher than on other markets. In the reporting period, a total of 52,643.72 tons were exported. If the billets had been sent to the United States market, the company's revenues would have increased by \$526,437.
- The light industry import-export company Empresa Comercializadora Importadora Exportadora de la Industria Ligera suffered losses of around \$297,700 because foreign banks refused to transfer to Cuba the funds received from the export of goods during the period, for fear of possible reprisals by the Government of the United States for violation of the embargo restrictions.

Other effects on industry during the reporting period included the following:

- Because of the fuel shortages in the country in the second half of 2019, following the decision of the Government of the United States to prevent the supply of crude oil to Cuba, the damage to production in chemical companies amounted to \$50.96 million. In particular, the chemical industry business group Grupo Empresarial de la Industria Química reported disruption in the production of toilet paper and napkins, and warehouses full of products that could not be transported owing to the lack of fuel. As a result, around 19.8 million rolls of toilet paper were not produced and, consequently, revenue of approximately \$4.8 million was lost.
- The fuel shortages also led to lengthy interruptions in paper production in the country. As a result, about 1,200 tons of environmentally friendly paper were not produced and \$2.1 million were lost.
- In the steel industry, production was affected by difficulties in accessing energy sources, resulting in losses of about \$6,454,559. The non-production of goods as a result of fuel shortages not only affected companies but also had a negative impact on such social programmes as the national housing construction programme, to which our country attaches high priority.
- The flexible packaging factory Unidad Empresarial de Base Empaques Flexibles, in San José de Las Lajas, Mayabeque province, which belongs to the publishing company Ediciones Caribe, part of the light industry business group Grupo Empresarial de la Industria Ligera, produces flexible packaging for food products, including powdered milk, yoghurt and pasta. The industrial equipment at the factory is obsolete and insufficient to meet the demand for those products on the domestic market. Although various foreign entities have shown an interest in investing in the factory, no progress has been made in the negotiations because the potential investors fear being subject to the application of the embargo regulations, in particular Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, since the factory is located in a facility that used to belong to the United States company Reynolds Kitchens and was nationalized by the revolutionary Government of Cuba.

Because of the embargo, the construction sector continues to face serious difficulties in acquiring more efficient and lightweight building technologies that consume fewer basic materials and less energy. Between April 2019 and March 2020, losses of around \$238,180,000 were recorded.

Most of the economic losses in the sector were caused by halts in production owing to fuel shortages in the country from the second half of 2019. This type of loss was faced particularly by the business group for construction Grupo Empresarial de la Construcción and the industrial business group for construction Grupo Empresarial Industrial de la Construcción, as shown by the following examples:

- The Grupo Empresarial de la Construcción recorded a loss of \$165.5 million as a result of the reduction in its fuel allocation because of the measures taken by the Government of the United States to prevent the supply of fuel to Cuba. Many problems were caused for the group by the low availability of energy sources, which limited the production of goods and services and forced the adjustment of activity levels in several of the group's construction programmes. The fuel shortages also resulted in the stoppage of some services, particularly the road programme and the production of precast and ready-mixed concrete.
- The Grupo Empresarial Industrial de la Construcción reported a loss of \$43.2 million, purely as a result of the fuel shortages it faced. The shortages adversely affected basic production, including cement, aggregate, blocks, asphalt blankets, fibre cement tiles, and carpentry and metalwork items, and the transport of inputs and finished goods, among other things.

During the reporting period, the transport sector suffered losses of around \$312,027,430. The embargo regulations, in particular the measures taken in 2019 by the Government of the United States to prevent the supply of fuel to Cuba, had a devastating impact in this area.

Among the main effects are the following:

- The maritime consulting company Consultores Marítimos reported a loss of \$160,000 because of the cancellation of the authorization for cruise ship companies to operate in Cuban ports. As a result, most of those companies completely severed their links with Cuban companies and terminated the established contracts.
- Owing to the tightening of the embargo during the reporting period, B-100 aviation fuel could not be acquired as planned for August, September and October 2019. As a result, 2,503 productive flight hours were not completed, resulting in a loss of around \$855,229.
- The national bus company Ómnibus Nacionales reported losses of over \$51 million in production and services because of the prohibition of fuel supplies to Cuba by the Government of the United States.
- Between September and December 2019, the fuel shortages adversely affected urban public transport by bus. It is estimated that 75.8 million fewer passengers were transported in 2019 than in 2018. As a result, \$21 million in income was lost.

In the energy and mining sector, the losses are estimated at \$125,282,022. The embargo regulations affect the development of energy and mining in Cuba because they limit access to state-of-the-art technologies for energy generation, equipment and spare parts, suitable means of protecting personnel, and financial facilities for acquiring all those resources.

In the electricity business group Grupo Empresarial de la Unión Eléctrica, the losses exceeded \$16 million. The group's production and services are particularly severely affected by the fact that the main manufacturers of equipment and spare parts for the production process have had to suspend their relations with Cuba because of the embargo. That in turn has resulted in higher maintenance costs, time lost in finding alternative suppliers and higher import costs. Among the manufacturers and suppliers that have severed their links with Cuban companies are the following:

- Clyde Bergemann, the manufacturer of the blowers installed in the boilers at the Lidio Ramón Pérez, 10 de Octubre and Antonio Guiteras thermal power plants, said that it would no longer work with Cuba after a part of its shares was acquired by a United States firm. The situation caused difficulties in the

acquisition of spare parts, because the supplier had to be changed, with the consequent additional costs.

- In May 2019, Flender, the manufacturer of the circulation reducers for the pumps of the 10 de Octubre thermal power plant, refused to sell new reducers to Cuba after the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

Other examples of damage in the sector are as follows:

- The Moa Nickel joint venture lost approximately \$7.58 million in exports because, in 2019, around 700 tons of mixed nickel and cobalt sulphides were not produced as a result of the fuel shortages.
- On 21 August 2019, the joint venture to develop the Hierro Mantua copper deposit was established through the signature of an association agreement and articles of association between Bulgargeomin and GeoMinera. Bulgargeomin has not yet been able to transfer the first part of the financing, amounting to \$1.2 million, as planned, because of the difficulties it faces with its bank as a result of the embargo regulations.
- Unión Cuba-Petróleo, the Cuban State organization responsible for supplying fuel and lubricant to the national market, faced serious obstacles to the import of fuel and other oil services as a result of the intensification of the embargo policy. Given the persecution and intimidation unleashed by the Government of the United States against the usual fuel suppliers, Unión Cuba-Petróleo was forced to look for new suppliers on more distant markets and at higher rates, which resulted in losses of approximately \$20.2 million. For the same reasons, the Moa Nickel joint venture reported damage amounting to \$2,925,000.
- The oil-drilling schedule has been affected by delays and shortages in the supply of fuel, while the equipment used in the drilling operations could not provide services in a timely manner. That situation resulted in an estimated loss of \$730,000.

The damage caused by the economic embargo measures is not only suffered in the State sector of the economy, as the Government of the United States claims. It also has a profound impact on the non-State sector, which is generally relatively small and less able to respond and adapt to the loss of customers as a result of the contraction in tourism, the limitations on the availability of working capital, difficulties in securing supplies and access to technology.

III. Impact on the external sector of the Cuban economy

3.1 Impact on foreign trade

The impact of the embargo on the external sector of the Cuban economy between April 2019 and March 2020 has been quantified at \$3,013,951,129 in total.

Beyond that quantified impact, the embargo makes businesses and business leaders in the United States and elsewhere wary and afraid, all the more so since the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which resulted in the cancellation of commercial transactions, collaboration and foreign investment projects that were at different stages of advancement. The embargo has also had a negative impact on banking and financial institutions, which refuse to work with Cuban entities for fear of attracting sanctions.

The measure adopted on 18 October 2019 to prevent the re-export from any country to Cuba of items produced in any country if they contain more than 10 per cent of United States components poses a significant challenge to the import needs of the Cuban economy. “Components” means parts, commodities and technologies,

including software. Consequently, in an increasingly globalized world economy, it is becoming more and more difficult for Cuba to acquire the inputs required for industry, services and consumers, regardless of the political or commercial relationship with the market of origin of those imports.

As in previous years, the greatest losses incurred have been in terms of income foregone, \$2,475,700,000, from the non-export of goods and services. Tourism continues to be the most affected sector in this respect, accounting for 72.6 per cent of the total. This is equivalent to \$1.798 billion, \$260 million more than in the previous period.

Being unable to export to the United States because of the embargo has produced an impact on Cuba's agricultural sector reportedly amounting to \$184 million. Of this figure, 84.3 per cent is attributed to the export potential of the Habanos company, while the rest, some \$26.5 million, corresponds to potential exports of marabou charcoal, pineapples, honey, coffee and fresh produce destined mainly for cruise ships.

The United States is the world's largest importer of bulk industrial honey. United States firms interested in acquiring Cuban honey are denied the required OFAC licence, so they cannot trade with the island. The United States market could absorb some 3,000 tons per year of this type of honey, which is very difficult to place on the European market. If this volume could be exported to the United States market, Cuba would gain an economic advantage of approximately \$500,000, 10 per cent more than that derived from the European market, through better prices, lower freight costs and more favourable delivery conditions.

The United States market is among the five largest in the world for ground and whole-bean roasted coffee. Cuban coffee, thanks to its quality, could meet a large part of the United States market demand, but, as in the case of honey, United States companies interested in importing it are denied an OFAC licence.

Also, despite the recognition by United States importers of the high quality of Cuban charcoal, only 80 tons of it were sold on the United States market during the period indicated, despite the export potential being much higher. This situation was influenced by the activation by the Government of the United States, from May 2019, of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. As explained earlier, this opened the way for complaints to be filed against Amazon and Fogo Charcoal, retail distributors of Cuban charcoal on the United States market. This action had an intimidating effect on those and other potential customers, significantly reducing the chances of selling the product. Considering that the United States is one of the ten largest importers of charcoal worldwide, it is estimated that the tightening of the embargo has prevented the sale of some 2,000 tons of this product, representing a loss of about \$70,000 due to differences in price relative to other markets.

The value of potential exports of sugar to the United States during this period is estimated at about \$93 million, taking into account the 354,078 tons that Cuba managed to place on the world market.

Moreover, the existing limits on imports of agri-food products from the United States remain. The Cuban food importer Empresa Comercializadora de Alimentos, Alimport, is forced to shoulder additional expenses involved in this irregular trade flow, which works in one direction only, since Cuba does not have access to financing from the United States banking system or the international credit system for this type of transaction, because of what is termed the country risk rating. This exposes Alimport to dependence on other creditors, which apply charges of approximately 5 per cent above the normal rate. Alimport cannot make payments in United States dollars to third parties, so it must buy repayment currencies to carry out its

transactions, with the consequent losses relating to exchange-rate risk. As a result, each commercial transaction involves several international banks which apply commissions for their services, further increasing the financial costs that Alimport must cover.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the impact on Cuban foreign trade of the ban on the use of the United States dollar was \$92,883,153, while the increase in the cost of credit resulting from the country risk rating was estimated at \$25,841,716. These indicators reflect the difficulties faced by Cuban entities in accessing bank or soft loans, as a result of the restrictions of the embargo, and in particular the deterrent effect of the embargo on international banking facilities. As a consequence, Cuban companies are forced to resort to commercial credit granted by suppliers themselves on poor financial terms.

Losses arising from the use of commercial intermediaries and the resulting increase in the cost of goods amounted to \$186,171,670.

Excess freight and insurance costs resulting from the geographical relocation of trade to more distant regions continue to have a major impact on the Cuban economy. This has resulted in losses calculated to be in the order of \$85,108,797, which represents an increase of 17.9 per cent over the previous period.

The following table shows the effects of the embargo on Cuban foreign trade between April 2019 and March 2020:

<i>Losses resulting from:</i>	<i>\$</i>
Inability to access the United States market	131 612 890.48
Use of intermediaries/increase in the cost of goods	186 171 670.73
Increase in shipping and insurance costs	85 108 797.39
Income not earned from exports	2 475 700 000.00
Country risk/increase in cost of credit	25 841 716.75
Prohibition on the use of the United States dollar	92 883 153.80
Other effects*	16 632 900.00
Total	3 013 951 129.15

* Additional costs, including costs related to operations through third-country banks and/or bank fees/payment methods, retained payments, breach of contracts and disputes.

3.2 Impact on the banking and financial sector

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the banking and financial system continued to be one of the main targets of the United States Administration's aggressive measures to strengthen the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. The monetary and financial impact on the Cuban economy during this period exceeded \$284.3 million.

As in previous years, this period was characterized by the growing refusal of foreign banking and financial institutions to process transactions by Cuban banks and companies, by the closing of accounts and termination of already-concluded contracts, by the constant rejection of banking transactions, as well as by the cancellation of keys for the exchange of financial information through the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT).

As a result of the policy of pressure, intimidation and dissuasion exercised by the Government of the United States against international financial institutions, new methods of hindering Cuban banking operations are being used. They include

requesting additional documents to carry out operations, which causes delays and slows the processing of payments to suppliers and the receipt of income from abroad.

During the reporting period, the number of foreign banks that refused for various reasons to carry out transactions with Cuban banks was 137, with 315 transactions involved, leading to losses valued at \$236.5 million.

Below are some examples of the extraterritorial application of the embargo in the banking and financial sector during the reporting period.

Refusal to provide banking services

- Refusal to open or close accounts: 7 foreign banks: 4 in Europe, 2 in Asia and 1 in Latin America.
- A total of 14 entities, of which 3 were Asian, 7 were European, 3 were Latin American and 1 was in North America, refused to transfer funds from or to Cuba and to provide other banking services.
 - A Cuban bank was unable to make a membership payment to an international organization consisting of savings and retail banks because the payment was not accepted by a European banking institution. Although multiple approaches were made to other financial institutions with which the Cuban bank maintains correspondent relations, the foreign banks rejected the deposit of funds.
 - The Latin American subsidiary of a European bank was directed by its parent bank to paralyse all financial operations with Cuba and to avoid any transactions with countries subject to sanctions by the Government of the United States.
 - A Cuban Embassy in a European country, as well as the Cuban Consulates-General and the Cuban Consul-General himself, were deprived of the use of automated teller machines and their credit cards. Discussions began with a banking institution to request the provision of such services. The institution's compliance department withheld its authorization.
 - A European banking institution denied a request to transfer funds to Cuba from a social security institution of a European country; the transfer was intended to pay citizens of that country based in Cuba.
 - A Latin American banking institution informed a Cuban bank that, as its only correspondents are the five largest United States banks, its compliance department has strictly forbidden it to carry out operations with Cuba.
- Retention of funds belonging to Cuban institutions: three banks, two in Europe and one in Asia.
 - One Asian and two European banks retained \$4.2 million belonging to Cuban institutions.
- Cancellation of SWIFT message keys² by foreign banks: 18 institutions, including 11 European, 3 from Latin America, 2 from Asia and 2 from Oceania. These cancellations of relationship management application (RMA) keys cause difficulties and delays in the processing of banking transactions. Banks use the SWIFT network to make electronic transfers (money transactions) and send

² Authorizations that are exchanged with correspondent banks and allow users to filter and limit the messages received and the type of message sent (known as relationship management application (RMA) keys).

messages between themselves. For international bank transfers, SWIFT codes are required for fast and secure transactions.

- A total of 10 institutions, of which 7 were Asian, 2 were European and 1 was Latin American, refused to process or provide advice regarding operations related to letters of credit. These refusals affect Cuban companies because they result in unnecessary delays; the companies are forced to look for an alternative bank that is willing to process the documents.
- Banking transactions were returned by 77 entities, including 43 from Europe, 14 from Asia, 15 from Latin America, 3 from North America and 2 from Oceania. The greatest effect on operations processed, whether for transfers or for documentary credits, was through the return of funds because internal policies of the beneficiary banks or correspondent banks ostensibly prevented the funds from reaching their destination. The largest volume of returns in banking transactions was made by European, Latin American and Asian banks, which gave justifications including the existence of sanctions against Cuba and compliance with internal bank policies.
- Five banks, of which four were European and one was Asian, cancelled banking operations and correspondent banking agreements.
 - One of these banks, based in Europe, officially requested the cancellation of an individual loan agreement signed with its Cuban counterpart; the purpose of the loan had been to finance a production-related activity in the special development zone in Mariel.
- Three banking institutions, of which one was Asian, one was European and one was North American, requested Cuban banks to provide additional documents or meet different requirements in order to conduct banking operations.
 - One of these banking institutions asked its Cuban counterpart for the OFAC licence and authorization required by its compliance department to process a transaction, stating that, if those requirements were not met, the funds would be blocked, in accordance with the embargo regulations.

Difficulties in the dispatch and receipt of bank documents through courier agencies

During the reporting period, Cuban banks faced various obstacles to the use of traditional banking communication channels, through DHL and SWIFT.

The refusal of couriers to accept or process bank documents creates the following difficulties:

- Using means other than DHL and SWIFT to send banking documents does not offer the same level of guarantees or security.
- Documents, including bills of lading, are sent as copies by email, instead of the originals being sent directly through DHL.
- Cuban importers need to find alternative ways of receiving the documents in order to carry out customs formalities and retrieve goods from the port. The situation leads to delays in the process and in placing the goods into circulation in the domestic economy.
- Acquiring high-technology equipment to use alternative methods requires Cuba to disburse more foreign exchange.

With the tightening of the embargo, remittances to Cuba have been particularly affected by the desire of the Government of the United States to prevent the entry into

the country of foreign currency. As a result of this policy, remittance agencies have been imposing higher transaction fees on remittances to Cuba.

IV. The embargo violates international law because it is applied with extraterritorial effect

As noted earlier, the extraterritorial application of the embargo remains a hallmark of the policy of the Government of the United States policy towards Cuba. This system of sanctions represents a threat both to the interests and sovereign rights of Cuba and to those of third countries, whose citizens are not exempt from suffering the consequences of this cruel and illegal policy, which contravenes international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as international trade rules.

Between March 2019 and April 2020, there was a sustained tightening of the extraterritorial application of the embargo, especially after the entry into force of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which was specially designed to interfere in the economic and trade relations of Cuba with the international community.

4.1 Impact on Cuban entities

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

Some examples are set out below:

- On 25 April 2019, the Air France-KLM Group communicated its decision to suspend the agreement with Cubana de Aviación, in force since 18 June 2018, which allowed the Cuban airline to make reservations and issue Air France-KLM tickets. The argument used to justify the suspension of the agreement was that Cubana de Aviación is on the OFAC restricted list. The decision entered into force on 9 June 2019.
- In May 2019, it emerged that Petrobras Uruguay Distribución had refused to respond to an approach from Cubana de Aviación, claiming that it was not allowed to carry out operations with companies subject to OFAC sanctions.
- In May 2019, it also emerged that Viajes Falabella, Havanatur's partner in Argentina, Chile and other markets, had become subject to restrictions on the direct or indirect marketing of Cuban hotels included on the List of Restricted Entities and Subentities Associated With Cuba.
- In June 2019, it emerged that the International Air Transport Association (IATA) had suspended its Billing and Settlement Plan service for three Havanatur and Cubana de Aviación offices in Mexico, Italy and France, owing to the position of the French bank BNP Paribas, which manages all banking and correspondent services associated with this service. The Billing and Settlement Plan is a collection and payment system related to the booking of airline tickets, operating between travel agencies and airlines around the world.
- On 26 June 2019, the French airline Air Caraïbes informed Cubana de Aviación of the decision to cancel the code-share agreement between the two airlines. The argument used was the current United States policy against Cuba, which affects the flights made by Air Caraïbes to the United States with Airbus planes, which use United States parts and components.

- On 23 October 2019, Cubana de Aviación was notified of the termination of aircraft leases by third-country companies, as a result of the measures to tighten the embargo announced by the United States Department of Commerce on 18 October of that year. Consequently, Cubana de Aviación was forced to cancel flights to several international and domestic destinations. By 31 December 2019, passenger numbers had fallen by about 40,000 as a result.
- On 23 October 2019, COSCO Shipping Lines Co. Ltd., based in an Asian country, suspended all shipments to Cuba, citing the embargo restrictions as the cause. This had a serious economic impact on the company MediCuba, which had contracts for a large number of containers with COSCO, and was therefore forced to look for other shipping alternatives, with the consequent additional costs.
- On 13 November 2019, Trivago, a technology company specializing in products and services in the hotel and lodging industry, based in Düsseldorf, Germany, deleted all Cuban hotel facilities from its Internet search platforms, owing to the regulations imposed under the embargo on Cuba. Trivago (along with Expedia, Booking.com and Meliá) had been targeted by a class-action lawsuit under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.
- On 10 December 2019, it emerged that the Spanish company Aceros Inoxidables Olarra had decided to stop buying Cuban nickel products. The reasons were connected with the increase in exports by the company to the United States market and the restrictions in place for the import of products with components of Cuban origin into the United States.

4.2 Other extraterritorial impacts

- At the beginning of 2019, the Internet payment platform WePay, through the GoFundMe website, froze the funds of a Canadian citizen attempting to repatriate the body of his father, who had died suddenly in Cuba, citing the regulations imposed by the embargo.
- On 1 April 2019, Multibank of Panama closed an unknown number of bank accounts belonging to Panamanian and foreign companies that trade or maintain relations with Cuba, including the account of the office of the Prensa Latina news agency correspondent. Multibank authorities claimed that this resulted from “an update of its internal policy and business approach”.
- On 16 April 2019, it emerged that the National Bank of Canada had informed Cuban banks that it was unable to make further payments in euros. The National Bank of Canada claimed that its correspondent, the Spanish bank BBVA, was returning payments for operations connected with Cuba because of the risk of being subject to sanctions by the United States.
- On 7 May 2019, it emerged that Scotiabank had sent a written communication to the Jamaican company Free Form Factory to inform it that it had one month in which to close the account that it used to receive payment for its exports (in Canadian dollars) from Cuban companies. The cause was given as the system of economic measures applied by the United States against Cuba.
- On 16 June 2019, it emerged that the Peace Boat was being prevented from docking at Cuban ports. The cruise restrictions imposed by the Government of the United States prevented the ship from docking in Cuba, because the vessel has United States owners. The ship was carrying aid for the victims of the tornado that hit Havana on 27 January 2019.

- In June 2019, a majority of the shares of Kiwi.com (an Internet search engine and air ticket seller) were bought by the United States company General Atlantic. From that moment on, Cuba disappeared from its inventory.
- Between August and November 2019, several cases arose in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Italy, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden of banks announcing the immediate cancellation of magnetic card payment services to Cuban embassies and consulates in those countries. In general, the reason given for this decision was the instructions received from Mastercard and Visa to cancel contracts with Cuban entities. Owing to the restriction, Cuban embassies and consulates in the above-mentioned countries cannot receive funds through Mastercard and Visa card transactions, hindering the provision of, and payment for, services.
- In August 2019, Square Canada informed the owners of Toronto's Little Havana Café that they could no longer use its payment platform because of concerns expressed by JPMorgan Chase, the bank that processes the company's payments, that the café was selling drinks made from Cuban coffee.
- On 22 August 2019, the Ecuadorian bank Produbanco refused to process transfers to Cuba, transfer that were payments from the Universidad Metropolitana to Servicios Médicos Cubanos. The reason given was the United States sanctions against Cuba.
- At the end of August 2019, the Swiss bank PostFinance halted financial transactions destined for Cuba. This was done without any official announcement or prior communication to its clients, who became aware of this decision when they tried to use the bank for any type of transaction with Cuba. Subsequently, PostFinance announced the closure of the payment channel to Cuba as of 1 September 2019, because of the tightening of United States sanctions against the island and the risk of being excluded from international payment traffic if trade relations were maintained. In a written communication revealed in the Swiss press, PostFinance stated that although as a Swiss bank it was not directly subject to United States law, it was involved in global payment transactions and depended on a network of correspondent banks, as well as on access to payment transactions in United States dollars, thus recognizing that United States law had "some degree" of extraterritorial effect.
- On 5 September 2019, the Netherlands bank Rabobank informed the Cuban embassy in the Netherlands of the termination of the contract for the point-of-sale terminal for payment for consular services. In addition, it notified the decision of Mastercard not to provide any kind of point-of-sale transaction service to the embassy in the future. The justification for these measures was the need to act in accordance with the international sanctions imposed by OFAC.
- On 30 September 2019, it emerged that the removal company Allied Pickfords in Wellington, New Zealand, had refused to provide its services to two Cuban diplomatic officials who had reached the end of their postings. The New Zealand company, whose parent company is based in Illinois, claimed that it could be exposed to sanctions as a result of United States regulations.
- On 25 October 2019, Western Union Canada announced the decision to limit the amounts of remittances that could be sent from Canada to Cuba, under the restrictive measures announced by the Government of the United States.
- On 25 December 2019, the international company Hyve Group, based in London, refused to arrange for the reservation of a stand at the East Mediterranean International Travel and Tourism exhibition in Istanbul, in which Cuba has participated for years. The company, which is in charge of all the contractual arrangements and stands at the fair, said that it could not provide its

services owing to the escalation of global sanctions and the ban on doing business with Cuba, which is listed as country subject to sanctions.

- In December 2019, it emerged that the Travelex Bank branch in São Paulo, Brazil, had decided to end all financial operations with Cuba, because its headquarters in London had advised it to sever ties with all countries subject to United States sanctions.
- On 16 January 2020, the Eurasian Development Bank sent two letters to the Embassy of Cuba in Kazakhstan, informing it of the bank's refusal to open an account in Kazakh national currency for the embassy. The bank claimed that, given the inclusion of Cuba on the OFAC sanctions list, there were risks of suspension of payments or blocking of funds, and of suspension of relations between the bank and its United States correspondents.
- On 13 February 2020, it emerged that Cuban citizens residing in Canada were facing limits and difficulties in sending remittances to their families in Cuba through the financial and communication services company Western Union Canada. Some Western Union branches announced that they would no longer make money transfers to Cuba, while others agreed to send remittances restricted to relatives and a limit of \$300 per month. Such restrictions match the measures adopted by the Government of the United States in October 2019.

V. Universal rejection of the embargo

5.1 Opposition within the United States

The policy of maintaining an economic, commercial and financial embargo is opposed by various sectors of United States society and numerous prominent figures and organizations within the country. Representatives of the agricultural, cultural, academic and business sectors have not only demanded the lifting of sanctions against Cuba but also played a leading role in influencing the executive and legislative branches to end the policy.

Despite the web of measures designed by the Government of the United States to affect the economic and social development of the Cuban people, many United States nationals have made significant efforts to improve bilateral relations.

Numerous requests have been made to the President of the United States to use his executive powers to lift the embargo in the light of efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some examples of opposition to the embargo within the United States during the reporting period are set out below:

- On 17 April 2019, Collin Lavery and James Williams, heads of the organizations Cuba Educational Travel and Engage Cuba, respectively, published statements against the embargo. That was the same day on which the United States Department of State announced the new measures against Cuba.
- On 18 April 2019, the Office of Government Relations of the Episcopal Church in the United States expressed concern about the Trump Administration's actions in connection with Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the limitation on the amount of remittances and the imposition of new travel restrictions.
- On 22 April 2019, the organization Cuban Americans for Engagement published on its social media accounts an open letter addressed to the Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and other United States State Department officials. In it, the organization expressed its members' rejection of the sanctions imposed by the Trump Administration against Cuba.

- On 22 April 2019, the organization Cuba Study Group issued an official statement in which it rejected the measures against Cuba announced by the National Security Advisor, John Bolton.
- On 23 April 2019, Cuban emigrant organizations in the city of Miami sent a letter to Pope Francis, in which they appealed to him to ask the Government of the United States to cease its aggressive policies against Cuba.
- On 26 April 2019, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States and the Cuban Council of Churches, through a joint communiqué, reaffirmed their willingness to work together to end the embargo imposed by Washington, D.C. They expressed their opposition to the decision of the Government of the United States to lift the suspension of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and condemned the limits and restrictions on remittances.
- On 30 April 2019, Illinois Democratic Congressman Bobby L. Rush reintroduced in the House of Representatives the United States-Cuba Relations Normalization Act, through which trade restrictions would be lifted and barriers to trade and travel would be eliminated.
- On 30 April 2019, in an interview for the podcast *Pod Save the World*, the Director for Cuba of the Washington Office on Latin America, Marguerite Rose Jiménez, spoke of the damage caused by the escalation of aggressive policies against Cuba and warned that they would cause greater suffering for Cubans.
- On 14 May 2019, Colorado Democratic Senator Michael Bennett and Arkansas Republican Senator John Boozman reintroduced in the Senate the bill on the expansion of exports to Cuba, entitled the Agricultural Export Expansion Act of 2019. Under the bill, a person subject to United States jurisdiction would be able to provide payments or financing for the sale of agricultural products to Cuba.
- On 14 May 2019, Randy Veach, President of the Arkansas Farm Bureau, Andrew Grobmyer, Executive Vice President of the Agriculture Council of Arkansas, and Jeff Rutledge, President of the Arkansas Rice Federation, expressed their support for the bill on the expansion of agricultural exports to Cuba.
- On 21 May 2019, a United States-Cuba business summit on opportunities and challenges for trade engagement, organized by the United States-Cuba Business Council of the United States Chamber of Commerce, was held in a hall of the United States Congress.
- On 23 May 2019, the travel agency Cuba Educational Travel published a survey on the impact of the United States measures on the Cuban private sector. It revealed concern about the reduction of United States visitors and the tightening of sanctions against Cuba.
- On 5 June 2019, the President of the Washington Office on Latin America, Geoff Thale, issued a statement in reaction to the announcement of new restrictions on travel to Cuba. He said the decision was “a vindictive move, that imposes on the freedoms of United States citizens, damages our own travel industry, tries to hurt the Cuban economy and punish the Cuban people”. Thale called on Congress to intervene to defend the rights of the people of the United States and support a policy of engagement with Cuba.
- On 6 June 2019, Florida Democratic Congresswoman Debbie Mucarsel-Powell described the changed rules relating to Cuba as a flawed policy that pushes in the wrong direction, separates families and harms the Cuban people.

- In June 2019, the American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA) spoke out against the Trump Administration's suspension of cruise ship travel to Cuba. In a statement, this organization said "Rather than shutting the door to this market 90 miles off our shores, we call on policymakers to enact legislation to do away with the statutory Cuba travel ban once and for all. [...] We will continue to advocate toward Cuba travel freedom and look forward to the day it becomes reality".
- On 4 and 5 June 2019, several cruise operators and lobby groups issued statements condemning the regulatory changes announced by the United States Treasury and Department of Commerce regarding Cuba. Statements were made by the Cruise Lines International Association, Norwegian Cruise Line, Carnival Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean International, Engage Cuba, Cuba Educational Travel, the Center for Democracy in the Americas and the Washington Office on Latin America. Statements were made on social networks by Cuban Americans for Engagement, CubaOne Foundation, Cuba Study Group and the Executive Director of the latter, Ricardo Herrero.
- On 25 July 2019, Massachusetts Democratic Congressman James McGovern and Minnesota Republican Congressman Tom Emmer introduced the Freedom for Americans to Travel to Cuba Act in the House of Representatives; it would eliminate all travel restrictions imposed by the embargo. On 29 July 2019, Vermont Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy introduced a similar bill in the United States Senate. To date, the bills have 48 and 47 co-sponsors, respectively.
- Between 1 and 4 August 2019, Democratic Socialists of America approved a resolution in support of Cuba at its National Convention, held in Atlanta, United States. In it, Democratic Socialists of America condemned the embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States, the United States presence in Guantánamo Bay and all types of sanctions that undermine the self-determination of the Cuban people.
- On 17 September 2019, the Meridian, Michigan, city council passed a resolution supporting the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba. It indicated that the end of the embargo would be favourable for the economies of both countries, while eliminating barriers between Americans and Cubans, through the expansion of diplomatic relations, travel, partnerships and trade, providing the opportunity for all citizens to discover and reconnect in relation to mutual interests. The resolution indicates the city council's support for congressional bills related to freedom of trade and travel to Cuba.
- On 24 October 2019, Vermont Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy issued a press release in which he criticized President Trump's policy towards Cuba and advocated the lifting of travel restrictions, considering them negative for the Cuban people and for the rights of Americans.
- On 25 October 2019, Massachusetts Democratic Congressman James McGovern criticized in a press release the restriction of regular flights to Cuba. He noted that: "It is absurd that this administration is taking away the freedom of American travelers to fly wherever they want. Our disagreements with the Cuban government should be handled through diplomacy and dialogue [...]. This administration should spend less time on reversing the legacy of President Obama and more time reading up on why the travel ban and other travel restrictions have been a colossal failure that should be ended as quickly as possible."
- On 25 October 2019, the organizations Center for Democracy in the Americas, Cuba Study Group, Engage Cuba, Working Group on Latin America,

Washington Office on Latin America and Oxfam issued a joint statement in which they condemned the flight restrictions announced by the United States Department of Transportation on that day. They also urged Congress to pass the Freedom for Americans to Travel to Cuba Act.

- On 26 October 2019, the Foundation for the Normalization of Relations between the United States and Cuba issued a statement condemning the ban on flights to nine airports in Cuba, stating that this measure seeks to make life more difficult for Cubans.
- On 26 October 2019, California Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee criticized on Twitter the restrictions on flights to Cuba. She said that President Trump's cancellation of flights to Cuba was yet another effort to destroy any relationship between the two countries, and that those isolationist and backward policies would hurt Cubans and Americans alike.
- On 26 October 2019, New York Democratic Congressman Eliot Engel criticized on Twitter the restrictions on flights to Cuba. He described the policy as a short-sighted decision that would harm the Cuban people and their families in the United States.
- On 28 October 2019, the United States organization Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba criticized in a press release the measures restricting travel to Cuba. William Keck, Executive Director of the organization, said that the measure would make medical cooperation between Cuba and the United States more difficult.
- On 1 November 2019, 11 United States senators sent a letter to Mike Pompeo and Elaine Chao, United States Secretaries of State and Transportation, respectively, opposing the decision to suspend flights by United States airlines from the United States to nine Cuban airports. The letter describes the step as "another step backwards for the peoples of Cuba and the United States " and criticizes the approach taken by President Trump towards Cuba, because it "has severely disadvantaged American and Cuban businesses, farmers, and citizens while failing to achieve any United States foreign policy or national security objectives". The letter was signed by Senators Amy Klobuchar (Democrat, Minnesota), Elizabeth Warren (Democrat, Massachusetts), Patrick Leahy (Democrat, Vermont), Chris Van Hollen (Democrat, Maryland), Tom Udall (Democrat, New Mexico), Tammy Duckworth (Democrat, Illinois), Sheldon Whitehouse (Democrat, Rhode Island), Jack Reed (Democrat, Rhode Island), Ron Wyden (Democrat, Oregon), Jeanne Shaheen (Democrat, New Hampshire) and Chris Murphy (Democrat, Connecticut).
- On 9 November 2019, the coalition US Hands Off Venezuela South Florida hosted an event in Miami entitled "No to the embargo against Cuba!" with the aim of condemning the United States policy. The organizations Alianza Martiana and the Foundation for the Normalization of Relations between the United States and Cuba, among other community and local entities, took part in the event.
- On 20 November 2019, Vermont Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy highlighted in a statement the importance of rapprochement between Cuba and the United States. He expressed his opposition to the travel restrictions imposed by the Trump Administration, stating that Cuba was the only country in the world, apart from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to which Americans could not travel freely "because President Trump apparently believes it is his sole prerogative to tell Americans where they can travel and spend their own

money”. He also said that the normal functioning of consular posts should be restored for the benefit of the citizens of both countries.

- On 28 November 2019, various United States religious leaders sent President Trump a letter in which they condemned the decline in bilateral relations and observed that the sanctions imposed on Cuba since 1960 had brought no positive benefit. Specifically, the leaders called for the lifting of the restrictions on travel and remittances, the suspension of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and the resumption of consular services at the United States Embassy in Cuba.
- On 10 December 2019, on Twitter, the organization Engage Cuba expressed its opposition to the suspension of direct flights between the United States and Cuba, with the exception of José Martí International Airport in Havana. The organization noted that the measure was negative for both Americans and Cubans, and positive only for hard-line politicians opposed to rapprochement with Cuba.
- On 16 December 2019, the Executive Director of the Center for Democracy in the Americas, Emily Mendrala, called the return to isolationist policies towards Cuba by the Trump Administration “painful”. She stated that “Cubans and Americans alike deserve a policy approach that is protected from the political whims of United States domestic politics”. She also urged Congress to pass bills that would guarantee Americans’ freedom to travel to Cuba.
- On 17 December 2019, California Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee observed on her Twitter account that the Trump Administration had reversed the progress that had been made between Cuba and the United States, to the detriment of both the Cuban and the American peoples.
- On 10 January 2020, various United States organizations issued a joint statement in which they denounced the restrictions on charter flights to Cuba and advocated the adoption of an Act on freedom of travel. The groups included the Center for Democracy in the Americas, Engage Cuba, the Latin America Working Group, the Washington Office on Latin America and Oxfam.
- On 10 January 2020, Florida Democratic Congresswoman Kathy Castor used her official Twitter account to express her opposition to the restrictions on charter flights to Cuba, stating that families of Cuban origin would be hardest hit by the measure.
- On 11 January 2020, the organization D.C. Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution held an event entitled “United States Hands Off Cuba” in Washington, D.C., in order to show solidarity with the Cuban Revolution and condemn the United States embargo against the island.
- On 11 January 2020, in an official communiqué, the Cuban emigré organization Alianza Martiana condemned the suspension of charter flights to destinations in Cuba other than Havana.
- On 8 February 2020, Alianza Martiana organized a caravan of more than a hundred vehicles in Miami in order to champion freedom to travel to Cuba and denounce the restrictions imposed by the Trump Administration in that area. The organizations Liga de Defensa Cubano Americana (Cuban American Defence League), Cuban Americans for Engagement, Puentes Cubanos, Foundation for the Normalization of the Relations between the United States and Cuba and US Hands Off Venezuela South Florida took part in the event.
- On 6 March 2020, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States, Michael Curry, declared that the Church would continue to oppose the embargo policy.

- On 19 March 2020, the Cuban-born United States professor and citizen Carlos Lazo published an online petition addressed to President Trump on the website change.org, in which he demanded that the restrictions on Cuba be lifted for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 26 March 2020, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States and the Cuban Council of Churches issued a joint statement in which they called for an immediate end to the United States embargo.
- On 26 March 2020, the Caribbean Educational and Baseball Foundation, the Center for Democracy in the Americas, Cuba Educational Travel, the Cuba Study Group, Engage Cuba, the Latin America Working Group, the National Foreign Trade Council and the Washington Office on Latin America signed a joint official statement in which they called for the suspension of sanctions against Cuba to enable the delivery of humanitarian and medical supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 26 March 2020, Massachusetts Democratic Congressman James McGovern tweeted his agreement with all those who called on the United States to suspend sanctions against Cuba to facilitate humanitarian aid in the context of COVID-19.
- On 29 March 2020, the Executive Director of the Fund for Reconciliation and Development, John McAuliff, wrote a letter to the Chargé d’Affaires of the United States Embassy in Havana, Mara Tekach, in which he advocated cooperation between Cuba and the United States in the face of the pandemic, and the suspension of unilateral sanctions against Cuba and other countries.
- On 31 March 2020, the United States academic Peter Kornbluh published an opinion article in *The Nation* magazine, in which he expressed his support for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba and called for international cooperation in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 2 April 2020, Brian Armas Lauzán, an American of Cuban descent, launched a petition on change.org addressed to the United States Senate and House of Representatives, in which he called for an end to the embargo against Cuba and highlighted the island’s internationalist work to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 4 April 2020, United States film director Oliver Stone and adjunct professor of international human rights at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law Daniel Kovalik, in an article in the *New York Daily News*, demanded an end to the “terribly cruel” sanctions of the Trump Administration against Cuba and other countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 9 April 2020, New York lawmaker José Rivera introduced a resolution in the New York State Assembly calling for an end to the embargo against Cuba.
- On 14 April 2020, the Foundation for the Normalization of Relations between the United States and Cuba published, on change.org, a petition addressed to the United States Department of the Treasury, in which it requested the immediate suspension of economic sanctions against Cuba in the context of COVID-19.
- On 28 April 2020, the United States branch of the Asociación Cultural José Martí, a member of Alianza Martiana, an organization of Cuban emigrés in the United States, published a message in which it called for the immediate elimination of the embargo policy and affirmed its support for the people of Cuba.
- On 5 May 2020, Vermont Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy and Massachusetts Democratic Congressman James McGovern, along with 25 other lawmakers,

sent a letter to Mike Pompeo and Steven Mnuchin, respectively Secretaries of State and the Treasury. In the letter, the lawmakers urged the officials to confirm that, in spite of the embargo, there were no obstacles to the transfer of medical equipment, food, humanitarian items and public health information to Cuba.

- On 5 May 2020, the City Council of Richmond, California, unanimously adopted a resolution in which it called for the lifting of the restrictions on medical and scientific collaboration between Cuba and the United States in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 7 May 2020, the D.C. Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution organized a demonstration outside the Embassy of Cuba in Washington, D.C., to condemn the terrorist attack on the Embassy and call for the lifting of the sanctions imposed by the Government of the United States.

5.2 Opposition by the international community

During the reporting period, the rejection by various members of the international community of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba has increased, as a result of the marked intensification of this policy and, in particular, of its extraterritorial component, expressed, among other measures, in the decision to activate Title III of the Helms-Burton Act starting in May 2019.

Against the current backdrop of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, many around the world have condemned the policy, the impact of which is significantly more painful during this international health crisis.

The following are some examples of the international community's rejection of the embargo:

- On 29 April 2019, the French branch of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP) expressed its solidarity with Cuba in the face of the tightening of the embargo that has been imposed by the United States on the island for nearly 60 years. The organization published a statement categorically rejecting the intention to apply Title III of the Helms-Burton Act as from 2 May 2019, while condemning the "new interference" and the application by the Government of the United States of extraterritorial laws with the aim of hindering the development of Cuba.
- On 14 May 2019, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) agreed to reaffirm the Community's strong support for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba in the final communiqué of the twenty-second meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations of the Community, held in Grenada.
- On 16 May 2019, the Network of Intellectuals, Artists and Social Movements in Defense of Humanity joined the international community's rejection of the decision by the Government of the United States to tighten the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. In a statement published on its website, the Network made an urgent appeal to all progressive forces and to international public opinion, seeking to mobilize resistance to the Helms-Burton Act, which it called an affront to Cuba, Latin America and the entire world, in its disregard for the fundamental principle of the sovereignty of States.
- On 22 May 2019, at its 109th session, the Council of Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States adopted a declaration in opposition to the United States embargo against Cuba. In the text, the members of the Group

expressed their full support and solidarity with the Cuban people and Government, and their deep concern regarding and rejection of the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and its extraterritorial effects. In the declaration, they also urged the Government of the United States to lift the embargo, which they recognized as the primary obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by Cuba.

- On 14 June 2019, at the sixth meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of CARICOM and Cuba, held in Georgetown, participants adopted a final declaration in which they rejected the imposition of unilateral coercive measures and urged the Government of the United States to immediately and unconditionally put an end to the embargo. In the document they recognized the intensification of the extraterritorial nature of the policy and the persecution of Cuban financial transactions. They also condemned the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which reinforced the embargo and flagrantly violated international law, while undermining the sovereignty and interests of third parties.
- On 15 July 2019, the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, Idriss Jazairy, submitted a report to the General Assembly on the subject, in which he stated that unilateral coercive measures with extraterritorial scope were almost universally rejected as contrary to international law, as evidenced by General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.
- During the general debate at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, dignitaries from 43 countries, including 19 Heads of State and Government, denounced the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and called for its immediate lifting. In three of those statements, speakers included thanks for Cuban medical assistance.
- The final declaration of the eighteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Azerbaijan on 25 and 26 October 2019, contained a forceful condemnation of the embargo, the Helms-Burton Act and other measures and aggression imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba.
- On 7 November 2019, the General Assembly adopted, for the twenty-eighth time in succession, the resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, with 187 Member States voting in favour.
- During the debate on and adoption of the resolution, 46 speakers expressed the view that the United States must put an end to its embargo against Cuba. These included six representatives of regional and subregional coordination groups and organizations: the Group of 77 and China, the Group of African States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, CARICOM, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.
- On 10 February 2020, the Assembly of the African Union, at its thirty-third session, held in Ethiopia, adopted a resolution on the impact of sanctions and unilateral coercive measures. In section B of the text, the African Union expressed its concern over the continuation and the illegal nature of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. In the document, it also recognized the embargo as the main obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by Cuba, while reaffirming its support for the General Assembly resolution on the subject, of which the African States vote

in favour every year. The States members of the African Union denounced the new sanctions adopted by the United States, sanctions that expanded the extraterritorial component of the embargo, including through the full implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

- The Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, at its thirty-first Intersessional Meeting, held in Barbados on 18 and 19 February 2020, reiterated its concern over the intensification of the sanctions announced by the Government of the United States under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, sanctions that are aimed at strengthening the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by that country against Cuba. The Conference condemned the application of extraterritorial laws and measures, which it recognized as contrary to international law, and expressed its appreciation for the medical assistance provided by Cuba to the States members of CARICOM over the years. It also rejected the campaigns designed to discredit Cuban medical collaboration.
- On 13 March 2020, the State Council Information Office of China published a document in which it criticized the Government of the United States for violating human rights by imposing embargoes against Cuba and Venezuela.

Since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic, on 11 March 2020, many members of the international system have spoken out against the embargo and against unilateral coercive measures more generally. This is evident from the examples listed below:

- On 19 March 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Syria issued a statement expressing solidarity with Cuba in the face of the embargo and the sanctions imposed by the United States, as they hamper efforts to stop the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 19 March 2020, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament issued a communiqué in which it called for the immediate suspension of commercial, economic and financial sanctions, embargoes and blockades, such as those endured by countries like Cuba and Venezuela, in the context of the global fight against COVID-19. Subsequently, in its Declaration on the Suspension of Foreign Debt Repayment and Economic Embargoes, adopted on 25 March, the Parliament reiterated the call, and insisted that international solidarity and humanitarian law demand the immediate suspension of any type of limitation imposed on countries and communities, and the transformation of such limitations into mutually supportive acts. That request was reiterated on 7 April 2020, in a declaration issued on the occasion of World Health Day.
- On 23 March 2020, several associations of Cubans living in Europe published an open letter addressed to the presidents and prime ministers of the countries of the European Union, asking them to intercede with a view to making the Government of the United States lift the embargo against Cuba. They also denounced the intensification of the policy since Donald Trump's arrival in the White House and pointed out that, in the light of the needs created by COVID-19, maintaining the embargo against the island was twice as genocidal.
- On 24 March 2020, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, called for the urgent suspension or easing of sanctions against countries such as Iran, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Zimbabwe. Subsequently, at a virtual Human Rights Council briefing on 9 April, the High Commissioner insisted that sanctions that had harmful impacts on the health and human rights of vulnerable people should be lifted or "adapted" as a matter of urgency.

- On 25 March 2020, the Secretary-General sent a letter to the member countries of the Group of 20, urging the removal of sanctions that limit countries' efforts to address COVID-19. Two days later, he issued a statement addressed to the States Members and main system entities of the United Nations on the response to COVID-19, in which he reiterated the importance of lifting economic sanctions that affect countries' capacity to respond to the pandemic.
- On 26 March 2020, at an extraordinary meeting of the Group of 20, the President of Argentina, Alberto Fernández, delivered a speech in which he called on the assembled leaders not to remain passive in the face of sanctions involving economic embargoes that only serve to suffocate people in the midst of the humanitarian crisis unleashed by COVID-19.
- On 28 March 2020, the British solidarity organization Cuba Solidarity Campaign published an open letter on its website (cuba-solidarity.org.uk) calling for the lifting of the United States embargo against the island, in return for Cuban support in the global struggle against COVID-19. By 7 April 2020, some 12,667 signatures had been collected in support of this petition, including those of 24 Members of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.
- On 29 March 2020, Grupo de Puebla, an alliance of progressive international leaders, urged the countries of the world to request the Government of the United States to put an end to the embargoes imposed unilaterally against Cuba and Venezuela.
- On 30 March 2020, the Co-Presidents of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly issued a declaration on COVID-19, in which they called on the international community to temporarily suspend restrictive and punitive measures, such as economic, commercial or diplomatic embargoes, in order to focus efforts on fighting the pandemic.
- On 31 March 2020, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Hilal Elver, said in a statement that the ongoing imposition of sanctions that paralyse the economy in Syria, Venezuela, Iran, Cuba and, to a lesser extent, Zimbabwe, to cite only the most prominent cases, seriously violated the fundamental right of every person to sufficient and adequate food. She added that the immediate lifting of such unilateral sanctions was a matter of humanitarian urgency.
- On 2 April 2020, the National Secretary of the French Communist Party, Fabien Roussel, made a statement demanding that the Government of the United States immediately lift its embargo against Cuba, at a time when the international community was fighting the scourge of COVID-19.
- On 3 April 2020, the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, Alena Douhan, made a statement on the impact of such measures in the context of COVID-19, in which she asked Governments to withdraw or suspend all sanctions.
- On 3 April 2020, at a virtual press conference, the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation, Arancha González, expressed the support of the European Union for the application of humanitarian exemptions in order to suspend the economic sanctions imposed on countries such as Cuba, Iran and Venezuela, to facilitate their access to the medical equipment needed to combat the coronavirus.
- On 3 April 2020, the European Parliament Group for Friendship and Solidarity with the People of Cuba sent a message of thanks to the Government of Cuba for sending medical brigades to Europe to help contain COVID-19. In addition, the Group recognized Cuban health professionals' tradition of solidarity and

demanded the lifting of the embargo against the island to enable it to cope with the extraordinary contingencies created by the battle against the coronavirus.

- On 3 April 2020, the non-governmental organization Oxfam published a press release entitled “The United States embargo against Cuba is aggravating the COVID-19 crisis on the island”.
- On 5 April 2020, the Secretary-General of the African National Congress, Ace Magashule, issued a statement requesting the Trump Administration to immediately lift all sanctions against Cuba, Iran, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Palestine to allow the Governments of those nations to obtain the support and resources needed to protect their people. The African National Congress also expressed its appreciation to Cuba for the incredible example of humanity and international solidarity it showed in deploying medical brigades to several countries to help combat COVID-19.
- On 6 April 2020, nearly 60 Spanish social collective organizations and associations sent a communiqué to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in which they demanded the suspension of sanctions and embargoes against Venezuela, Cuba, Iran and Palestine, to enable those countries to respond to the health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Beginning on 6 April 2020, the Foro de São Paulo, a grouping of progressive Latin American and Caribbean parties and movements, held a two-week event to mobilize resistance to the economic embargoes and sanctions imposed by the Government of the United States on Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, and advocate their lifting in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of the event was to collect as many signatures as possible in support of an online petition against the illegal embargoing of countries and in favour of solidarity among peoples, published on www.change.org, as well as to raise awareness regarding the humanitarian and economic consequences of the United States sanctions for those countries.
- On 6 April 2020, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, issued statements in which he emphasized that no international sanctions against countries such as Cuba or Venezuela could be allowed to affect the delivery of humanitarian aid, especially during the coronavirus pandemic.
- On 11 April 2020, the Spanish political party Izquierda Unida, which is part of the ruling coalition, published a statement of support for the international “Embargo no, solidarity yes” campaign, which was launched to support Cuba in the face of the hostile actions of the United States in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On 12 April 2020, during Easter Mass, Pope Francis asked the world to “relax” the sanctions imposed on countries affected by the coronavirus, as such sanctions prevented them from offering adequate help to their citizens.

- On 30 April 2020, a group of special procedure mandate holders from the United Nations system³ spoke out against the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and called for its lifting, as the policy obstructs humanitarian responses aimed at supporting the island's health system to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular funding for the purchase of medicines, medical equipment, food and other essential goods. The experts further noted that the Government of the United States had ignored repeated calls for the lifting of sanctions, which undermined the ability of Cuba and other countries to respond effectively to the pandemic and save lives. They also expressed particular concern about the risks to the rights to life, health and other fundamental rights of the most vulnerable sectors of the Cuban population, including persons with disabilities and the elderly, who are at much greater risk if they contract the virus.

During the reporting period, calls for an end to this unjust policy proliferated. In 87 countries, 256 activities were undertaken by organizations for solidarity with Cuba. Statements were issued, as well as denunciations from parliaments, opinion makers and ministers, among other public figures, requesting an end to the prohibitions that are restricting access by Cuba to vital resources needed to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, at least during the health emergency.

Conclusions

The topic addressed in the present report is of vital importance to the Cuban people, as it is directly related to the right to life, to a nation's very existence. The embargo contravenes the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, hinders the normal development of international relations and seriously harms the legitimate interests of many States, institutions and individuals around the world.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, the Government of the United States reinforced the embargo against Cuba until it attained unprecedented levels of aggression. In particular, the extraterritorial dimension of the policy was brutally intensified by the full application of the Helms-Burton Act from May 2019. The Act is an affront to the principles of international law and to international trade rules, in that it provides for the application of economic pressure that is damaging to the sovereignty of Cuba and third countries. Other measures taken during the reporting period that were harmful to the Cuban economy and people included the increase in persecution of Cuban financial and commercial transactions, the siege to deprive the country of fuel supplies, the ban on flights from the United States to Cuban provinces other than Havana and the campaign to discredit Cuban medical cooperation programmes.

The Government of the United States has worked viciously to sabotage the international cooperation in the field of health offered by Cuba in solidarity, cooperation that is all the more necessary during health emergencies. Through a campaign of slander, United States politicians and officials are directly attacking a programme grounded in the most genuine United Nations conceptions of South-South

³ The statement was signed by the following experts: Alena Douhan, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; Saad Alfarargi, Special Rapporteur on the right to development; Catalina Devandas-Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; Agnès Callamard, Special Rapporteur on arbitrary, summary or extrajudicial executions; Livingstone Sewanyana, Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; Obiora Okafor, Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity; and Nils Melzer, Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

cooperation, which, moreover, is recognized by the international community and lauded by the highest officials of the United Nations and several of its agencies.

During the reporting period, the embargo caused Cuba losses of approximately \$5,570,300,000. This represents an increase of around \$1,226,700,000 with respect to the previous period. For the first time, the total amount of the losses caused by the policy have exceeded \$5 billion, which illustrates how intense the embargo has now become. The losses calculated do not take into account the actions of the Government of the United States in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, because they continued after the reporting period. That information will be included in next year's report.

At current prices, the losses accumulated in almost six decades of application of the policy amount to \$144,413,700,000. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the embargo has caused quantifiable losses of more than \$1,098,008,000,000.

As shown in the present report, the embargo is the main obstacle to the economic and social development of Cuba, the well-being of all Cubans, and the implementation of the National Plan for the Economic and Social Development of Cuba until 2030 and the 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

The United States has arrogantly and contemptuously ignored not only the 28 General Assembly resolutions condemning the embargo but also the many voices, inside and outside that country, calling for an end to the policy.

Under these particularly complex circumstances, Cuba and its people are confident that they can continue to count on the support of the international community in their legitimate demand to put an end unconditionally to this unjust unilateral policy.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]

[18 March 2020]

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in conformity with the principled position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 of opposing unilateral sanctions in all forms, fully supports the draft resolution on the "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

We denounce the United States embargo on Cuba as a challenge to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, an infringement on sovereignty and a crime against humanity.

The unilateral sanctions of the United States against sovereign States draw condemnation and denunciations from the international community as days go by and bring about only isolation of the United States itself.

Owing to the United States policy of an economic and financial blockade and a commercial embargo spanning more than 60 years, the economic loss of Cuba is estimated to have reached trillions of United States dollars.

For more than 20 years, the Helms-Burton Act has guided the interventionist efforts of anti-Cuban sectors in the United States to attack the Cuban nation and undermine its sovereignty. By virtue of its implementation, hundreds of millions of dollars have been allocated to subvert Cuba's internal order, and countless measures have been proposed to bring about a change of regime. Its economic impact has seriously affected the country's development efforts as well as the population's well-being.

However, the Cuban people unyieldingly bring about great successes in their struggle to safeguard their system and achieve economic development and prosperity with the active support of States Members of the United Nations.

The Cuban people are unshakably advancing along the road of socialism chosen by themselves and achieved economic growth of 1.2 per cent in 2019, even in the face of sanctions and natural disasters.

International support to and solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba in their just cause are also increasing, and the General Assembly resolutions requesting an end to the United States economic embargo on Cuba have been adopted on 28 occasions by an overwhelming majority of Member States, except the United States and Israel.

The longer the anachronistic United States economic embargo on Cuba continues, the more the Cuban people will struggle with their redoubled efforts.

Once again, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea extends its full support to and solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba in their just cause to safeguard the sovereignty of the country.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

[Original: French]
[11 May 2020]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the importance that the Secretary-General continues to attach to the issue of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo supports the steps taken by the United States to lift certain sanctions, in particular the restrictions on travel for family reasons and on remittances, the authorization for the development of communication services between the two countries, and the reopening of the embassies of the United States in Havana and of Cuba in Washington, D.C., as a means of gradual normalization with a view to the full resolution of the issue.

At a time when all the peoples of the world are facing the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo also supports any initiative through which Cuba and the United States are urged to engage in a constructive, fruitful dialogue that could help to bring about a peaceful and mutually beneficial settlement for the peoples and Governments of the two countries.

Djibouti

[Original: English]
[19 February 2020]

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

Furthermore, the Republic of Djibouti voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) and thus has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to the resolution, and, therefore, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

Dominica

[Original: English]
[26 March 2020]

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

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica has embraced and will continue to embrace the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba as a fellow member of the United Nations, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America (ALBA) and a sister nation of the Caribbean. For over 38 years, the Governments and peoples of both nations have enjoyed strong cultural and political ties and solidarity in a number of areas of cooperation, especially education, health and sports.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica is fully aware that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a threat to all of humanity. Thus, solidarity is now crucial in the face of this unprecedented global health crisis. The Government and people of the Republic of Cuba have risen to the occasion and have dispatched contingents to various regions to aid in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. We therefore recognize the global humanitarian effort of the Government and people of Cuba in this fight.

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

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica continues to view with serious concern the decision to fully apply Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, with its resulting negative consequences, and reiterates the call for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, which has done much damage to the Cuban people over the past 61 years. This is a call for the return to the well-established reliance on dialogue and diplomacy as core strategies for the resolution of outstanding issues between members of the international community.

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

Dominican Republic

[Original: Spanish]
[30 March 2020]

In various regional and international forums, the Dominican Republic has reiterated that it does not adopt, advocate or apply any measures involving intervention in the internal affairs of States, underscoring its commitment to the norms and principles of self-determination of peoples and sovereignty of States, which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and public international law.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[27 March 2020]

Ecuador has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7; moreover, it fulfils its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, *inter alia*, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

The Government of Ecuador has supported the annual resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. It has expressed its support by voting in favour of those resolutions and participating in the General Assembly debate convened to advocate for an end to the unjust embargo which seriously affects the economic and social development of the Cuban people, and which runs counter to the principles and provisions of the Charter.

Ecuador maintains close relations with Cuba and, in the area of trade, concluded Partial Scope Economic Complementarity Agreement No. 46 with Cuba on 7 March 2001, within the framework of the Latin American Integration Association. This Agreement is aimed at strengthening reciprocal trade through the granting of tariff and non-tariff preferences.

Egypt

[Original: English]
[25 March 2020]

The Arab Republic of Egypt has voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 74/7, in line with its consistent position that unilateral sanctions imposed outside the framework of the United Nations are not a course of action that Egypt can condone.

The embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba constitutes a clear violation of the principles of multilateralism and is in breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as of the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and mutual trust.

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

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

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

Egypt believes that the embargo continues to be a counterproductive and morally insupportable policy, which has not served the purpose of breaking the Cuban people's determination to control their own future. And, in spite of all the detrimental

repercussions and adverse impacts of the embargo, the Government of Cuba has made enormous efforts in meeting the needs of its people.

What has been proved through over 58 years of embargo against Cuba is that, in this globalized world, the Cuban people can still survive thanks to their perseverance and hope.

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

Egypt once again urges the United States to comply immediately and fully with all 28 General Assembly resolutions, which were adopted by the overwhelming majority of the international community, and to put an end to the unjustified embargo, which should never have existed and must cease once and for all.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]
[26 May 2020]

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

El Salvador is aware that the embargo affects vital areas of the Cuban economic and social systems, such as health, education, food, sport and culture, and therefore considers the embargo to be a deplorable action that has seriously affected the progress and development of the Cuban people.

The mechanisms for implementing and tightening the embargo against Cuba constitute grave violations of the principles governing economic, commercial, monetary and financial relations, and numerous United Nations resolutions.

El Salvador believes that, in order for the international community to advance firmly towards development, unilateral measures such as those mentioned above must end, not only in accordance with international law but also because the embargo has caused incalculable harm to the Cuban people.

Lastly, El Salvador recognizes the growing strength of the international community's call to lift the embargo against the Cuban people, and once more joins that call and reiterates the urgent need to end the embargo.

Equatorial Guinea

[Original: Spanish]
[17 March 2020]

As on numerous occasions, specifically at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has consistently indicated and insistently focused on the urgent need to end the economic embargo to which Cuba has been subjected for several decades.

Today, the laws and regulations that support the policy of an embargo against Cuba are undeniably hindering the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United

Nations for 2030 and that these laws and regulations undermine the integrity, happiness and development of the Cuban people.

The extraterritorial nature of the laws and regulations in place to execute the United States policy towards Cuba jeopardizes the spirit of peace, cooperation, solidarity and true free trade that should prevail in the international community, as exemplified by the effective application of the so-called Helms-Burton Act.

Equatorial Guinea calls for attention to be paid to the clear positive energy bringing the Cuban and United States peoples closer together, reflected in the fact that more than a few sectors within American society show interest and willing in regard to improving the cultural, academic, scientific and personal links and exchanges between the two countries.

Eritrea

[Original: English]
[18 March 2020]

The Government of the State of Eritrea has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7.

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

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

Eswatini

[Original: English]
[12 March 2020]

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

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

Ethiopia

[Original: English]
[27 February 2020]

The Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia has never promulgated any laws, legal provisions or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7, adopted on 7 November 2019.

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

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

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

European Union

[Original: English]

[1 April 2020]

The European Union and its member States believe the unilateral measures of the United States against Cuba should be ended. The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States contributes to the economic problems in Cuba, negatively affecting the living standards of the Cuban people and having consequences in the humanitarian field as well. The embargo will constitute an additional obstacle to Cuba's ability to face the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The measures directed against Cuba negatively affect the interests of the European Union and violate commonly accepted rules of international trade. The introduction by the United States Administration of additional restrictions and the ban on individual self-directed travel from the United States, in particular, not only curtails the possibility of engagement with the Cuban people, but also has a negative impact on Cuba's nascent private sector.

The European Union and its member States have been clearly expressing their opposition to the unlawful extraterritorial extension of the United States embargo, contained in, among others, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

In November 1996, the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted a regulation and a joint action to protect the interests of natural and legal persons resident in the European Union against the extraterritorial effects of the Helms-Burton legislation. In particular, Regulation (EC) No [2271/96](#) prohibits compliance with that legislation and forbids the European Union member States to give effect to that legislation. Moreover, on 18 May 1998, at the European Union-United States Summit in London, a package was agreed covering waivers of Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act; a commitment by the United States Administration to resist future extraterritorial legislation of that kind; and an understanding with respect to disciplines for the strengthening of investment protection (together, the "Agreement").

Against this backdrop, the European Union regrets the United States Government's decision to activate Title III fully, and to resume enforcement of Title IV. We believe this clearly violates the European Union-United States Agreement of 1998. The European Union recalls that it has delivered – and is continuing to deliver – on its commitments under this Agreement and calls on the United States to do the same. In view of the activation of Title III and Title IV of the Helms-Burton Act, against companies or nationals from European Union member States, among others, the European Union must consider all instruments and options at its disposal to protect the economic activities of European Union nationals and companies, including their investments. This encompasses Regulation (EC) No 2271/96, whose provisions can

be invoked by European Union operators that are negatively affected by the extraterritorial effects of the Helms-Burton legislation.

The European Union is convinced that engagement with Cuba at all levels, including civil society, is the most effective approach to contributing to the country's institutional, economic and social modernization, including a frank and intensive dialogue on the necessary improvements with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms. In the framework of the European Union-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement, which has been provisionally applied since 1 November 2017, the European Union offers Cuba a consistent and reliable partnership to support it on the assumption that the country continues to seek economic and social reforms, sustainable development and common solutions to global challenges, while continuing to promote democracy and respect for human rights.

Fiji

[Original: English]
[13 April 2020]

The Government of Fiji reaffirms its support for the resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

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

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

Gabon

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

The Government of the Gabonese Republic reiterates its commitment to calling for the repeal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

In accordance with its obligations under the relevant purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Gabon voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), and previous resolutions related to the matter.

Gabon remains concerned by the negative impact of this embargo on the Cuban people and the Cuban diaspora.

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

Finally, Gabon calls on the international community to pursue its tireless efforts in calling for the normalization of relations between the two countries.

Gambia

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

The Government of the Gambia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7. Accordingly, the Gambia is opposed to the continued enactment or application of such laws, acts or measures against Cuba, which impede the free flow of international trade and navigation. The embargo against Cuba contravenes the fundamental principles of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, violating the sovereign equality of States and the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other Member States. The embargo has no legitimate or moral justification, given the fact that it continues to undermine the essential rights to economic emancipation and to development of the Cuban people; it must come to an immediate end.

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

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

Georgia

[Original: English]
[31 March 2020]

Georgia reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 74/7. Georgia has not promulgated or applied laws or taken measures against Cuba that would prohibit or restrict economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Georgia.

Ghana

[Original: English]
[31 March 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Ghana remains committed to the Charter of the United Nations and the established principles of international law, which underpin the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. For this reason, Ghana joins the majority of Member States in calling for the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba, which militates against the legitimate political, social and economic aspirations of the Government and people of Cuba.

Ghana shares the view that the continued imposition of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba impedes the realization of the country's fundamental rights to development, including the right to food, medical care and social services for the most vulnerable, among them women and children. It also undermines the country's national and collective efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a result, Ghana has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the embargo. Furthermore, the

Government of Ghana continues to refrain from promulgating and enforcing laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7.

In this connection, Ghana once again expresses solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba and reiterates its call for the United States to heed the calls by the international community to lift its embargo against Cuba, in order to enable the country to achieve its full potential for the benefit of its people.

Grenada

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

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

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

The unfettered adverse effects of this embargo form a consistent impediment to the goal of human development as it undermines the fundamental principles of humanity. Grenada continues to view it as counterproductive in its application and in contravention of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Grounded in this conviction, Grenada unreservedly supports General Assembly resolution 74/7, which calls for conformity with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Grenada further highlights the humanitarianism Cuba has displayed to the world during the onslaught of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), giving hope and providing much-needed and life-saving medical support to many. Now, more than ever, Cuba needs to be recognized for the potential and selfless, invaluable contributions of its people and be readmitted to the economic, commercial and financial community of nations.

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]
[3 March 2020]

Since 1997, the Republic of Guatemala has supported the resolutions on the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba, in accordance with its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

On 7 November 2019, the country joined the efforts of the United Nations system by adopting General Assembly resolution 74/7, and pursuant to paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, Guatemala declares that it has not promulgated or applied laws or measures of any kind contrary to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations or contrary to the freedom of international trade and navigation.

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

Consequently, there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Guatemala and Cuba, as reflected in the excellent relations between our countries.

Guatemala is concerned that, despite the General Assembly resolution, the policies of the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba are being increasingly tightened, with consequences that harm the development and well-being of the Cuban people.

In that connection, the Republic of Guatemala reiterates and makes a strong call for the restoration of a fruitful dialogue between these countries to ensure the rapid reestablishment and normalization of their diplomatic, economic, commercial and financial relations and mutual cooperation.

The Republic of Guatemala will continue to join the international community in supporting and promoting actions that lead to a prompt and definitive solution to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

Guinea

[Original: French]
[29 April 2020]

In accordance with the rules of international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Government of the Republic of Guinea, faithful to the ideals of the sovereignty and equality of peoples, reaffirms its full support for the international community's efforts to lift the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The embargo constitutes a serious violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the valiant Cuban people and hinders its development in all areas.

The Government of Guinea deplores the adoption and application by certain States of measures and regulations intended to further stifle and overwhelm the efforts of the Republic of Cuba in its struggle for economic and social development.

The Government of Guinea once again welcomes the support for and solidarity with the Cuban people demonstrated through the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution [74/7](#) on 7 November 2019.

It encourages all States Members of the United Nations to implement the resolution strictly and unconditionally in order to end the embargo, whose consequences are disastrous.

Guinea-Bissau

[Original: French]
[19 March 2020]

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

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

Guinea-Bissau notes with concern the actions and measures aimed at tightening the embargo.

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

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

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau therefore acknowledges the importance attached by the Secretary-General to this issue and calls for the full implementation of resolution 74/7.

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau also calls upon Cuba and the United States to reach an agreement through sincere and constructive dialogue, with a view to improving ties between the two States.

Guyana

[Original: English]
[31 March 2020]

The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana has consistently demonstrated its unwavering respect for, and adherence to, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including those stated in General Assembly resolution 74/7.

Accordingly, the Cooperative Republic of Guyana has not enacted any legislation or adopted any policies or practices the extraterritorial effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States, including Cuba. Further, the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana is in full compliance with and remains fully supportive of General Assembly resolution 74/7.

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

The Government of Guyana notes with grave concern the increasing punitive measures being levied against the Cuban people and the adverse effects of such measures. Recalling the earlier steps taken by the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Cuba to remove impediments inhibiting friendly relations between the two countries, Guyana encourages constructive dialogue between those countries as a means of building mutual trust and respect, ultimately leading to a complete normalization of relations between them.

The Government of Guyana notes with appreciation the unwavering support of the Government of Cuba for the efforts of many Member States to combat the deleterious impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Cuba's solidarity, medical support and international efforts to stem the spread of the virus outside its borders are part of a long and consistent pattern of global humanitarian commitment. As such, we salute the dedicated healthcare professionals and other Cuban workers deployed around the world in the frontlines of the response to the pandemic.

The Government of Guyana notes with concern that the measures of the embargo, particularly at this time when the world is battling the COVID-19 pandemic,

hinder, undermine and constrain the contribution of the Cuban people to global efforts to confront the challenge in an effective and timely manner.

Haiti

[Original: French]

[13 February 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Haiti has never promulgated any laws, legal provisions or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 74/7, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019.

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

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

The Government of the Republic of Haiti therefore hopes that normal bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States are resumed to the benefit of both countries.

Honduras

[Original: Spanish]

[8 April 2020]

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

Iceland

[Original: English]

[20 March 2020]

The Government of Iceland reaffirms its position in favour of General Assembly resolution 74/7. Iceland neither promulgates nor applies any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 74/7. Iceland does not apply trade or economic legislation that restricts or discourages trade with or investment in Cuba. Iceland opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures to a third country.

India

[Original: English]

[16 March 2020]

India has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7, and, therefore, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

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

India recalls the Final Documents adopted by the Eighteenth Summit Conference of Heads of State and Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 25 and 26 October 2019, on this subject and the Santa Cruz Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77, as well as other high-level decisions of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and urges the international community to adopt all necessary measures to protect the sovereign rights of all countries.

Indonesia

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

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

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

Despite our consecutive support for a resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, regrettably, we have witnessed little to no improvement in the situation. The suffering and hardships of the people of Cuba, particularly the vulnerable groups such as children, women and the elderly, remain.

As we enter the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, any act that would impede another country's capacity to fulfil their economic and social development is deemed intolerable. The embargo runs counter to the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and risks leaving the people of Cuba behind.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo, which limits Cuba's access to financial and international cooperation, as well as medical supplies, will also hinder measures needed to address the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. This, in the end, will inflict harm on the health and well-being of the Cuban people. It is imperative and timely that the embargo be lifted to remove the risk to millions of lives.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia continues to underline the importance of enhanced dialogue with a view to ending the embargo imposed against Cuba and towards normalization of bilateral relations.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

[Original: English]
[27 March 2020]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its strong opposition to any kind of unilateral coercive measures and the economic, commercial and financial embargo against United Nations Member State Cuba.

In conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not applied nor promulgated any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

During the past half century and in defiance of international law and commitments under the Charter, the United States has had an economic, commercial and financial embargo in place against the Republic of Cuba, with the sole goal of the economic suffocation of the Cuban people.

On 7 November 2019, recalling its previous resolutions, the General Assembly adopted resolution [74/7](#) to end the United States embargo against Cuba. Even so, the United States has continued the promulgation of economic, commercial and financial sanctions against Cuba, in blatant breach of its obligations and insubordination to the collective will of the international community, as reflected in the aforementioned resolutions.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba continues to adversely affect the living conditions and human rights of the Cuban people and will hamper the efforts of the Government of Cuba to achieve sustainable development.

It is a matter of great concern that the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against Member States by the United States Administration, with extensive extraterritorial effects, have reached an unprecedented level. These measures have been taken with the sole intention of pursuing a political agenda through inflicting tremendous hardship and suffering on nations, not only by affecting freedom of trade but also, in particular, trade in humanitarian goods and commodities, such as foodstuffs, medicine and agricultural and animal products.

Moreover, through its new excessive unilateralism, the United States has even introduced unilateral coercive measures against other States for implementing their commitments under Security Council resolutions. A clear example is the irresponsible conduct of the United States with respect to Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). The United States, in addition to reimposing its unilateral illegal sanctions against Iran in gross violation of its obligations under the Charter as well as its strict commitments under Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), brazenly continues to force other States to either violate that resolution or face punishment.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the increasing number of unilateral acts in international relations, including the unilateral use of force, the threat of the use of force and unilateral coercive economic measures have grave and adverse consequences for multilateralism, international law, the Charter, human rights and the right to development.

We are of the firm view that any unilateral coercive economic measure adversely affecting the entire population of a nation, hindering that population's ability to have its humanitarian needs met, or impeding the full enjoyment of that population's fundamental human rights, shall be considered a grave violation of international law. In consultation with other Member States, we will continue to demand international

means to prevent, remove, minimize and redress the adverse impacts of unilateral coercive measures.

In the same vein and as desired in the annual resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, we call upon the United Nations to prepare a substantial contribution on the subject, including through the preparation of a profound report on the implementation of the resolution. Along with the accumulation of views and reports of Member States and other international bodies, the annual reports should contain substantive analysis and propose practical arrangements to ensure their full implementation.

The Islamic Republic of Iran shares the concern of the Government and the people of Cuba and emphasizes the urgent need to put an end to unilateral coercive measures and to fully implement General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

Iraq

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

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

Iraq declares its solidarity with Cuba and its full support for the right of the Cuban people to self-determination and its sovereign right to benefit from the use of its land and waters without any economic restrictions. Iraq rejects illegal economic measures that affect vulnerable groups, in particular, children, women, the elderly and the sick; hinder development; and impede efforts to eradicate poverty in Cuba.

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

Jamaica

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

The Government of Jamaica remains fully committed to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, particularly, the principles of sovereign equality, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, as well as freedom of international trade and navigation of all Member States.

In keeping with the obligations under the Charter and international law, and pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, the Government of Jamaica has not promulgated any legislation or measure that would infringe upon the sovereignty of any State or its lawful national interests.

Jamaica agrees that the imposition of unilateral extraterritorial laws is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Charter and undermines the principles of multilateralism, sovereignty and free trade.

Jamaica remains concerned about the impact of the extension of the application against Cuba of the Trading with the Enemy Act from 14 September 2019 to 14 September 2020, thus keeping in place the legal framework on which the 1962 policy of a blockade against Cuba is based.

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

This national position is represented at the multilateral level, as Jamaica has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions, including 74/7, which call for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, and urge all Member States to uphold the Charter by ceasing the application of such inimical measures.

Within regional forums, Jamaica has joined with other Member States in affirming this position. These include the thirty-first Inter-sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in February 2020, at which they reiterated their concern over the enhanced sanctions announced under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act that strengthen the United States economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. The statement denounced as unjustifiable the application of laws and measures of an extraterritorial nature that are contrary to international law.

At the eighth Summit of the Association of Caribbean States, in March 2019, Jamaica also reaffirmed, in the Declaration of Managua, its appeal to the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, trade and financial embargo it imposes on Cuba, as well as to repeal the Helms-Burton Act and end its extraterritorial enforcement.

Jamaica reiterates its call for the complete and immediate removal of the embargo, which continues to have dire social and economic effects on Cuba and its people.

Japan

[Original: English]
[10 March 2020]

The Government of Japan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind that are referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 74/7.

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

The Government of Japan has been closely following the situation in relation to the above-mentioned legislation and the surrounding circumstances, and its concern remains unchanged. Having considered the matter with the utmost care, Japan voted in favour of resolution 74/7.

Jordan

[Original: English]
[4 February 2020]

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has not applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [74/7](#). The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has consistently voted in favour of resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Kazakhstan

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

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

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

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

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

Kenya

[Original: English]
[23 March 2020]

The Government of Kenya has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in paragraph 2 of resolution [74/7](#).

The Government of Kenya believes in a rules-based multilateral system and as such cannot support unilateral decisions that seek to block the Republic of Cuba and cause continued suffering for the friendly Cuban people.

The United Nations should never uphold or support any sanctions or embargoes in perpetuity, particularly when these have undermined Cuba's overall objectives of national ownership, sustainable peace and sustainable development.

It is for these reasons that Kenya always votes in favour of the resolutions on the necessity to eliminate this prolonged burden on the Cuban people. The Cuban people deserve a chance to self-determination and free participation in the global market, as well as in other trends and events at play, as a nation duly recognized by the United Nations.

Kiribati

[Original: English]
[24 April 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Kiribati reiterates its support for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 74/7 and, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial and financial relations between Kiribati and Cuba – or, for that matter, any other country.

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

Kuwait

[Original: English]
[15 April 2020]

The State of Kuwait supports the implementation of General Assembly resolution 74/7, with an emphasis on the need to comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation.

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

Kyrgyzstan

[Original: English]
[24 February 2020]

In its foreign policy, the Kyrgyz Republic firmly adheres to the fundamental norms and principles of international law, including the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and advocates respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. For its part, the Kyrgyz Republic consistently supports the efforts of States Members of the United Nations to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

[Original: English]
[6 March 2020]

The Lao People's Democratic Republic would like to reaffirm its position that an embargo, with its extraterritorial implications, not only hinders the socioeconomic development of a nation, but it also contradicts the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law and the sovereign equality of States, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has therefore neither promulgated nor applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7.

The imposition of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America not only violates international law,

but it also imposes severe restrictions and obstacles to the socioeconomic development of Cuba. Against this backdrop, the Lao People's Democratic Republic calls for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba as soon as possible.

Lebanon

[Original: English]
[26 February 2020]

The Government of Lebanon fully complies with General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", in accordance with the principles of the United Nations and international law.

This is a long-standing position of Lebanon, based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law that underscore the need to respect the sovereignty of States.

Lesotho

[Original: English]
[17 April 2020]

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

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

Liberia

[Original: English]
[7 May 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Liberia supports the call to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba, principally on humanitarian grounds, especially as the embargo poses challenges to the people of Cuba.

The position of the Republic of Liberia is in line with the African Union's common position, which calls for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

In this regard, Liberia collaborates with other Member States of the United Nations to support the call to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba and the resolutions on that matter.

Libya

[Original: Arabic]
[30 March 2020]

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

In keeping with its principled position, Libya voted in favour of resolution 74/7 because it opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. It calls for differences between States to be resolved by peaceful means and for shunning coercive unilateral measures, which violate the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and human rights and impede efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals to be attained by 2030.

Libya therefore urges all countries to resolve their differences through dialogue and mutual understanding.

Liechtenstein

[Original: English]
[31 January 2020]

The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”. The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein is furthermore of the view that legislation whose implementation entails measures or regulations having extraterritorial effects is inconsistent with generally recognized principles of international law.

Madagascar

[Original: English]
[2 March 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Madagascar has neither promulgated nor applied laws or economic, trade and financial sanctions against the Republic of Cuba.

Madagascar supports any measures aiming to lift the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

Malawi

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Malawi wishes to register its support for General Assembly resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

Malaysia

[Original: English]
[17 March 2020]

Malaysia remains opposed to all forms of unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions and embargoes that infringe on the norms of international law and contradict the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Such unilateral economic measures not only restrict free and open business across borders, but they also hamper the economic and social development of the general population.

In this connection, Malaysia urges an immediate end to the unilateral embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which has impeded that nation's development and caused significant suffering for the Cuban people. Malaysia further calls on all parties to resolve their disputes amicably through dialogue and negotiations.

Malaysia would continue to support efforts of the international community to bring an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions and embargoes imposed on any member of the United Nations, consistent with the provisions of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), adopted on 7 November 2019.

Maldives

[Original: English]
[19 March 2020]

The Republic of Maldives is against imposing any kind of sanctions against any country without an explicit mandate from the Security Council. The Republic of Maldives has therefore not imposed any sanctions on Cuba, nor has it enacted any laws or regulations that would contravene the provisions of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), in support of which the Republic of Maldives has voted.

Mali

[Original: French]
[30 March 2020]

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

The Government of the Republic of Mali, which fully supports General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), adopted by the Assembly on 7 November 2019, has not promulgated any laws or applied any measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to that resolution.

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

Mauritania

[Original: English]
[5 May 2020]

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

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

Mauritius

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

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

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

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[23 March 2020]

Mexico believes that any unilateral measure by a State to effect political, economic or social change in another State runs contrary to the norms of international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

In this regard, Mexico reiterates its firm rejection of unilateral trade laws intended to have extraterritorial effects and regrets the decision of the United States Government to apply, for the first time in history, title III of the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act) which, since May 2019, has allowed United States citizens to take legal action in United States courts against those who profit from the use of property confiscated by the Cuban Government after 1 January 1959.

The intention of the provisions is to make any person, of any nationality, who carries out commercial or financial activities in Cuba in relation to confiscated property, liable to a lawsuit.

The Cuban economy is currently facing major challenges. Mexico recognizes the efforts of Cuba to promote reforms aimed at creating more efficient markets, greater productivity and a more modern foreign investment policy, for the benefit of the Cuban people.

It also recognizes its efforts to guarantee basic services in education, health, culture and sports, despite the tense economic situation and in a context of austerity.

For Mexico, Cuba is a strategic ally. Both of our countries are experiencing an intense process to renew our institutions, in view of the new paradigms that are shaping the new regional and global geopolitical scenario.

Mexico and Cuba are pleased to engage in a foreign policy based on the defence of multilateralism, international cooperation for development, friendship, respect for all countries and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Our similarities and affinities are evident in a strong bilateral agenda in the political, economic and cooperation fields. In recent years, we have been energizing our political dialogue to find joint solutions to the challenges we face as a region.

In 2019, the seventh meeting of the Standing Mexico-Cuba Information and Consultation Mechanism, our main forum for political dialogue, and the thirteenth meeting of the Working Group on Migration and Consular Affairs, allowed us to promote joint actions to address the complex situation of migration that year.

Our proximity and a dynamic bilateral agenda led to reciprocal visits. In 2019, Foreign Ministers Marcelo Ebrard and Bruno Rodríguez met four times. Likewise, President Miguel Díaz-Canel made his first official visit to Mexico as President of Cuba in October 2019. This political dialogue at the highest level allowed us to strengthen not only our bonds of friendship and trust but also our determination to move forward together, as partners and allies, renewing our ties through endeavours in new fields.

Mexico is currently Cuba's fifth- and the region's second-largest trading partner and our growing trade ties are growing stronger.

In 2019, domestic exports to Cuba were supported through letters of credit issued by the National Bank of Cuba and guaranteed by the National Bank of Foreign Trade of Mexico. A total of 23 Mexican companies benefited from this mechanism.

Tangible progress is also being made in cooperation in education, science and culture. Visitor exchanges are increasing annually: there are more than 80 weekly flights between Mexico and Cuba and Mexican airlines operate more flights between Mexico City and Havana than any other Latin American capital.

Mexico believes that relations between neighbours in the Americas, based on mutual respect and understanding, are essential to the growth and development of countries, requiring greater openness and a freer flow of people, goods, technologies and ideas.

Monaco

[Original: French]
[3 March 2020]

Pursuant to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the general principles of international law, the Principality of Monaco has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) adopted by the Assembly on 7 November 2019.

Mongolia

[Original: English]
[3 February 2020]

In accordance with paragraphs 2 to 4 of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), the Government of Mongolia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution.

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

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

Montenegro

[Original: English]
[5 March 2020]

Montenegro supported the adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/7, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Montenegro has not adopted or implemented any laws, policies or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 74/7, and the Government of Montenegro remains committed to developing cooperation with Cuba at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Morocco

[Original: French]
[11 February 2020]

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the cardinal principles of international law.

The Kingdom of Morocco has always encouraged the development of friendly relations between States Members of the United Nations.

Mozambique

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

The Republic of Mozambique has never promulgated, applied, collaborated with or contributed to the application of any of the laws or regulations of the kind mentioned in General Assembly resolution 74/7. This is the reason why the Republic of Mozambique voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution.

The Republic of Mozambique reiterates its unconditional support for the provisions of General Assembly resolution 74/7 and appeals to the United Nations to ensure that all Member States take the resolution into consideration.

Myanmar

[Original: English]
[16 March 2020]

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

Myanmar upholds the purposes and principles of international relations as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Myanmar has always been against the extraterritorial application of the blockade and the politicization of human rights issues, which are against international law.

Myanmar hopes that normalization of the relationship between the United States and Cuba will open up great opportunities of peace and prosperity for the two neighbouring countries and extend the benefits to the whole region. Myanmar believes that this will lead to the eventual lifting of the embargo imposed against

Cuba, which will create a conducive economic environment for Cuba to realize its full development potential, thereby advancing its efforts towards achieving the pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.

Myanmar hopes that the United States and Cuba have the wisdom, courage and ability to address this protracted political problem between them and to enter into a new chapter of friendship and cooperation for the good of their peoples through dialogue in line with the norms of international law and good-neighbourliness.

Namibia

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

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

In the light of the above, Namibia supports General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) and maintains that the unconditional lifting of these illegal and unwarranted measures remains the only viable option for the normalization of relations between the two sister countries. Furthermore, it is equally important to note that the current measures taken by the United States Administration are unhelpful for achieving appreciable progress in the situation.

Nauru

[Original: English]
[12 March 2020]

The Government of Nauru is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including, in particular, the fundamental principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation, as established by international law.

The Government of Nauru further reaffirms its full support for and observance of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Nepal

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

The Government of Nepal has firmly adhered to the provisions of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) and has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures contrary to the resolution.

New Zealand

[Original: English]
[11 March 2020]

The Government of New Zealand reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#). The Government of New Zealand has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo against Cuba. We

reiterate those calls. New Zealand has no trade or economic legislation or measures that restrict or discourage trade with Cuba or investment in or from that country, and welcomes steps towards normalization, including lifting the embargo.

Nicaragua

[Original: Spanish]
[12 February 2020]

Nicaragua reiterates its commitment to multilateralism and to the right to development of our peoples by promoting friendly and respectful relations with all peoples of the world and defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including non-interference in internal affairs and respect for international law.

Nicaragua believes that it is only through the unity of our peoples, through policies of friendship, solidarity, trade and cooperation with other States, ensuring the common good, that we can overcome the great challenges faced by our peoples.

Nicaragua is a faithful defender of a world with a culture of peace, where respect for the rules of human coexistence is preserved by resorting to the peaceful settlement of disputes between States. Consequently, we reaffirm the validity of the defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and right to self-determination of our peoples.

The intensification of the embargo against the brotherly people and Government of Cuba, seen in the adoption of the directive entitled “National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba”, on 16 June 2017, by the current United States Administration, is regrettable and has become a serious setback to bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba.

This embargo has a negative and unjustifiable impact on the economy, right to development and full enjoyment of all human rights of the Cuban people, posing a serious challenge to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of its Goals, resulting in losses and harming Cuban international financial and credit relations.

Our commitment to lifting and ending this embargo against Cuba has been firm and unwavering; its inhumane character is amply demonstrated in the respective reports of the Secretary-General on the subject, containing examples of irreversible damage already incurred.

Like all peoples, the people of Cuba have the right to choose their own political, economic and social system, without external interference, coercive economic measures, sanctions or embargoes; the end of the embargo against Cuba must be totally unconditional.

The overwhelming majority of the international community has consistently expressed its firm rejection of the embargo, as was evident in the latest vote on this resolution, on 7 November 2019, with 187 votes in favour by its 193 Member States.

The United Nations has a historical and moral duty to denounce and reject the tightening of the embargo and its extraterritorial effects.

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

Niger

[Original: English]
[20 April 2020]

The Government of the Niger is deeply committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and freedom of international trade and navigation, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and has taken no measures that run counter to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 74/7, adopted on 7 November 2019.

On the contrary, the Republic of Niger and the Republic of Cuba have maintained good relations since the signing of a general agreement on cooperation between the two countries in 1994. Since then, the scope of this cooperation and the activities covered by it have evolved and expanded. The two countries regularly hold bilateral consultations, attesting to the political will of their leaders to strengthen the bonds of cooperation and solidarity between them for the benefit of their peoples.

The terrible reality, here, is that the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba continues to afflict the Cuban people appallingly, hindering their economic and social development for more than half a century.

Therefore, today more than ever before, with the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, when all countries are struggling to protect the health of their citizens, and for all the above-mentioned reasons, Niger strongly calls for the immediate lifting of this outdated blockade, in order for Cuba to source the necessary equipment and services to face the pandemic.

Niger strongly believes that the lifting of the sanctions will be key to the normalization of friendly bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States, for the benefit of their peoples.

Nigeria

[Original: English]
[3 April 2020]

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

Norway

[Original: English]
[27 March 2020]

The Government of Norway reaffirms its position in favour of General Assembly resolution 74/7. Norway does not promulgate or apply laws or measures of the kind referred to in the resolution. Norway does not apply trade or economic legislation that restricts or discourages trade with or investment in or from Cuba. Norway opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures against a third country. Norway regrets the decision by the United States to renege on its long-standing commitment to waive Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, and encourages the

United States and Cuba to work towards the normalization of bilateral relations with a view to bringing about the end of the embargo.

Oman

[Original: English]
[5 February 2020]

The Government of Oman complies with and implements General Assembly resolution 74/7 and does not apply any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to said resolution.

Pakistan

[Original: English]
[20 March 2020]

Pakistan is fully in observance of General Assembly resolution 74/7, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[19 March 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Panama continues to implement agreements that promote bilateral economic, commercial relations and mutual cooperation with the Republic of Cuba, which may help to reduce the effects of the restrictive measures imposed against that country. Panama therefore reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 74/7, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Government of Panama is concerned by any measures that could aggravate the consequences of the application of the embargo against the Republic of Cuba, including those affecting the health of the Cuban population and the achievement of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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

The Republic of Panama, a country that promotes dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as free trade and transparency in international commerce, has historically voted in favour of the General Assembly resolution that supports the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, and renews its commitment to bringing about the end of this measure against that country.

The Republic of Panama reiterates its support for the elimination of the embargo, on the understanding that it would contribute to the full integration of the Republic of Cuba into the region and the socioeconomic development of its population, and therefore supports the preparation of a comprehensive report on the implementation of resolution 74/7.

Papua New Guinea

[Original: English]

[4 May 2020]

Papua New Guinea reiterates its firm support for General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), in which the imperative to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is emphasized.

Accordingly, any extraterritorial application of laws and regulations that infringe on the sovereignty of other United Nations Member States is opposed by Papua New Guinea.

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

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]

[23 March 2020]

The Republic of Paraguay fully supports the effective implementation of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) in accordance with its historical position of refraining from promulgating or applying laws or measures of the kind indicated in the resolution.

In this regard, it rejects any domestic law whose extraterritorial effects affect the sovereignty of other States, international law and the freedom of trade and navigation.

The Government of Paraguay, mindful of its situation as a landlocked developing country, is bound by the principles enshrined in its Constitution regarding international relations and reaffirms its commitment to unrestricted respect for the purposes and principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations, to international law, to the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and interference in internal affairs and to freedom of international trade and navigation, among other principles established in various international legal instruments.

Peru

[Original: Spanish]

[24 February 2020]

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

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

Since 1992, when Peru voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [47/19](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, the Peruvian Government has maintained a consistent foreign policy and has

successively voted in favour of all resolutions on this matter in the United Nations General Assembly.

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

Peru considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is inconsistent with the dynamics of regional politics. Peru continues to promote trade and economic exchanges with Cuba and has consistently opposed the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against that country.

Philippines

[Original: English]
[25 March 2020]

The Philippines fully supports and reiterates its commitment to adhere to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

The Philippines has not imposed, nor does it not intend to impose, any laws, regulations or measures that are contrary to resolution [74/7](#).

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[31 March 2020]

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

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

Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[1 April 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Korea has consistently supported, since 1999, the General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. Therefore, the Republic of Korea has not applied any laws or administrative measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

Republic of North Macedonia

[Original: English]
[9 March 2020]

The Republic of North Macedonia has neither applied nor promulgated any unilateral sanctions or embargo and reiterates that it fully implements General Assembly resolution 74/7.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[27 March 2020]

The Russian Federation has maintained a consistent position of principle with regard to the resolution, making targeted efforts and joining the overwhelming majority of members of the international community in condemning the United States embargo against Cuba and calling for its full lifting.

We believe it is counterproductive and futile for the United States of America to maintain its trade, economic and financial embargo against Cuba, which is a relic of the cold war and an anachronism that, together with the attempts to revive the Monroe Doctrine, is in no way justified by the current situation; which hinders sustained regional and international cooperation; and which runs counter to the Sustainable Development Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We consider this illegitimate regime, which has been in place for almost 60 years, to be a direct violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, a flagrant example of extraterritorial unilateral coercive measures, which are preventing a sovereign State from following its own development model without external interference, and an infringement of the inalienable right of the Cuban people to a decent life.

The unprecedented tightening by the Trump Administration of sanctions against the island through the extraterritorial application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, numerous financial and visa restrictions, the ban on group trips by American citizens to the island for educational purposes, the prohibition of United States cruises to Cuban ports, the suspension of regular and charter flights by United States airlines to all airports in Cuba, except the one in Havana, and the suspension of exports of manufactured goods of more than 10 per cent United States-origin puts the food and energy security of the country at risk and violates fundamental human rights. Furthermore, the campaign to discredit the work of Cuban doctors and the restrictions on the biopharmaceutical industry are a threat to the health of thousands of ordinary people throughout the world.

The embargo against Cuba causes considerable damage to the island's economy and makes it more difficult for the Cuban authorities to carry out major changes. The burden is heavy, especially for the people of Cuba, since it limits the enjoyment of their legitimate rights to a dignified life and full social security, including health care and education.

The effects of unilateral economic measures are particularly devastating amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as has been underlined by a number of countries and the leaders of international organizations. As they are cut off from access to emergency credit facilities, necessary materials and value chains, some of these countries could be pushed to the brink if they do not have sufficient resources

to bolster their health-care systems and support industry, business and ordinary citizens.

It is equally important to look at this problem in terms of the post-crisis recovery of national economies under sanctions, such as the Cuban economy. In extending a helping hand to their allies, the large countries imposing illegal sanctions, and the leading international creditors under their influence, are denying the Republic of Cuba and other countries that are not to their liking access to global financial markets, the international division of labour, labour markets and the benefits of regional cooperation, depriving them of important sources of development.

The campaign waged against Cuban doctors is particularly despicable given the global health challenges.

We are convinced that the experience of Cuba, which enjoys well-deserved respect in the world, is a clear example of the inadequacy, futility and short-sightedness of the high-handed policy employed with respect to Cuba.

Russia believes that the lifting of the embargo would not only benefit the people of Cuba and the United States, but would also, more generally, help to improve international relations at the regional and global levels.

In line with our unchanged policy that is guided by the principles of international law, we believe it is of the utmost importance to continue to vote in favour of the relevant draft resolution of the General Assembly calling for an immediate and unconditional end to the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

Rwanda

[Original: English]

[27 March 2020]

The position of the Government of the Republic of Rwanda remains unchanged with regard to the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Rwanda, like the majority of States Members of the United Nations, voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019.

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 74/7; reaffirms its support for said resolution; and has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution. The Government of Rwanda stresses that there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Rwanda and Cuba.

Saint Kitts and Nevis

[Original: English]

[31 March 2020]

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis supports the adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/7, which seeks to bring an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America against the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba.

The embargo remains, to date, the largest obstacle to trade for the Cuban people, with far-reaching negative impacts on the economy and the daily lives of Cubans. This situation is not only unfortunate, but also in direct contravention of the Charter of the United Nations and freedom of trade and navigation. It is in violation of the norms and principles of international law and peaceful relations among States.

We strongly believe that the lifting of the embargo will boost the economy of Cuba and empower its people. We therefore call upon the United States to withdraw the sanctions under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which strengthen the embargo.

We recognize that a Cuban-developed drug is currently being utilized to treat victims of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Certainly, this speaks to the potential of Cuba to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of global health.

It is against this backdrop that Saint Kitts and Nevis calls for a renewed dialogue between Havana and Washington, as a means of bringing this outdated embargo to an end.

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to stand in solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba; once again votes in favour of the resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”; and reiterates its position that the time has come to end this long-standing embargo.

Saint Lucia

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

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

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

Saint Lucia acknowledges with appreciation the continued economic, educational and technical cooperation with Cuba in furtherance of socioeconomic development and sustainability, consistent with South-South cooperation. Saint Lucia further acknowledges the immense support provided by Cuba to the national health service of Saint Lucia, including support to combat the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

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

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

[Original: English]
[23 March 2020]

The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continues to express its grave concern over the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. In this regard, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its unwavering support for General Assembly resolution 74/7.

During the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, for the twenty-eighth consecutive time, a draft resolution entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” was considered. Resolution 74/7 was adopted by a recorded vote of 187 to 3, with 2 abstentions.

The consensus of the international community and its opposition to the embargo have intensified since the adoption of resolution 47/19 of 24 November 1992.

Despite the blockade, Cuban doctors are working in dozens of countries around the world that have confirmed cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The response of the Cuban medical teams to the COVID-19 pandemic is only one example of the Cuban efforts to strengthen health-care provision in areas of need throughout the world. Most recently, on 26 and 27 March 2020, the Republic of Cuba deployed to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 16 Cuban medical brigades in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the Government of the Republic of Cuba continues to supply Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with the drug Interferon alfa-2b to aid in the fight against COVID-19.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines once again rejects the imposition of extraterritorial laws, as well as of unilateral and illegal measures, which are contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular those related to the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and freedom of international trade and navigation. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and calls for effective dialogue and constructive engagement between the two relevant parties towards lifting the decades-long economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Samoa

[Original: English]
[28 April 2020]

The Government of the Independent State of Samoa reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law and therefore confirms that it has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7.

The Government of Samoa reaffirms its continued support for the annual resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

San Marino

[Original: English]
[13 February 2020]

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

Sao Tome and Principe

[Original: English]
[23 March 2020]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe once again fully endorses the content of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, of 7 November 2019.

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

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

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

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

Saudi Arabia

[Original: English]
[29 April 2020]

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

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

In this context, Saudi Arabia is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recalls and affirms its support for General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

Senegal

[Original: French]
[6 April 2020]

In accordance with its international obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, Senegal will continue to comply with the provisions of resolution 74/7, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019.

Serbia

[Original: English]
[4 March 2020]

The Republic of Serbia, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirming its commitment to the rules and principles of international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 74/7 and has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures or acts of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution.

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

The Republic of Serbia calls for an end to the embargo, expressing the desire of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations.

Seychelles

[Original: English]
[27 February 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Seychelles once again fully endorses General Assembly resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

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

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

That being said, the Government of Seychelles welcomes and encourages attempts by the United States and Cuba to normalize the relations between the two countries. Seychelles has always been of the view that the strained relationship between the United States and Cuba has not been conducive to the sustainable development of the people of the United States or of Cuba.

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

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

Sierra Leone

[Original: English]
[29 March 2020]

The Republic of Sierra Leone reaffirms its full commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law.

The Republic of Sierra Leone enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba. We have in the past voted in favour of all resolutions aimed at ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

The Republic of Sierra Leone reiterates its call for the total elimination of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which continues to adversely affect the well-being of the Cuban people. Sierra Leone therefore reaffirms its full and unequivocal support for General Assembly resolution 74/7, which calls for an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

The Republic of Sierra Leone is encouraged by the steps taken in the past to normalize relations between Cuba and the United States. We trust that the progress made will be built upon.

Singapore

[Original: English]
[5 February 2020]

The Government of Singapore reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 74/7. Singapore has consistently supported resolutions calling for an end to the United States trade embargo against Cuba since 1995 and has voted in their favour.

Solomon Islands

[Original: English]
[20 March 2020]

Solomon Islands, in its support for General Assembly resolution 74/7, calls for the unconditional lifting of the 1962 economic and financial blockade on Cuba by the Government of the United States, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

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

Somalia

[Original: English]
[19 February 2020]

Somalia has no laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7, in conformity with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

South Africa

[Original: English]
[26 March 2020]

South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Naledi Pandor, reiterated South Africa's steadfast solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba and condemned the continuation of unilateral sanctions against Cuba during her statement at the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly in September 2019. The South African Government also supported resolution 74/7, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade, in the Assembly on 7 November 2019, together with 186 nations.

South Africa, as the current Chair of the African Union, will strengthen the ties of friendship and solidarity between the continent and Cuba, especially with regard to international support towards ending the United States blockade against Cuba. South Africa also reiterates its alignment with the statement on ending the United States blockade against Cuba by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the thirty-third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 10 February 2020.

South Africa condemns the latest measures to tighten the blockade against Cuba, including the suspension as of 10 March 2020 of public charter flights between any airport in the United States and Cuba, except the José Martí International Airport. The measure is the latest of the 190 sanctions applied by the United States Government since 2017, which include the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, the consular closure of the United States Embassy in Havana, the revoking of existing licences for aircraft leases to Cuban State-owned airlines, the suspension of cruise trips and the persecution of tanker ships that transport oil to Cuba.

South Africa continues to stand in solidarity with Cuba and its people, despite the United States Administration's ever-increasing pressure on Havana.

The United States sanctions are major impediments for South African companies in conducting business with Cuba. South Africa-Cuba relations, however, continue to serve as a successful model of South-South cooperation. South Africa has recommitted itself to its existing bilateral cooperation programmes with Cuba, as well as to pursuing new areas of cooperation, such as infrastructure development, agriculture, science and technology.

However, for Cuba, the United States blockade remains the most significant obstacle in its quest to realize its development objectives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The severe economic and financial restrictions, threatened to be increased, further compound the hardships and the suffering of the people of Cuba.

South Africa therefore takes this opportunity to commend those countries that have taken measures to mitigate the specific effects of the Helms-Burton Act and to request third-party countries to support Cuba and its people by scrapping any domestic laws or regulations that continue to hamper the development of Cuba and its people, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 74/7.

We furthermore commend Cuba for its solidarity and internationalism during the height of the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Secretary-General called for a global response and solidarity irrespective of regions, nationality, race, religion, political and economic systems, state of development and age. Despite the hardship and challenges, Cuba once again rose to the occasion by sending medical brigades to countries in need of assistance to help save lives. The unjust economic, commercial and financial blockade has not deterred Cuba from its internationalist

policy of rendering support to those in need. This selfless act of humanity makes the call to end these more than 60 years of injustice even more pertinent.

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

South Sudan

[Original: English]
[27 March 2020]

The Republic of South Sudan reiterates its profound concern about the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. In line with the majority of States Members of the United Nations and African Union resolutions Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XVII), Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XIX) and Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XXI), the Republic of South Sudan calls for the lifting of the embargo endured by the Cuban people for over half a century. The Republic of South Sudan considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba is a unilateral act contrary to the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the basic principles of the multilateral trading system. The Republic of South Sudan considers that these coercive measures are affecting the economic growth of Cuba and impeding its social and human development. In this regard, the Republic of South Sudan calls for the implementation of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019.

Sri Lanka

[Original: English]
[19 March 2020]

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

Sri Lanka has not promulgated any laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

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

Sudan

[Original: English]
[9 March 2020]

The Sudan fully supported resolution [74/7](#) by voting in its favour in the General Assembly.

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Sudan and Cuba were established in 1969. The year 2018 marked the forty-ninth anniversary of bilateral relations between the two countries. Bilateral relations took a step forward when the Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan in Venezuela was accredited as Ambassador to Cuba in March 2014. Furthermore, bilateral relations have been strengthened through the exchange of visits by senior officials.

The Government of the Republic of the Sudan pursues a policy of full respect for international law, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. Consistent with its principled stand, the Sudan opposes the imposition of sanctions on developing countries because of their devastating impact on the efforts of those countries to achieve sustainable development and because they constitute a violation of the Charter. To that effect, the Sudan participates every year in the debate of the General Assembly on the agenda item under which resolution 74/7 was adopted and votes with the majority of Member States in favour of Assembly resolutions prohibiting the imposition of such unilateral measures and sanctions. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan reaffirms that it does not promulgate or apply any laws or measures that could, by being applied outside its own national borders, affect the sovereignty of any State. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan calls for the repeal of laws that impose such measures.

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

The Sudan itself continues to await the full implementation of the decision made by the United States in October 2017 to lift unilateral economic, financial and commercial sanctions, particularly with regard to facilitating banking and financial transactions, as well as inflows of foreign direct investment. The Sudan also continues to await its immediate removal from the list of State sponsors of terrorism.

Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/7, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan has put the issue at hand before the concerned multilateral organs with a view to mobilizing support for the elimination of all forms of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries.

Suriname

[Original: English]
[23 March 2020]

The Republic of Suriname remains firmly committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as well as to upholding the principles of international law. Suriname is of the considered view that sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the right of nations to develop in accordance with their own charted paths should be respected at all times. Adherence to these principles becomes particularly important in an era in which the high level of interconnectedness and interdependency in global systems and associated linkages have an increasingly greater impact on countries' ability to earn revenues.

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

While the rapprochement between Cuba and the United States of America in 2015 was seen as encouraging and conducive to the achievement of a better understanding and improved relations between the two States, the announcement in 2019 by the Government of the United States of America that it would activate Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which allows legal action against Cuban entities in United States courts, reverses that process, as it tightens the economic blockade, extends its extraterritorial effects and exacerbates the divergent positions between the two States.

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

Suriname expresses, once again, its solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba and places on record that the Government of the Republic of Suriname has never promulgated or applied laws or measures affecting the economic, commercial and financial rights of the people and Government of Cuba, as referred to in General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

Switzerland

[Original: French]
[1 April 2020]

As in previous years, Switzerland expressed its support for the General Assembly resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" in 2019. Switzerland considers that the economic, financial and commercial measures taken against the Republic of Cuba have negative repercussions on the living conditions of the Cuban people and increase their economic difficulties. For these reasons, they should be repealed.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[13 March 2020]

With reference to the letter dated 29 January 2020 from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA/AD/2020/1) addressed to the permanent missions to the United Nations, and based on General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) of 7 November 2019, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", I write to you to convey the observations and assessments of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on this important matter.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its full commitment to General Assembly resolutions calling for an immediate end to the unjust economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the most recent of which is General Assembly resolution [74/7](#).

The Syrian Arab Republic, which is a founding member of the United Nations, is firmly committed to applying the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution [74/7](#). It disregards and does not consider itself bound by any of the illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed on the Cuban people by successive American administrations since 1962.

The unjust embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America constitutes a violation of the various resolutions in which the General Assembly has rejected all unilateral coercive economic measures imposed by certain Governments on other States and has characterized such measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

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

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

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

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

The Syrian Arab Republic calls on all international parties and on the competent United Nations entities to respect the obligations set forth in the resolution with regard to the illegality of the imposition of unilateral coercive economic measures. In particular, the Syrian Government draws attention to General Assembly resolution [74/200](#), in which the international community is urged to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries that were not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or are inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and that contravene the basic principles of the free and multilateral trading system.

The Syrian Government draws particular attention to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution [74/200](#), by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to “monitor the imposition of unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion and to study the impact of such measures on the affected countries, including the impact on trade and development”. The Syrian Government also notes that paragraph 5 of the resolution requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, with a particular focus on the impacts of unilateral economic measures on the achievement of sustainable development.

The Syrian Arab Republic recalls that the Syrian people continue to be the target of a number of coercive economic measures that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States, the European Union, the League of Arab States and a number of other States. Those aggressive coercive measures, many of which were imposed four decades ago, have caused huge losses to the Syrian economy. The situation is now even worse: after nine years of bitter suffering inflicted on Syria by terrorism, the Governments that imposed the economic embargo on Syria have now strengthened it by hampering the Syrian economy's capacity to produce and recover, directly affecting the lives of Syrians and their right to basic services; by hindering the creation of conditions conducive to the return of Syrian refugees and displaced persons to their homes; and by preventing the process of reconstruction and reconciliation.

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

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

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

Tajikistan

[Original: English]
[27 March 2020]

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), dated 7 November 2019.

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

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

Moreover, given that the international community is facing challenges such as terrorism, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), climate change and an economic downturn, countries need to work together to address global challenges.

Economic, commercial and financial restrictions are contrary to the principles of the United Nations and create obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thailand

[Original: English]
[12 February 2020]

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

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

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

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

Timor-Leste

[Original: English]
[24 March 2020]

Timor-Leste adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. In this regard, Timor-Leste reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) and reiterates that it has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to therein.

The Government of Timor-Leste is strongly opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures and supports the immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. It is believed that the imposition of the said measures will hinder the ability of countries to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and weaken the application of the Charter and the rule of law.

Togo

[Original: French]
[21 April 2020]

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

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

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

Tonga

[Original: English]

[14 April 2020]

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

Thus, the Kingdom of Tonga has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 74/7. The Kingdom of Tonga maintains friendly and diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]

[26 March 2020]

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

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

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

Trinidad and Tobago welcomed the reopening of direct, frank dialogue between Cuba and an influential and respected member of the international community. However, that optimism was short-lived, as new economic sanctions were imposed in 2017 and further restrictions were placed on travel, tourism and remittances.

Trinidad and Tobago reiterates its support for rolling back such measures and calls upon the well-respected and responsible member of the international community to work with Cuba to build a mature and open bilateral relationship, based on mutual respect and sovereign equality. Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its position that the full achievement of such a relationship will continue to be elusive without the lifting of the embargo. This crucial goal must be a priority for both Governments and peoples.

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

Tunisia

[Original: French]

[24 February 2020]

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

In that context, Tunisia supported General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) and all of the previous Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba. Tunisia does not apply unilateral laws or measures with extraterritorial effects. It therefore has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures against Cuba prohibiting economic, commercial or financial relations between the two countries.

Turkey

[Original: English]

[11 March 2020]

The Republic of Turkey does not have any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#). Turkey expresses concern at such measures, which adversely affect the living standards of people, and reaffirms its adherence to the principles of freedom of trade and navigation in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. The Government of Turkey maintains its stance that differences and problems between States should be settled through dialogue and negotiations.

Turkmenistan

[Original: Russian]

[26 March 2020]

The Government of Turkmenistan once again reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

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

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

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

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

Tuvalu

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

The Government of Tuvalu reiterates its position that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba runs counter to the need to promote dialogue and support the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among all nations. Such discriminatory trade practice continues to adversely affect living conditions and human rights, as well as the efforts of the Cuban Government and people to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals.

The Government of Tuvalu has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures against Cuba, and fully supports the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, in line with the unequivocal and continued request of the majority of States Members of the United Nations. This will allow the Republic of Cuba to further consolidate and enhance its cooperation with small island developing States like Tuvalu.

The Government of Tuvalu therefore highlights the importance of mending the relations between the United States and the Republic of Cuba, which would be an honourable step, in line with the Charter and the principles of sovereignty and equality among all nations and people. Tuvalu also wishes to express its appreciation for the scholarships awarded by Cuba to medical students of Tuvalu.

Uganda

[Original: English]
[31 March 2020]

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

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

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

United Arab Emirates

[Original: English]
[10 February 2020]

The United Arab Emirates voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 74/7, which was adopted by 187 votes.

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

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[Original: English]
[20 May 2020]

The United Kingdom calls upon the United States to end its economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. We consider that the embargo serves no useful purpose. Rather, it is negatively affecting the living standards of the Cuban people and impeding the political and economic development of the country.

In particular, through restrictions on remittances, tourism and travel to and from the United States, the embargo is having a negative impact on Cuba's nascent private sector, the development of which is so important for the island's economic prospects. Restrictions on travel, both of Cuban citizens to the United States and of United States citizens to Cuba, reduce the exposure of the Cuban people to United States citizens and the exchange of values, ideas and social and cultural understanding.

The extraterritorial effects of the embargo – in particular the activation of Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act – prevent and restrict the conduct by foreign companies, including British companies, of legitimate and lawful business in Cuba. The United Kingdom considers these extraterritorial effects to be illegal under international law and will continue to vigorously defend the right of British businesses to conduct trade with, and invest in, Cuba. As such, to protect the interest of natural or legal persons resident in the United Kingdom against the extraterritorial effects of the Helms-Burton legislation, the United Kingdom has promulgated blocking legislation which prohibits compliance with the Helms-Burton Act and includes provisions for counterclaims to be brought against United States plaintiffs in United Kingdom courts.

The United Kingdom again registers its deep disappointment at the decision of the United States to activate Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act in April 2019. We consider this attempt to prevent foreign companies from undertaking legitimate business in Cuba to be illegal under international law and a violation of the agreement made between the European Union and the United States on 18 May 1998. In accordance with this agreement, successive United States Presidents waived the application of Titles III and IV for over 20 years. We call upon the United States to end the embargo and to implement its side of the 18 May 1998 agreement.

The United Kingdom believes that dialogue and engagement with Cuba and the Cuban people – including through the conclusion of a new bilateral agreement on political dialogue and cooperation – are the best way to promote greater respect for fundamental human rights and achieve economic progress in Cuba. We consider that

the United States embargo has the effect of making such reforms, which will serve the best interests of the Cuban people, more difficult to achieve.

In the specific context of the COVID-19 pandemic, we consider that the embargo constitutes an additional impediment to Cuba and that it risks exacerbating the harm the pandemic may cause to the health and well-being of the Cuban people.

United Republic of Tanzania

[Original: English]
[28 March 2020]

The embargo imposed by the United States has had profoundly negative effects on the Cuban economy and the welfare of the Cuban people at large.

The United Republic of Tanzania continues to call for the total unconditional removal of all economic, commercial, financial and other sanctions imposed against Cuba.

Tanzania stresses that lifting the embargo will not only pave the way to flourishing economic relations between Cuba and the United States, but also enhance their relations in all other aspects.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]
[13 February 2020]

Uruguay voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) because it considered that the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba was contrary to international law and violated the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The position of Uruguay is based on the principles of respect for international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, which are the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

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

In addition, Uruguay has strongly condemned any theory that supports or justifies the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, except those that form part of international law, and any direct or indirect means constituting unilateral action by one State to impose sanctions in response to sovereign decisions taken by another State in the political, economic, commercial or other arenas.

Uruguay opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba: it is not only a violation of international law but also a severe impediment to the well-being of the Cuban people, leading to shortages and suffering for the population and restricting the legitimate right to development.

Uruguay urges both parties to restart the dialogue that will make it possible to move towards a settlement of the outstanding problems between these two countries of our continent.

Uzbekistan

[Original: Russian]
[25 February 2020]

The Republic of Uzbekistan supports General Assembly resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”, and reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law.

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

Vanuatu

[Original: English]
[15 May 2020]

The Government of Vanuatu reaffirms its support for resolution 74/7, in which the General Assembly, for the twenty-eighth consecutive year, called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America.

Vanuatu reiterates its commitment to acting in accordance with its obligations under the principles and goals of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including safeguarding the sovereign equality of States and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Vanuatu therefore fully supports the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

[Original: Spanish]
[16 March 2020]

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

The Venezuelan Government therefore condemns the application of such measures by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba, as an anachronism contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal instruments and because such measures violate the freedom of trade and navigation and the norms of the international trading system. Venezuela also reaffirms its condemnation of the application of the extraterritorial provisions of the Torricelli Act and the Helms-Burton Act, which have caused serious additional harm to the economy of the Republic of Cuba for almost 30 years, both in terms of its economic relations with third countries and with the subsidiaries of United States companies.

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

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

That policy of confrontation, promoted and implemented for decades, has affected the well-being of the Latin American and Caribbean sister nation, whose citizens' human rights have been violated as a result of the implementation of these illegal measures. In this regard, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urges the United States of America to comply immediately with General Assembly resolutions [47/19](#), [48/16](#), [49/9](#), [50/10](#), [51/17](#), [52/10](#), [53/4](#), [54/21](#), [55/20](#), [56/9](#), [57/11](#), [58/7](#), [59/11](#), [60/12](#), [61/11](#), [62/3](#), [63/7](#), [64/6](#), [65/6](#), [66/6](#), [67/4](#), [68/8](#), [69/5](#), [70/5](#), [71/5](#), [72/4](#), [73/8](#) and [74/7](#), whose adoptions have been marked by historical majority votes within the United Nations.

Accordingly, Venezuela would like to highlight what was expressed in the Declaration of the Seventeenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Bolivarian Alliance for the People of our America – Peoples' Trade Agreement, held in Havana on 14 December 2019, which underlines the recent adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" by 187 votes in favour, once again evidencing the overwhelming isolation of the United States Government, in the context of an international community committed to truth, justice and respect for international law.

Consistent with those strong exhortations, Venezuela categorically rejects the measure announced by the United States Department of State to allow, in the near future and under title III of the Helms-Burton Act, lawsuits to be filed in courts of the United States, solely against Cuban companies included in the so-called Cuba Restricted List drawn up by that Government since 2017. The measure is clearly aimed at intensifying the embargo and extending its extraterritorial effects. As an example of this, it has recently become known that directors of several foreign companies with interests in Cuba have received letters from the State Department prohibiting access to United States territory, even when these companies only have branches in the Republic of Cuba, thus extending the veto already declared against the companies specifically mentioned.

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

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

By denouncing the criminal measures against Cuba by the United States, Venezuela has continued to comply with General Assembly resolution [74/7](#). In the light of its moral and material commitment to strictly adhere to international law, Venezuela once more calls on the United States of America to lift, unconditionally, the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Republic of Cuba, which owing to its extraterritoriality affects all States with economic, financial and

trade relations with that country. A change on the part of the Government of the United States would demonstrate that country's commitment to international law, and its respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter.

The international community must continue to demand an end to the practice of applying unilateral coercive measures that seek to curtail the sovereign right of States to determine, in keeping with the right of self-determination, their political and social model, in line with the situations and particularities of their respective countries and peoples. Peoples should under no circumstances be deprived of their own means of subsistence and development.

Lastly, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela renews its firm commitment to unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law and therefore appeals again to the Government of the United States of America to comply with the 28 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and to end the merciless and criminal economic, commercial and financial embargo which it has illegally maintained against Cuba for almost 60 years.

Viet Nam

[Original: English]
[3 March 2020]

The General Assembly has for many consecutive years adopted, with an overwhelming majority, resolutions demanding that the United States end its economic, trade and financial blockade and embargo policies and laws against Cuba, the most recent of which is resolution 74/7, adopted with 187 votes in favour.

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

Viet Nam reaffirms its strong support for the related General Assembly resolutions and believes that the United Nations will soon produce concrete initiatives and measures to rapidly implement the adopted resolutions in order to put an immediate end to the blockade and embargo against Cuba.

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

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

Yemen

[Original: English]
[19 February 2020]

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

The Government of Yemen supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to create effective means of implementing General Assembly resolution 74/7, aimed at the adoption by the international community of effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral economic measures as a means of economic and political coercion against developing countries.

For almost four decades, the Republic of Yemen has enjoyed outstanding diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba in the economic, social and cultural realms. Yemen has consistently sought to develop and strengthen those relations in the joint interest of both countries and peoples. Yemen has concluded several bilateral cooperation agreements with the fraternal Republic of Cuba regarding diplomatic, economic, cultural and medical matters. As a result, there has been active cooperation in a number of areas.

Zambia

[Original: English]
[26 March 2020]

The Government of Zambia continues to oppose the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The sanctions, which have been in place for 60 years, have come to signify the illegal and unjust infliction of suffering on one nation by another through unilateral coercive measures.

Only in the past year the United States blockade has cost the Cuban people over \$4.5 billion, resources that could have gone to fostering the sustainable development agenda for the Cuban nation and its gallant people. It is also regrettable that rather than the sanctions being eased, there instead is evidence of them being tightened.

Presently, and as a consequence, Cuba continues to suffer from resource deprivation in sectors such as health, tourism, manufacturing, agriculture and food production, education, sports and culture.

Zambia therefore expresses its solidarity with the Cuban people and calls on the United States and all concerned parties to refrain from promulgating and applying laws or measures that are contrary to the obligations of States under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirms the freedom of trade and navigation.

Zimbabwe

[Original: English]
[30 March 2020]

With reference to General Assembly resolution 74/7, as well as to previous resolutions on the matter, the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe would like to reiterate its firm position urging the United States of America to respect

international law and the consecutive United Nations resolutions by unconditionally putting a complete end to the unjustified sanctions against Cuba.

Zimbabwe believes that the imposition of economic and other unilateral coercive measures is self-defeating and contrary to the principles of international law and that it impedes the full enjoyment of human rights in countries subject to arbitrary sanctions. The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against Cuba by the United States of America continues to place a heavy burden on the people of Cuba. It has inflicted grave human suffering and severely incapacitated the Government of Cuba to deliver on its economic programmes.

Zimbabwe reiterates that the imposition of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, does not contribute to economic and social development and severely threatens the flow of trade and investment. We would like to express our deep concern about and rejection of the increasing promulgation and application of unilateral economic coercive measures against other States, used by some countries and their associates. Such measures impede the full achievement of socioeconomic development and are in violation of international law.

To that end, the Government of Zimbabwe calls on the United States Government to foster constructive dialogue with Cuba and to develop, together with the Cuban Government, good-neighbourly relations, at a time when the international community is aiming at successfully implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to achieve sustainable development.

Holy See

[Original: English]

[1 May 2020]

The Holy See has never drawn up or applied economic, commercial or financial laws or measures against Cuba. The Holy See, on the contrary, has maintained a consistent policy of calling for an end to the embargo against Cuba.

The Holy See has consistently appealed, and continues to do so, for the consolidation of mutually beneficial relations between Cuba and the entire international community, by building bridges and more meaningful civil society participation, opening new avenues of dialogue and strengthening those already existing.

In this context, the Holy See hopes to see as soon as possible an end to the embargo that, for decades, has had humanitarian consequences, especially for those most excluded in Cuba, and has caused the economic isolation of Cuba, especially in the light of the present circumstances when the COVID-19 pandemic afflicts all of humanity. As mentioned by Pope Francis in his Easter message “Urbi et Orbi”, the Holy See believes that the end of the embargo will contribute to more harmonious and fraternal relations between the people of Cuba and the United States of America.

The Holy See therefore urges Cuba and the United States of America to pursue perseveringly the process of normalizing their relations and encourages their respective political leaders to assume their responsibility in leading this process.

State of Palestine

[Original: English]
[16 March 2020]

The State of Palestine stands in solidarity with the Republic of Cuba against the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on it by the United States of America and joins the overwhelming majority of nations in calling for an immediate end to this unjust embargo.

The State of Palestine – which continues to suffer from the extensive socioeconomic, humanitarian, developmental, political, security and environmental impact of nearly 53 years of illegal foreign occupation, in addition to an inhumane blockade of the Gaza Strip imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, in grave breach of international law and with untold consequences for our people and all dimensions of our society – reiterates its firm opposition to the punitive embargo imposed on Cuba. We reaffirm our full support for the calls and efforts to bring to an end this embargo, which continues to so detrimentally affect Cuba and the Cuban people and their rights, including to self-determination and to development.

The State of Palestine reaffirms its principled position in support of General Assembly resolution 74/7 and all other relevant resolutions, as well as its adherence to the relevant positions affirmed by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, among others, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. We call for serious efforts towards the full implementation of this important resolution, consistent with international law and respect for the sovereignty and independence of States and freedom of commerce and navigation.

We deeply regret that the positive developments of recent years have been reversed and that the United States embargo against Cuba has instead been intensified, accompanied by escalating rhetoric, thereby undermining dialogue and the critical steps that had been taken towards ending the embargo and promoting normalization. We once more join the international community's call for the lifting of the embargo to allow for unimpeded Cuban trade and normal economic activity, both of which are essential for the sustainable development that Cuba and all nations are entitled to and need in order to ensure the prosperity and stability of their peoples and countries.

The State of Palestine, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, affirms that it has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 74/7. Moreover, the State of Palestine enjoys full diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba; remains in solidarity with the Cuban people and Government; and will continue to work to strengthen the political, economic and cultural relations, cooperation and friendship between our countries.

III. Replies received from organs and agencies of the United Nations system

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

[Original: English]
[5 March 2020]

Cuba has not signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is therefore not a member of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. In addition, Cuba does not host international monitoring system facilities under the Treaty. On 18 June 2015, Cuba was granted

observer status by the Preparatory Commission, enabling it to attend meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, without the right to participate in the decision-making process. As a non-signatory State, however, Cuba is not currently a recipient of equipment or technical support related to the establishment of a national data centre that would provide it with access to the data collected by the international monitoring system, and it does not at present routinely take part in associated capacity-building or training programmes of the Organization. Therefore, in the context of General Assembly resolution 74/7, the situation has not arisen whereby the existing embargo could practically affect the implementation of the Organization's projects.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

[Original: Spanish]

[9 April 2020]

1. Overall performance of the Cuban economy in 2019 and prospects for 2020

In 2019, the economy of Cuba grew by 0.5 per cent according to estimates by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). This percentage represents a significant slowdown compared to the 2.2 per cent growth recorded in 2018. The main cause of this slowdown was the tightening of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States, which has mainly affected the flow of visitors, remittances and fuel supplies. The tightening of the embargo was compounded by the crisis in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the main trading partner of Cuba. In its most recent report on the embargo, which covers the period between April 2018 and March 2019, the Cuban Government estimated that the annual impact was 4.313 billion dollars (equivalent to 4 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Cuba), and that a total of 138.840 billion dollars had already been lost at current prices.

For 2019, ECLAC estimated that the State's fiscal deficit was around 6 per cent of GDP – less than the 8.3 per cent observed in 2018. The recovery in exports of some primary goods, mainly sugar and nickel, coupled with the effort to substitute for merchandise imports, led to an improvement in the goods balance, but the deterioration of service exports and the lower flow of remittances resulted in a deterioration of the current account balance. Considering the persistent problems of supply of consumer goods throughout the year, we assume that in 2019 there was an increase in inflation compared to the 2.4 per cent seen in 2018, despite the slowdown in economic activity.

While unemployment remained at 1.7 per cent in 2018, the labour market participation rate increased by almost half a percentage point to 63.8 per cent, reversing the negative trend observed since 2015. This was due to the 2 per cent growth in the number of persons employed in the non-State sector, which offset the slight reduction in the number of those working in the State sector.

We anticipate that the participation rate may increase again in 2019 due to the incentives provided by the wage increase for budgeted activities. As part of the policy of wage adjustments in the context of updating the economic model, in July 2019 the wages of the nearly 1.5 million workers in the budgeted sector of the economy were increased, bringing the average wage in this sector to 1,065 pesos, which is 68 per cent above the average of 634 pesos in force until June. The minimum wage for the budgeted sector also increased significantly, by 77 per cent, to 400 pesos per month.

Against the backdrop of the global economic slowdown and considering the impact of the tightening of the economic, commercial and financial embargo by

the United States Government, ECLAC projects a baseline scenario⁴ in which the economy of Cuba would have 0.8 per cent negative growth in 2020. In a scenario of moderate impact by the COVID-19 pandemic,⁵ our preliminary projection is that the GDP of Cuba would decrease by 1.75 per cent; whereas in a medium impact scenario,⁶ economic activity would be reduced by 2.5 per cent, and by 3.3 per cent in a high impact scenario.⁷ These estimates could improve if the global demand for Cuban medical services picks up in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Principal embargo measures taken since June 2019

The tightening of the embargo against Cuba affects the country's main sources of foreign exchange earnings: (a) international medical cooperation; (b) transfers of remittances; and (c) tourism. In addition, Title III of the Helms-Burton Act has been activated and foreign oil companies linked to Cuba are being sanctioned.

2.1. International medical cooperation

On 20 June 2019, the United States Department of State assigned a lower rating to Cuba (Tier 3) in its report on the list of countries responsible for human trafficking.⁸ It should be noted that the Caribbean island had been among the countries placed on the Tier 2 Watch List in the report during the period 2015–2018. The reason for the decision, according to the Department of State, is that Cuban medical cooperation in the world is equivalent to “human trafficking and forced labour”.

On 26 September 2019, the Department of State made a public call for all countries to carefully review their medical cooperation programme with Cuba, since it considered Cuban doctors to be subject to human trafficking and modern slavery. In its briefing on that date, the Department of State mentions that: “We urge host country governments and civil society to examine the practices in Cuba's medical missions in their countries and ensure the healthcare professionals' rights are protected.” It also notes that the Cuban medical cooperation programme employs up to 50,000 healthcare professionals in more than 60 countries and is a major source of income for Cuba.⁹ The United States Department of the Treasury highlights that the Cuban Government receives \$7.2 billion annually for the export of services, which includes medical missions. This briefing, however, does not mention the significant

⁴ This scenario reflects a situation prior to the health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the fall in international oil prices.

⁵ This scenario assumes positive growth in the United States (1 per cent); an average price of 45 dollars per barrel of oil; a slight slowdown in growth in Cuba in the first quarter, a sharp fall in the second quarter and a moderate recovery in the third and fourth quarters of 2020; investment recovery; and a 50 per cent reduction in productive activities for one month due to COVID-19.

⁶ This scenario assumes zero growth in the United States; an average price of 35 dollars per barrel of oil; a slight slowdown in growth in Cuba in the first quarter, a sharp fall in growth in the second quarter and a moderate recovery in the third and fourth quarters of 2020; moderate investment recovery; and a 50 per cent reduction in productive activities for two months due to COVID-19 (from ECLAC estimates using its own econometric models as of March 23).

⁷ This scenario assumes negative growth in the United States (minus 1.5 per cent); an average price of 25 dollars per barrel of oil; a slight slowdown in growth in Cuba in the first quarter, a sharp fall in the second quarter and a moderate recovery in the third and fourth quarters of 2020; little investment recovery; and a 50 per cent reduction in productive activities for three months due to COVID-19.

⁸ The report assigns a rating to the countries included in the list of those responsible for human trafficking, which ranges from less serious to more serious: Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 2 Watch List, Tier 3 and Special Case (Libya, Somalia and Yemen are included in the 2019 report in this category).

⁹ The content of the briefing is available at the following link: www.state.gov/a-call-to-action-first-hand-accounts-of-abuses-in-cubas-overseas-medical-missions/.

benefits and effectiveness of this cooperation model, which has led so many nations to establish these agreements.

In October 2019, the Government of Ecuador decided to terminate its medical cooperation agreements with Cuba, a few days before their expiration date. In November 2019, Bolivia ordered all Cuban aid workers to leave the country as soon as possible. It should be noted that some months earlier, the Brazilian Government unilaterally broke the tripartite agreement of medical cooperation signed in 2013.

2.2. New migration barriers and restrictions on sending remittances to Cuba

Although tourist travel from the United States to Cuba is not authorized under current legislation, the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury allows travel to Cuba under 12 categories: (1) family visits; (2) official business of the United States Government, foreign governments and certain non-governmental organizations; (3) journalistic activity; (4) professional research and professional meetings; (5) religious activities; (6) public performances, clinics, workshops, participation in sports events or other types of competitions or exhibitions; (7) support for the Cuban people (8) “village to village” educational group trips;¹⁰ (9) humanitarian projects; (10) activities of private foundations or research or educational institutions; (11) exportation, importation or transmission of information or information materials; and (12) certain transactions for authorized exports. However, in June 2019, the Department of the Treasury eliminated the “village to village” category of educational group trips (the category with largest number of requests of the 12 allowed).

In addition, in September 2019, the Department of the Treasury restricted the sending of family remittances to 1,000 dollars per quarter (previously there were no restrictions) and eliminated the category of donation remittances. Furthermore, the Department of the Treasury ended the use of “U-turn” transactions, a category which had allowed banks to process certain transfers of funds originating and terminating outside the United States. According to the estimates of the Department of State, cash-based transfers from the Cuban community account for 3.5 billion dollars per year.¹¹

2.3. Restrictions on tourism to Cuba

In June 2019, the Department of the Treasury, through the Office of Foreign Assets Control, announced that private and corporate aircraft, cruise ships, sailboats, fishing boats, and other similar aircraft and vessels would not be authorized to travel to Cuba.¹² During the same month, the Office of Foreign Assets Control also announced sanctions against the specialized international tourism groups Expedia, Hotelbeds USA and Cubasphere for violating the regulations on economic sanctions against Cuba.

Since 10 December 2019, the Department of State has banned all scheduled commercial flights between the United States and Cuba, with the exception of those to or from Havana (the country’s capital). Flights will therefore not be permitted to the following international airports: Ignacio Agramonte in Camagüey; Jardines del Rey in Cayo Coco; Vilo Acuña in Cayo Largo; Jaime González in Cienfuegos; Frank

¹⁰ According to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, travellers using this licence must ensure that they maintain a full schedule of educational exchange activities aimed at promoting contact with the Cuban people, supporting civil society in Cuba or promoting the independence of the Cuban people from the Cuban authorities.

¹¹ Information on this and related figures can be found at the following Department of State link: www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-cuba/.

¹² The official document can be consulted at the following link: www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba_fact_sheet_20190604.pdf.

Pais in Holguin; Sierra Maestra in Manzanillo; Juan Gualberto Gómez in Matanzas; Abel Santamaria in Santa Clara; and Antonio Maceo in Santiago de Cuba.¹³ Charter flights to those nine Cuban airports were also banned on 10 January 2020.¹⁴

It should be noted that since 2017, under the administration of President Donald Trump, the Department of State established a list of Cuban companies and entities with which no citizen of the United States may do business. Since then, the list has grown and there are now more than 230 Cuban companies and entities included in the ban;¹⁵ most are linked to the tourism sector, mainly hotels. The Habaguanex Tourism Company and the Gaviota Tourism Group, the main Cuban tourist groups, appear on the list, as do other tourism agencies, the main marinas, a dozen souvenir shops and 118 of the top hotels in the country. United States citizens are thus prohibited from using them or will be subject to heavy fines.

Furthermore, on 18 October 2019 the United States Government announced new unilateral coercive economic measures against Cuba. Their implementation affects the Cuban civil aviation sector, particularly the airline Cubana de Aviación. Accordingly, the national aviation company was notified by third-country leasing companies of the termination of previously signed leases. As a result, international flights had to be cancelled to the following destinations: Cancun, Caracas, Mexico City, Fort-de-France, Pointe-à-Pitre, Port-au-Prince and Santo Domingo.¹⁶

These measures had a negative impact on the Cuban tourism sector. According to information from the National Statistics and Information Office of Cuba, in the period from January to December 2019 the arrival of international visitors decreased by 9.3 per cent compared with the same period in 2018. It should be noted that this is the first decline in 12 years. In 2018, the number of tourists was 4.7 million but only reached 4.2 million in 2019. The number of visitors from the United States (the third largest after Canada and the Cuban community abroad) decreased dramatically, with a fall in 2019 of 21.9 per cent compared to 2018. More recently, in January 2020, there was a 19.6 per cent drop in international visitors compared to the same month in 2019. The number of visitors from the United States fell by 68.8 per cent over the same period.

2.4. Activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act

Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, better known as the Helms-Burton Act, allows United States citizens (including Cuban-Americans who acquired this status before March 1996, the date of publication of the Act) whose property was expropriated by the Cuban Government as of 1 January 1959, to file claims in United States courts against any person, regardless of nationality, who knowingly or wilfully “traffics” in that property.

Since its enactment, the Helms-Burton Act has provoked strong objections from many United States allies and trading partners such as Canada, Mexico and the European Union. They saw in Title III an extraterritorial application of United States law, in violation of international law. While a nation State can regulate the conduct of

¹³ The official communiqué from the Department of State can be found at the following link: www.state.gov/united-states-restricts-scheduled-air-service-to-cuban-airports/.

¹⁴ The official communiqué from the Department of State can be found at the following link: www.state.gov/united-states-further-restricts-air-travel-to-cuba/.

¹⁵ The list of these Cuban companies and entities can be consulted at the following link: www.state.gov/cuba-sanctions/cuba-restricted-list/.

¹⁶ Detailed information can be found at the following links: www.bis.doc.gov/index.php/policy-guidance/country-guidance/sanctioned-destinations/cuba; and www.cubadebate.cu/noticias/2019/10/23/bloqueo-de-eeuu-obliga-a-empresas-de-terceros-paises-a-cesar-contratos-de-arrendamiento-con-cubana-de-aviacion/#.Xmp7DXJKiUk.

foreign actors if that conduct has “a substantial effect within its territory”, many countries have argued that the use by non-United States citizens of expropriated property in Cuba lacks a sufficient link to the United States. They have also argued that, insofar as Title III of the Helms-Burton Act obliges foreigners to choose between doing business with the United States or with Cuba, this statute imposes a “secondary boycott” on Cuba.

In response to strong opposition from many allies and trading partners of the United States, and to concerns about violations of international law, successive Administrations of the United States had continuously suspended the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, at six-month intervals, since it came into force in July 1996. On 17 April 2019, however, United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that President Trump would not suspend Title III of the Helms-Burton Act for any further period of time.

In response, Canada, Mexico and the European Union adopted measures to counter and obstruct the application of Title III. On the day that Secretary Pompeo announced President Trump’s intention to end the suspension of Title III, Canada and the European Union issued a joint statement strongly condemning the measure. The European Union produced a set of “blocking” regulations, which among other things prohibit European individuals and companies from recognizing United States judgments rendered in Title III actions, and create causes of action in European courts to recover damages and costs sustained by the application of Title III of the Act. Argentina, Canada and Mexico passed similar laws.

So far, just over two dozen claims have been filed under the Act, and three have been rejected by the courts. For example, the courts dismissed the lawsuit filed against Mediterranean Shipping Company Cruises for the use of confiscated property in Cuba. In addition, the courts ruled out a lawsuit filed against Norwegian Cruise Line, a Norwegian company, for the use of docks belonging to the Havana Docks Corporation in the port of Havana. In addition, a south Florida federal court dismissed a class action against the Spanish hotel company Meliá Hotels International, the Trivago platform and the Cuban State entities Grupo Hotelero Gran Caribe, Cubanacán Tourism and Commerce Corporation and Grupo de Turismo Gaviota. In addition, a United States family voluntarily withdrew a lawsuit against Navarra Hotel (NH) Group, a Spanish chain of hotels, for the use of Hotel Capri in Havana. This withdrawal occurred after NH Hotel Group filed a motion to have the lawsuit dismissed.

2.5. Sanctions against foreign oil companies linked to Cuba

The Office of Foreign Assets Control administers various sanctions programmes. Sanctions can be broad or targeted and make use of assets freezes and trade restrictions to meet United States foreign policy and national security goals. The Latin American and Caribbean countries included in its sanctions programme are Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. In addition, the Office of Foreign Assets Control has the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, which includes individuals and companies owned or controlled by, or acting for or on behalf of, countries that are subject to sanctions. Thus, following Executive Orders issued in November 2018¹⁷ and August 2019,¹⁸ the Office of Foreign Assets Control, in September 2019, imposed sanctions on several oil entities in Cyprus and Panama

¹⁷ This Executive Order can be consulted at the following link: www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/venezuela_eo_13850.pdf.

¹⁸ This Executive Order can be consulted at the following link: www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/programs/documents/13884.pdf.

responsible for supplying fuel to Cuba (presumably of Venezuelan origin).¹⁹ In December 2019, six more foreign oil tankers were placed on the above-mentioned list for transporting oil to Cuba.²⁰ These measures had severe impacts on the Caribbean island's economy, particularly in manufacturing, construction, agriculture, food production and distribution, and public transport. In addition, some investments were temporarily halted as a gasoline rationing plan had to be developed.

3. Concluding remarks

The imposition of additional sanctions on Cuba by the United States has had negative consequences for the economy of the Caribbean island because it is directed at its main sources of foreign exchange earnings: international medical cooperation, remittances and tourism. In addition, the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act makes it even more difficult to attract foreign direct investment, owing to the fear of reprisals. Furthermore, the sanctions on oil companies linked to Cuba have forced the Government of the Caribbean island to activate an emergency plan, in view of the relative scarcity of fuel that has had a negative impact on its economic dynamics, with serious consequences for the Cuban population. The Government of Cuba has put in place contingent measures to alleviate the impact and counteract the effects on economic activity, in addition to the measures already implemented by updating the Cuban model.²¹ In principle, the average wage and the minimum wage of workers in the budgeted sector of the economy were increased, as well as social security pensions below 500 pesos per month, in order to boost private consumption.

On the other hand, the Cuban authorities have implemented a series of measures (28 in total) to make the performance of socialist State-owned enterprises more flexible and to achieve greater efficiency and productivity. The measures include: (a) facilitating the availability of foreign exchange to exporting companies; (b) developing a financial institution to promote business development, which ensures working capital and allows for the establishment of productive chains; (c) modifying the procedures for financing development, research and training activities from after-tax profits, which are considered as investments and not as expenses; and (d) establishing that exporters – initially entities in the tourism sector served by the Ministry of Tourism, the leading business management organization Grupo Empresarial de Tabaco de Cuba and others – acquire certain national products and services, paying 50 per cent of their value, and implementing financial mechanisms that allow companies that export or produce for exporters to receive financing.²² In addition, the Government continues to make significant efforts to promote the arrival of foreign direct investment. To that end, it has opened a one-stop shop to facilitate the investment approval process.

In October 2019, the Cuban Government liberalized the use of United States dollars in stores where products are sold in convertible pesos, a local currency, thereby eliminating the need to convert dollars. The aim is to support the sale of imported consumer goods and make them more affordable to the population, as the products are more competitively priced.

¹⁹ The press release issued by the United States Department of the Treasury can be viewed at the following link: <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm784>.

²⁰ The press release issued by the United States Department of the Treasury can be viewed at the following link: <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm841>.

²¹ The publication in April 2011 of the Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and Revolution, which set out the road map for updating the Cuban economic model.

²² The complete list of measures is available at the following link: www.mep.gob.cu/sites/default/files/Documentos/Informe%20de%20Ministro%20de%20MEP%20%20ANPP%20diciembre%202019.pdf.

The tightening of the embargo on Cuba significantly hampers the efforts of the Cuban people and Government to achieve development and attain the Sustainable Development Goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The persistence of the embargo has left structural scars on the Cuban economy in terms of financing for development, investment, growth and productivity. The damage will be extremely difficult to overcome. Cuba presently faces an extremely complex situation, as the structural effects and tightening of the embargo are compounded by the humanitarian and economic emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]

[17 April 2020]

Overall situation: effects of the embargo on the sectors of food security, agriculture, fisheries and the food industry

The main changes since the previous reporting period can be summarized as follows:

(a) Paddy production in Cuba in 2019 is estimated to have fallen 16 per cent below its 2018 level, to 385,000 tons (or 257,000 tons in milled rice equivalent), as heightened shortages of agrochemicals, fuel and machinery depressed plantings. Early expectations for production in 2020 on the island point to the pace of output recovery being limited by sustained constraints in the availability of basic inputs, although efforts to improve productivity levels and infrastructure are ongoing;

(b) The country's maize production in 2019 is pegged at a below-average level of 360,000 tons. The decline is mainly due to lower plantings in response to lower demand for animal feed, reflecting the declining number of bovines and poultry;

(c) The cereal production of Cuba in 2019 is estimated at 617,000 tons in milled rice equivalent, down from the previous five-year average by about 12 per cent. The decline mainly reflects a contraction in sowings owing to the lack of agricultural inputs, combined with the lower demand for animal feed;

(d) Cereal imports, which cover about two thirds of the country's domestic needs, have declined significantly since the second half of 2018 owing to stricter sanctions. It was forecasted that the country would import 1.5 million tons of cereals in the 2019/20 marketing year (from July to June), more than 25 per cent below the average of the previous five years. Consequently, lower production and below-average imports are expected to reduce the availability of cereals for both food and feed use in the country.

The main effects of the embargo on agriculture, fisheries, livestock and the food industry should continue to be viewed from two different perspectives:

(a) The impossibility of taking full advantage of the export potential (i.e. of coffee, honey, tobacco, live lobsters and aquaculture products) to the nearest market, the United States, has implied major losses, since it has been necessary to sell to markets located farther away, with the resultant higher marketing and distribution costs, negatively affecting the foreign-exchange earnings of Cuba and its capacity to purchase basic products, especially food;

(b) The high costs of inputs needed for agricultural, fisheries and livestock production (fuel; spare parts for agricultural machinery; animal feeds; phytosanitary and zoosanitary products and fertilizers; products such as herbicides, low-toxicity insecticides and other highly effective pesticides; and veterinary pharmaceuticals and

disease diagnostic kits that, in many cases, are produced only by United States firms) reduce profitability and lower the ability of Cuba to satisfy local food requirements.

Overall, the embargo has very negative implications for Cuba's balance of trade and foreign exchange earnings, as well as for the country's supply of food and agriculture products. One of the bottlenecks that the Government of Cuba is facing in its ongoing economic actualization process is its acute shortage of foreign exchange. The main source of foreign exchange expenditure is the purchase of agricultural products, amounting to around \$800 million per year.

The embargo affects the import of food products for human consumption, particularly those destined for social programmes, given that it restricts their quantity and quality, thus having a direct effect on the food security of the vulnerable segments of the population. The overall economic damage to the agricultural sector between April 2018 and March 2019 is estimated to be \$345,454,714.

An additional problem resulting from the embargo relates to the difficulty for Cuba to access external multilateral financing for development programmes in agriculture and rural development in general, and the related unavailability of resources for rehabilitating and modernizing agricultural equipment and infrastructure.

In 2016, Cuba and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding on agriculture and related fields. The memorandum was expected to enhance cooperation on issues such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures, plant and animal sanitation, standards and forest conservation. In 2017, the countries signed a memorandum of understanding that was aimed at improving cooperation in the fields of animal and plant health, protection and quarantine. Furthermore, for the first time in a decade and following the 2018 United States farm bill, the United States removed some restrictions on financing agricultural trade with Cuba.²³ However, the tightening measures of the embargo adopted by the current United States Government have deepened the negative impacts on agricultural production in Cuba.

Even the operations of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are directly affected, although it is officially exempted from the embargo. Delays in or blocking of payments to FAO staff (even if made in euros) and to providers for project procurement reduce the willingness of suppliers to sell to FAO-Cuba and increase the cost of the few remaining suppliers.

Effects of the embargo on selected agricultural commodities

Cereals

Estimates of the 2019 cereal production (milled rice equivalent) in Cuba point to an output level of 617,000 tons. Heightened shortages of agrochemicals, fuel and machinery constrained paddy plantings in 2019, resulting in a well-below-average paddy harvest of 385,000 tons (257,000 tons, milled rice basis). Early expectations for production during the 2020 season point to a paddy harvest of 410,000 tons (273,000 tons, milled basis), up 6 per cent from 2019, but well below the 673,000 tons (449,000 tons, milled basis) harvested in 2013. The comparatively subdued outlook mirrors expectations that constraints in the availability of basic inputs would limit the pace of production recovery. This is even if prioritized input distribution to rice areas, combined with increased usage of animal traction and organic fertilizers and pesticides, could arrest the downward trajectory in 2020 plantings. Moreover, efforts to shore up productivity levels continue on the island, as part of the country's self-

²³ Congressional Research Service, "Cuba: US policy overview", 5 March 2019.

sufficiency programme – a drive that has also entailed increased investment in irrigation, drainage, storage and processing infrastructure.

Despite ongoing government efforts to liberalize and promote domestic production, Cuba remains highly dependent on rice imports. Production setbacks faced in recent years have accentuated this trend. In the calendar year 2019, rice imports are estimated to have reached a four-year high of 514,000 tons, with another 550,000 tons anticipated to be imported in 2020 in order to meet consumption needs. Viet Nam provides the bulk of the country's rice needs through government-to-government deals that allow Cuba to defer payments of purchases. The balance is normally covered by South American exporters, namely, Brazil, Guyana and Uruguay. Because of restrictions on payment and financing options imposed by the embargo, as well as the more advantageous terms provided by alternate rice exporters, virtually no United States rice has been shipped to Cuba since 2008. Legislative provisions passed in the United States in December 2018, which lifted restrictions on the use of government funds by United States farmers to assist marketing of agricultural exports to Cuba, have not altered this trend. Still, the United States rice industry supports an easing of the embargo, believing that the commercial advantage provided by the geographical proximity of the two countries could help the United States to provide up to 30 per cent of Cuba's rice imports within two years of the lifting of the embargo.

In the case of maize, the only imported coarse grain, foreign purchases are projected to be in the order of 350,000 tons between July 2019 and June 2020, a significant drop from the previous five-year average. Wheat imports could also remain below average, reaching close to 650,000 tons. Overall, cereal imports account for about two thirds of total domestic utilization.

Oilseeds

Oilseed production in Cuba is not significant and, as a result, the country depends almost entirely on imports to meet its vegetable oil and meal needs. Among the oilseeds, the dominating commodities imports are soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal. When the United States embargo came into effect, Argentina and Brazil became the main suppliers of soybeans and derived products. Both Canada and Mexico have occasionally shipped small volumes to Cuba. Cuba has imported non-soybean oilseed products from, inter alia, Argentina, Canada, China, Mexico and the European Union. Imports of soybeans and derived products from the United States resumed in 2002. In that year, following the implementation of the United States Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act, and owing to geographical proximity, the United States became Cuba's principal supplier of soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal, largely replacing imports from other regions. However, in the second half of the 2000s, United States sales of soybean and soy products to Cuba were in part replaced by more competitive offers from Argentina and Brazil. The effect of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2015 on trade flows remains unclear. In 2016, soybean imports from the United States recovered and, in 2018, the United States supplied the bulk of those imports, although purchases from Canada partly displaced United States shipments in 2019. By contrast, the deliveries of soybean meal from the United States declined to zero in 2018, although a rebound occurred in 2019. Deliveries of soybean oil from the United States in 2019 remained low and erratic, with Brazil reported to be the key supplier of Cuba.

Raw sugar

Following eight consecutive seasons of growth, raw sugar production in Cuba contracted by 42 per cent in 2017/18, compared with 2016/17, falling to 1.1 million tons – the lowest level on record. The sharp decline was the result of significant

damages caused to the crop by Hurricane Irma, which hit the country in late 2017. Sugar production recovered in 2018/19 to reach 1.3 million tons, as a result of a larger sugarcane harvest, despite less-than-favourable weather conditions. Preliminary forecasts for 2019/20 indicate that the sugar output of Cuba may increase by 20 per cent, notwithstanding shortages in energy supply.

On the demand side, sugar consumption is expected to remain relatively stable at 0.53 million tons, which – combined with higher domestic production – leaves 1 million tons for the export market. The main destinations for sugar exports include China and the European Union. For many years, the domestic sugar subsector has been managed by a complex system of price-support mechanisms, production limits and import restrictions designed to maintain high sugar prices. Despite a number of attempts over the years to reform the subsector, lawmakers have left the system in place to protect sugar growers and processors. The ambition of the Government is to improve the efficiency of the subsector, by facilitating foreign direct investment targeted at the sugar industry.

Meat

After experiencing a 3.3 per cent decline in 2018 (according to updated data from the FAO Statistics Division), meat production in Cuba is expected to have partially recovered in 2019, reaching slightly over 350,000 tons (carcass weight equivalent). In recent years, expanding meat production has become increasingly difficult because of several factors. Inadequate agricultural inputs – including energy, veterinary pharmaceuticals, agricultural machinery and spare parts – are the immediate obstacles. Restrictions on access to financial resources and technologies have made it even more difficult to build farm-related infrastructure and increase productivity.

Meat production has not been able to fully recover from the impact of Hurricane Irma, which devastated the sector, especially poultry meat production. Lack of production growth amidst rising demand has forced the country to expand its imports. In 2019, Cuba imported 445,000 tons of meat products – mostly poultry, followed by pork and beef. Cuba sourced over 60 per cent of meat imports in 2019 from the United States, with the balance coming mostly from Latin American countries. A high proportion of meat consumed in the country is sourced from overseas, costing a significant amount in foreign exchange.

Dairy products

Milk production in Cuba in 2019 is estimated at 585,000 tons, registering a marginal increase of 0.5 per cent over 2018. Overall milk production in Cuba has declined over time. In the year 2000, the country produced 615,000 tons of milk, which increased to 633,000 tons in 2010, but output has not reached these levels since. This decline is caused mainly by a sharp decrease in the national dairy herd. In addition, production expansion is hampered by a lack of capacity for genetic improvements, high costs of animal feed and limited availability of fuel and transport equipment. Restrictions on access to financial resources and technologies have made it even more difficult to build farm-related infrastructure and increase productivity. In view of the shortage in meeting national dairy-consumption needs, Cuba continues to import large volumes of dairy products, amounting, in 2019, to 538,000 tons (in milk equivalent) – mostly milk powders – sourced from suppliers in Europe, Latin America and Oceania. The expenditure on milk powder alone in 2019 was over \$130 million dollars, a significant proportion of the country's foreign exchange. Ensuring food security and adequate nutrition in the country will require the development of the dairy sector.

Fish products

Fish products are important for food security in Cuba as a source of nutrition and earnings from exports. In 2018, capture fisheries production reached 22,590 tons, representing an increase of 5 per cent compared with 2017, but a decline of over 91 per cent compared with the peak reached in 1986 (238,900 tons), when the country also fished in distant waters. The potential for expansion of capture fisheries is limited and focused on the adoption of a management approach that allows for the recovery of fish stocks that may have suffered overfishing. Cuba is a member of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission, the regional fishery body that promotes international cooperation towards the sustainable management and conservation of fish stocks. At its last session, in July 2019, the Commission adopted seven regional fisheries-management recommendations, the Regional Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (2019–2029) and other important recommendations and resolutions in support of the regional framework for fisheries and ocean governance, climate change and other environment and socioeconomic issues. Cuba participates in the regional discussions on the strategic re-orientation of the Commission and, together with other member countries, participated in the development of a road map for the development of a model for a regional fisheries-management entity or arrangement in the area covered by the Commission. At the national scale, Cuba is currently developing a medium-sized project funded by the Global Environment Facility trust fund on the improvement of the management and protection of marine habitats in the Gulf of Guacanayabo, focused mainly on the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries.

The greatest potential for expansion in domestic fish production lies in aquaculture, which has shown some fluctuations during the past few years. Production was 29,200 tons in 2018 (8 per cent less than in 2017). Almost all of the fish exports consist of high-value products, notably frozen lobster and shrimp, which are in high demand on the international market. However, the embargo prevents access to the United States market, which is one of the most important markets and the leading world importer for fish and fish products. As a result, Cuba exports to more distant destinations, facing higher marketing and distribution costs. In 2018, exports reached an estimated \$74 million, representing a decline of 25 per cent compared with 2017. Fish imports, consisting mainly of low-value fish products, increased by 8 per cent in 2018, compared with 2017, reaching an estimated \$40 million.

Technical assistance to Cuba by the Food and Agriculture Organization

FAO continues to provide support to Cuba, notably in promoting rural development and fisheries, with an emphasis on food security. FAO has assisted Cuban institutions in organizing several international congresses and events in such areas as sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, animal production and animal health surveillance; cooperatives and family farming; fisheries and related policies; forestry and biodiversity; and environment and climate change. In addition, FAO assists Cuban experts in providing help in respect of South-South cooperation and in attending meetings on international conventions and agreements. Travel logistics and flight bookings are also affected by the embargo.

Policy and technical support has been provided to update the national agricultural policy, with particular emphasis on the dairy sector, given that it constitutes one of the most important components of the food basket, as well as being a major economic engine for the generation of employment and income in rural areas. Technical assistance has been focused on assessing the productivity level of different forms of industrial organizations and assisting the Government in identifying policy recommendations to strengthen the industrial set-up of the national dairy sector.

FAO provided technical support and assistance to develop tools for Cuba to establish its national information system mechanism for applying the new monitoring approach for the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The Cuban delegation participates regularly, through the FAO Commission and its intergovernmental working group on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, in the development of the policy framework of the Second Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as well as indicators and targets for plant genetic resources and in the preparation of gene-bank standards for plant genetic resources.

Policy advice is provided for agricultural sector policies, agro-environmental policies, rural youth employment and the development of sustainable intensification programmes based on FAO pilot projects in the grain, milk and beef value chains. In addition, FAO is assisting Cuba in projects focusing on the rehabilitation and conservation of the environment, particularly in managed landscapes, and in resilience to the risks associated with climate change.

Effects of the embargo on projects implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization in Cuba

Given that Cuba is subject to an embargo, projects implemented by FAO in the country are affected in regard to the procurement of equipment and supplies that complement the technical assistance because the resources that could be imported from the United States have to be imported from far more distant markets, at much higher prices and higher freight costs. If acquisitions could be made in the United States, it would be much cheaper and more activities could be supported through the available budget.

The most recent embargo measures against Cuba, under which third-country companies trading with Cuba can be sued in United States courts, have had a negative impact on Cuban trade by drastically reducing the commercial partners that operate in the country. This has had a direct impact on the procurement operations that FAO carries out in Cuba in the framework of its technical cooperation projects. A concrete example is Toyota Gibraltar not delivering vehicles, which has had a direct impact on the implementation of FAO projects.

In addition, project implementation is hampered by an increase in transportation costs for imports and the cancellation of contracts for maritime transportation by transport companies. The latter has generated delays in the arrival of merchandise, as new carriers have to be found. The shipping companies MSC and Hapag-Lloyd, lacking their own ships, have reduced their capacity and the volume of goods transported to Cuba.

Under the embargo, conditions hinder the processes of payments and banking transactions to and from suppliers who provide services for cooperation projects and to the FAO country office. This is demonstrated by banks' rejections of transfers from FAO for sales to Cuba; the impossibility for suppliers to offer products to Cuba obtained from other North American companies; and the inability of suppliers to transfer funds to Cuba for payment of services contracted in the country.

In addition, banks reject commercial and financial transactions by Cuban enterprises in United States dollars and in other currencies, which hinders payment for certifications of Cuban products with a high potential to be commercialized in Europe.

FAO staff continue to be affected by expensive and long formalities in banking processes.

A summary of the negative effects caused by the embargo in some of the sectors in which FAO is providing technical support and other sectors included within its country programming framework is presented below.

The losses originated mainly in:

- (a) Price difference owing to changes in the import market;
- (b) Additional costs related to freight insurance;
- (c) Additional costs owing to a freeze on assets;
- (d) Monetary damages;
- (e) Losses owing to lack of access to the latest technology from the United States;
- (f) Relocation of exports.

International Atomic Energy Agency

[Original: English]
[20 March 2020]

The assistance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to all its member States, including Cuba, is governed by article III/C of its statute, which reads as follows: “In carrying out its functions, the Agency shall not make assistance to members subject to any political, economic, military, or other conditions incompatible with the provisions of this Statute.”

However, the existing embargo continues to pose certain difficulties for the implementation of the IAEA technical cooperation programme in Cuba. For instance, the procurement of equipment, consumables and materials such as chemicals, reagents, radiopharmaceuticals, radiation sources for medical and industrial uses and sterile insects is affected by the limited number of vendors willing and able to procure for and/or ship to the country. Furthermore, receiving end user certificates for certain equipment is not possible.

During the past year, some restrictions also applied to the participation of Cuban nationals in IAEA-organized training, and difficulties persisted in the use of information technologies owing to poor Internet connections.

In accordance with the above-mentioned article of its statute, IAEA tries to overcome these difficulties, to the extent possible, to meet the requirements of the IAEA technical cooperation programme in Cuba.

International Civil Aviation Organization

[Original: English]
[23 March 2020]

At the fortieth session of the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), held from 24 September to 4 October 2019, the Economic Commission reviewed the submission by Cuba on the continued economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States. In its submission, Cuba reaffirmed that unilateral and extraterritorial actions by the United States impeded the sustainable economic development of international air transport and, in particular, had a great impact on developing countries. Cuba stated that ICAO had a role to play in upholding the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-discrimination, mutual respect, equality of opportunity and freedom of

international trade and navigation, as enshrined in the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and the Charter of the United Nations. In response to the submission of Cuba, the United States affirmed its position that ICAO was not the proper forum to debate United States sanctions and posited that the sanctions were meant to target specific behaviour and would be enforced until such behaviour stopped. The United States added that it would continue to uphold all its international obligations to ensure the safety and security of international aviation.

The Commission noted in its conclusions that the issues raised by Cuba were delicate, political and sensitive; that the concerned States held strong views on the issues; and that the Commission was not in a position to resolve them. Consequently, the Commission reflected the discussions on the matter in its report to the plenary meeting. The Commission also decided that the matter would be brought to the attention of the President of the ICAO Council, whose good offices had been involved in those issues in the past.

In its resolution A40-9 (appendix A, sect. I, para. 3), the Assembly “urges Member States to avoid adopting unilateral and extraterritorial measures that may affect the orderly, sustainable and harmonious development of international air transport and to ensure that domestic policies and legislation are not applied to international air transport without taking due account of its special characteristics”.

During the reporting period, Cuba continued its active participation in three regional projects implemented through the ICAO Technical Cooperation Bureau. The projects were aimed at providing administrative assistance in the management and administration of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission secretariat and fostering the implementation of performance-based air navigation systems in the Caribbean region, leading to a seamless global air traffic management system. At the same time, the projects were aimed at establishing and operating a regional safety oversight system that encompasses the requisite technical, logistical and administrative support in accordance with the provisions of the Chicago Convention and its annexes. No bilateral projects with Cuba were developed during the reporting period.

International Fund for Agricultural Development

[Original: English]

[14 May 2020]

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is currently co-financing three projects in the Republic of Cuba, the Cooperative Rural Development Project in the Oriental Region, the Livestock Cooperatives Development Project in the Central-Eastern Region and the Agroforestry Cooperative Development Project, approved by the IFAD Executive Board in September 2013, December 2016 and September 2019, respectively. These projects are implemented by the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture and have been designed to provide agricultural support services to small rural producers, including women, young people and other groups that are highly vulnerable to external economic shocks and the impacts of climate change.

Owing to the impact of the current measures of the United States of America, IFAD-supported projects in Cuba continue to face delays in their implementation as a result of scarce foreign exchange, lengthy import procedures and high costs of imports. Among other actions, the United States imposes measures against shipping companies from third countries ferrying cargo from other countries to Cuba, impeding the flow of oil, foodstuffs and other commerce critical to the daily needs of Cuban citizens and residents, especially the most vulnerable groups living in rural areas. Furthermore, the embargo continues to hamper the financial transactions of Cuba and

its ability to export and import needed materials that support opportunities for agricultural and rural development, as well as human development in general.

In the agricultural and rural sectors, the following limitations are observed:

- Obsolete agricultural equipment (for example, tractors, irrigation systems and water pumps) and lack of spare parts.
- High cost and lack of inputs required for agricultural and livestock production, processing and distribution (for example, fuel, animal feeds, seeds, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and veterinary pharmaceuticals).
- Insufficient access to hard-currency financing for the import of equipment and inputs.
- Limited access to providers of new agricultural technology.
- Limited export opportunities for some agricultural products.

Among other consequences, the limitations contribute to low productivity levels, limiting the quantity, quality and competitiveness of domestic food production and making high levels of food imports necessary to cover the needs of the rural population.

In addition, like many other nations, Cuba is currently struggling to mitigate the impact and contain the spread of COVID-19, while managing the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. We understand that the Cuban Government has closed schools and hotels, as well as the entry into the country by all non-citizens and residents, effectively bringing the tourism-driven economy to a standstill. However, unlike most nations, the ability of Cuba to confront the pandemic is hampered by the United States restrictions, which have been incremented in recent years. Even before the pandemic, the Cuban economy was experiencing chronic shortages.

The country's starting conditions were already adverse in the first quarter of 2020 owing to several factors: (a) the increment in the measures resulting from the embargo, which has been maintained during the pandemic; (b) international tourism at the end of January 2020 registered a decrease of 19.6 per cent compared with the same period in 2019; (c) the country has been operating for more than six months with 50 per cent of its fuel reserves; (d) complex drought conditions are prevalent throughout the Caribbean; and (e) agricultural production of key commodities (food and vegetables, rice, corn, pork and milk) in 2019 showed contractions with respect to previous years.

Despite its own challenges, Cuba has sent medical teams around the globe to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. As of the last week of April, Cuba had deployed over 1,000 medical professionals to 20 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The majority of the health-care specialists are deployed in the most severely affected areas to directly confront the virus.

International Labour Organization

[Original: English]
[27 March 2020]

The embargo has intensified in recent years and has significantly constrained development possibilities in Cuba, greatly impacting the life conditions of the Cuban people. Among the effects, just to name a few:

- Restrictions on the transfer of remittances still imply a high indirect tax burden on salaries legitimately earned abroad and sent for household spending on basic human needs such as food, clothing, education, housing, water and sanitation.

- Limitations on commerce and financial transactions still represent a serious bottleneck and an additional cost for business development and job creation, as decent work largely depends on productive investment and access to financing.
- Limited access to technology transfer implies further difficulties for enterprises, as well as for social and economic development.

The implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act intensifies the embargo by affecting business and investment opportunities in Cuba for third-country investors; the creation of new job sources; and decent work in Cuba.

The direct and indirect effects of the embargo on the Cuban economy have an impact not only on the enterprises, but even more on their workers and the population in general. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is particularly concerned about the impacts on children, workers and older persons. Ending the embargo would turn the overall loss into an opportunity for productive investment and employment generation.

Cuba is an active member of ILO and deputy member of the ILO Governing Body. ILO considers that the General Assembly is the appropriate forum for addressing questions related to ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

International Maritime Organization

[Original: English]
[21 April 2020]

As a member State of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Cuba participates in the meetings of IMO bodies and is a recipient of the available technical cooperation programmes (IMO regional programmes on support for maritime development in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as global programmes, as applicable).

IMO maintains collaborative relations with all Latin American member States, including Cuba. Since the early 1980s, IMO has collaborated closely with the Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of the Americas, which comprises South America, Cuba, Mexico and Panama.

The assistance by IMO to Latin America is guided by the maritime strategies of the region, which are revised every five years, and the organization will continue to focus on supporting their implementation. The countries of the Operative Network have addressed issues such as safety standards, training aspects and marine environment protection through regional strategies, with numerous training activities organized in cooperation with IMO. In accordance with the decentralization policies adopted by IMO, most of its support is channelled through the Operative Network by virtue of a memorandum of understanding signed with the secretariat of the Operative Network. Through this instrument, the Operative Network is assigned responsibility for the management and execution of regional technical cooperation activities identified by the respective countries, including Cuba, as priorities in building capacities for the effective implementation and enforcement of IMO global maritime standards.

Cuba also receives technical assistance from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Information and Training Centre for the wider Caribbean, a regional centre based in Curaçao, which aims to assist countries in the region in preventing and responding to major pollution incidents in the marine environment.

IMO has not encountered difficulties in delivering any of the activities in the projects mentioned above as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

International Organization for Migration

[Original: English]
[27 March 2020]

Cuba joined the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a member during the 108th IOM Council in 2017. However, the partnership between Cuba and the IOM began before the country's accession to membership. For example, IOM supported the response of the Cuban authorities to Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Irma in 2017 by distributing non-food items to the storm-hit population.

Cuba has actively participated in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. In addition, the Cuban Government has sent participants to the Inter-American Course on International Migration in Mar del Plata, Argentina, for the past seven years.

IOM has participated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework process for the period 2020–2024 and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with the United Nations country team.

In 2019, IOM executed a project funded by the Central Emergency Response Fund. Through the project, IOM provided emergency humanitarian assistance to families housed in State facilities or in the homes of family and friends after the passage of a storm that hit the Cuban capital at the beginning of March. The project assisted 3,800 individuals, or 950 households, representing 38 per cent of the persons evacuated. The IOM office in Cuba continues to participate in the United Nations emergency technical team, a group of professionals of the United Nations system that supports the country team.

In February 2020, IOM began a new project on migration management with the Cuban Ministry of the Interior, with a total budget of \$200,000. The project is funded through the IOM Development Fund. As part of the project, IOM will provide technical assistance to Cuban government authorities, including through training workshops for immigration and border-management officials to improve their ability to detect and combat travel document fraud and to improve passport issuance systems, as well as regional technical exchanges with Cuban experts in border management. More assistance will be provided through the training of trainers workshops on human trafficking and migrant smuggling for selected border officials, and on how to obtain relevant data disaggregated by gender and age.

In addition, IOM continues to provide assisted voluntary return services to stranded migrants, as well as resettlement assistance for refugees.

During the reporting period, IOM has not experienced any difficulties in the implementation of its activities

International Telecommunication Union

[Original: English]
[12 March 2020]

During the period in question, the International Telecommunication Union received in relation to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#) the following

correspondence from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland: a note dated 9 September 2019 and a note dated 11 February 2020, both addressed to the Secretary-General of the Union.

Office for Outer Space Affairs

[Original: English]

[31 March 2020]

Cuba has been a State member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space since 2001. Between 1994 and 2001, Cuba participated in the work of the Committee and its subcommittees, following the Committee's practice of sharing seats on a rotating basis. Since the early 1980s, Cuba has regularly attended the sessions of the Committee and its subcommittees as an observer.

In 1990, Cuba and the Office for Outer Space Affairs organized jointly a workshop on the theme "Space communications for development", held in Havana. In 2012, Cuban experts benefited from participating in a workshop on the theme "Contribution of space law to economic and social development", held in Buenos Aires (see [A/AC.105/1037](#)).

The potential for disasters as a result of natural hazards – such as hurricanes, tsunamis, storm surges, earthquakes, landslides, droughts, floods and heatwaves – is high in the Caribbean. In the course of multiple crises over the years, the Government of Cuba has put in place an efficient and unique alert system reaching all corners of the country. However, the use of satellite-based data, as well as of precise positioning and navigation systems or of modern satellite telecommunication, by its civil protection agency could improve the performance of the alert system, while providing for enhanced contingency planning and preparedness. The integration of these tools in the existing systems in Cuba would be greatly facilitated by well-structured participation of all stakeholders at the various levels of administration in Cuba.

The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), implemented by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, ensures that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle. The Platform is achieving its mission by focusing on being a gateway to space information for disaster management support, by serving as a bridge to connect the disaster management, risk management and space communities and by being a facilitator of capacity-building and institutional strengthening. UN-SPIDER is supported by 23 regional support offices (including 5 in Latin America), all of which are crucial to fulfilling the mission of the Platform.

A technical advisory mission of the Platform, comprising a Spanish-speaking international expert team that would consult key entities in Cuba with responsibilities or potential roles in disaster risk reduction and emergency response, would allow the assessment not only of the current capabilities but also of the priorities for action. Such a mission could be planned and executed in 2021 or 2022, funds permitting, with a view to delivering clear recommendations for the consideration of the Government of Cuba.

Office of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system for operational activities for development, Cuba

[Original: English]
[5 May 2020]

Cuba maintains a high level of human development. In 2019, the country was ranked seventy-second on the human development index, one level higher than the previous year, despite experiencing development challenges. Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a national priority and a commitment of the Cuban State. This commitment is enshrined in the National Economic and Social Development Plan towards 2030, which is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. Following resolution 233/2018 of the Ministry of Economy and Planning, a national Sustainable Development Goals group was created with the mandate to articulate the interlinkages between the National Plan and the 2030 Agenda. It brings together key governmental entities, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment and the National Statistics and Information Office, along with research centres, subnational entities and civil society representatives, in order to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. National figures estimate that the embargo has a direct impact on about 65 per cent of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Government of Cuba continued to implement a transformative process to update its economic model, focusing on national priorities, such as economic efficiency and productivity, the national food security strategy, export promotion and import substitution policies. National authorities have stated their strong commitment to maintaining social development standards, and this is implemented by allocating close to 30 per cent of the budget to social sectors, similar to the standards of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

A new constitution was adopted by the National Assembly in April 2019. The Constitution strengthens citizens' rights and human rights, recognizes different types of property, establishes new governance structures and reaffirms the local role in development, among others. In this context, the United Nations system supports the efforts of national authorities to address emerging issues and development challenges.

Following the mandate from the General Assembly on the United Nations development system reform, the United Nations system in Cuba, in partnership with the Government of Cuba, prepared a United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period 2020–2024, marking the beginning of the decade of action to implement the 2030 Agenda in Cuba. It outlines the collective response of the United Nations system to support the Government in its implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in line with the National Economic and Social Development Plan towards 2030, with the following key results areas: effective government, productive transformation, environment and disaster risk management, and human development with equity. The new framework succeeds the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2014–2019).

In addition, the United Nations system in Cuba supports emergency response and preparedness. Cuba is exposed to cyclical disasters, such as hurricanes, flooding and drought. The country is also exposed to seismic risks. In January 2020, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake on the seabed between the south of Cuba and the north-west of Jamaica was felt in Cuban cities, including Santiago de Cuba, albeit with no severe impact on infrastructure or people.

While diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States experienced an improvement when the countries restored diplomatic relations in July 2015, measures undertaken by the Government of the United States under President Donald Trump

reversed many measures taken by the previous Administration to reduce the restrictions of the embargo. This negatively affected Cuban society, especially in commerce and financial activities, as well as United Nations operations in the country. Of particular negative impact were the 2019 measures that expanded the prohibition to undertake direct financial transactions with more than 200 entities and subentities, the changes to the general licence on “U-turn” financial transactions and the elimination of the authorization for remittances for donations. Such measures as the suspension of consular services for Cuban citizens who wish to undertake travel to the United States, the reduction of embassy personnel and policy changes over visa duration for Cuban citizens have further affected bilateral relations. In addition, the narrowing of travel restrictions, such as the elimination of the “people-to-people” category for United States visitors, the prohibition of all United States flights to Cuban cities except for Havana and the restriction of cruise ships to stop in Cuban ports, also had a negative impact.

In 2019, the entry into force for the first time of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which allows lawsuits to be brought against third-country companies that conduct business with Cuba and use properties nationalized by the Government of Cuba that belonged to United States persons, reversed the precedent set by all previous administrations since the Helms-Burton Act was passed, in 1996.

The embargo maintains the restrictions on the use of the United States dollar and those relating to imports from Cuba. It affects opportunities for national and local development and creates economic hardship for the population. It has an impact on the population’s most vulnerable groups and on human development in general.

Furthermore, a situation of fuel shortage related to embargo restrictions for vessels transporting petrol to Cuba had a direct impact on the purchasing power of the Cuban people, increasing the costs of logistics, adding further pressure to supply chains and contributing to inflation.

The United Nations country team in Cuba comprises the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization. In addition, non-resident entities, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Labour Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, have ongoing activities and initiatives in Cuba. Each United Nations agency, fund and programme has provided an individual input to the present report. The submission by the United Nations country team in Cuba summarizes the most significant cross-cutting issues that have a negative impact on the humanitarian and development cooperation of the United Nations system in Cuba.

Impact on Cuban people

The embargo affects the ability of Cuban programmes to ensure continued quality and universal public services, such as health and education, owing to the existence of commercial restrictions that prevent the purchase of health supplies and teaching materials from United States companies. There are items that cannot be

acquired because they are made in the United States or have United States components, including technologies that can save, prolong or increase quality of life.

With regard to health, the embargo limited the ability of Cuba to procure in a timely and cost-effective manner preparedness and response materials for the COVID-19 pandemic, among which personal protective equipment, including gowns and masks, temperature scanners, laboratory materials, medical equipment, such as ventilators, and cleaning and disinfecting products. In particular, the embargo is hindering the country's ability to meet Sustainable Development Goal 3, on health, limiting access by the Cuban people to the latest cancer treatments from United States health-care companies, as well as the technology for molecular studies and research, among others.

In higher education, the implementation of the embargo posed obstacles to the access by Cuba to the technology and equipment needed for advanced learning and scientific research. Participation in exchanges and academic cooperation between Cuban and United States universities, institutions and research centres is limited for Cuban scientists and health professionals because of the embargo. The embargo also has an impact on the dissemination of and remuneration for results of academic and scientific value. It limits access to a wide range of software by the Cuban people, restricting their ability to use information and communications technology to support capacity-building and engage in such activities as coding and multimedia production, affecting the ability of Cuba to meet Sustainable Development Goals 4, on education, and 17, on new global partnerships.

The embargo also affects the cultural sector, as it hinders the ability of Cuban artists to make full use of the United States market, limiting dissemination, marketing and creative opportunities for collaboration with artists in the United States. The regulations regarding bank transfers are an obstacle for Cubans trying to sell cultural goods. The embargo limits the purchase of updated bibliographical materials, resources for the conservation of cultural property and state-of-the-art technological equipment when they are under the protection of United States patents.

High costs to import agriculture equipment or inputs caused by the embargo remain a limiting factor for agricultural productivity in Cuba, affecting the country's ability to produce the necessary amount of food. The need to import a considerable portion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety net programmes represents a significant financial burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and poses challenges to food security in Cuba.

The departure of non-emergency personnel assigned to the United States Embassy in Havana has led to Cubans having to travel, when possible, to third countries to apply for a United States visa. Restrictions on visa duration for Cuban citizens and limits on remittances have had a further impact on the Cuban people.

Although there have been agreements in the telecommunications sector for direct connections with four United States companies, they have not been implemented, partly because of technical challenges related to the embargo and partly because of domestic policy and infrastructure issues.

Impact on the Cuban economy

According to estimates by ECLAC, the Cuban economy grew by 0.5 per cent in 2019. The loss of momentum from the already low growth rate in 2018 (2.2 per cent) and 2017 (1.3 per cent) continues and is mainly due to the decline in the number of visitors to the island, primarily as a result of the travel restrictions imposed by the Government of the United States on its citizens, as well as the limited access of Cuba

to international financing, foreign investment and remittances. This will be exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The embargo has limited the access by Cuba to development credit granted by international financial institutions, which has narrowed the possibility for obtaining resources to provide financial support for the country's national and local development plans.

Remittances are likely to be affected by the restrictive measures imposed by the Government of the United States in 2019, severely limiting an important source of revenue for many Cuban families.

Neither Cuban nor foreign companies established in Cuba may purchase products, components or technologies from the United States, even though the latter is the closest, most competitive and most diversified market. Being more distant, alternative markets result in higher import costs and delays in delivery time.

The embargo further restricted access to fuel on the global market by Cuba, contributing to fuel shortages in many parts of Cuba and directly increasing the operating costs of existing supply chains, adding further pressure on prices, with a direct impact on Cuban families.

Goods, services and technologies produced by the United States, covered by United States patents or containing any component produced or patented by the United States are not available to Cuba. In addition, the embargo places restrictions on shipping line companies with vessels that dock in Cuban harbours. This situation significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transport and delaying the loading and delivery of goods. This is particularly detrimental in the context of the need to transport medical supplies and equipment related to COVID-19. The export sector is also affected by the enforcement of the embargo, given that the latter limits the proper promotion, dissemination and marketing of Cuban products. The prohibition of bank transactions with Cuba under the embargo prevents direct transactions with the United States in connection with the sale of goods and services.

The main effects of the embargo on the Cuban economy are those stemming from forgone income for not being able to export goods and services to the United States, the limitations imposed by having to source goods and services from third countries, and restrictions on finance and investment owing to the inability to carry out financial transactions with United States institutions.

Impact on United Nations operations

The aforementioned restrictions cause critical difficulties for the implementation of United Nations programmes and projects, in particular in the acquisition and purchasing of development and humanitarian products, especially in response to COVID-19, such as medicines, medical equipment, personal protective equipment, fertilizers, food supplements, laboratory equipment, agricultural implements, educational tools, computers, information and communications software, construction materials and bibliographic resources (even if they are purchased through multilateral cooperation). These products are purchased from third countries and from secondary suppliers at prices that are significantly higher than those of comparable products sold on the international market.

Even when long-term corporate agreements with international suppliers apply to the projects in Cuba, the providers must obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control to deliver services or products to projects in Cuba, a bureaucratic process that takes significant time and effort.

The increase in costs of transport and freight for commodities and related materials that need to be purchased in other regions is also significant. The procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities, including fortified food provided by WFP, are delayed owing to the aforementioned logistical challenges. As a result of the embargo, vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for trans-shipment, causing delays and additional costs that also affect WFP shipments. Owing to the fuel crisis experienced during the last quarter of 2019, WFP faced considerable difficulties in monitoring its activities in the five eastern provinces and in the offloading of food and non-food items in the various ports of the country.

For UNFPA, the commodities linked to sexual and reproductive health assistance and related materials have to be purchased in other regions, usually resulting in an increase in costs for transport and freight charges. Difficulties in the procurement of necessary items on the local market continue to negatively affect the implementation of the UNFPA programme.

Consequently, financial proposals and new projects must include an extended period for procurement processes and allocate additional resources that could otherwise be allocated to development activities.

The embargo prevents United Nations country offices in Cuba from making transfers in United States dollars. For that reason, and although the budgets of all projects are recorded in United States dollars, transfers abroad must be made in another currency. However, even when payments are made in another currency, bank charges significantly increase as a result of requests for additional information by banks to comply with the Office of Foreign Assets Control all along the banking chain (issuer, intermediary and beneficiary). These requests have affected the ability of the country offices to honour payments to suppliers within the agreed time frames.

For example, a significant number of suppliers that have had fluid commercial relations with Cuban companies and with UNDP in Cuba for years had their accounts closed in 2018 or 2019 as a result of policies implemented by Multibank, in Panama, that are directly and explicitly related to United States sanctions against Cuba. The UNICEF office in Cuba is obliged to use a correspondent bank to pay back the funds in its local account in United States dollars. This process results in losses of approximately 3 per cent of the total value transferred owing to differences in exchange rates. The transfer processes have taken more than 30 days to complete. To keep the office operational, a local bank balance is maintained to guarantee operations for the following 30 days. This represents an exceptional measure according to the liquidity management rules for UNICEF, whereby the office has exceeded the account balance limit set at 150 per cent. Money transfers made from the UNESCO headquarters in Paris have often been affected by restrictions imposed by the United States Department of the Treasury on banks conducting transactions with Cuban banks. This has caused delays in the availability of funds, affecting the capacity of the office to meet financial commitments on time.

Challenges in repatriating funds from the representations of agencies in Cuba to their headquarters in the United States have also been reported. Financial resources that could have been used to achieve the expected programme and development results more effectively are required to cover additional costs incurred as a result of the embargo.

The embargo continues to obstruct financial transactions conducted by United Nations international and national personnel, as well as banking and insurance services received by said personnel. Local officials find it difficult to use United States-based services, such as transfers to internal bank accounts or between bank accounts. In addition, international personnel with local credit cards or bank accounts generally have difficulties in making payments abroad.

Access to Internet services is still limited because of the embargo, which inhibits the efficient use of institutional platforms and slows online processes and activities. Voice and data communications are extremely expensive, given that they must bypass United States telecommunications infrastructure. The embargo also prevents United Nations country offices from directly accessing technical support for products and services from the United States.

Owing to the embargo, many long-term agreements with global suppliers may not be used by United Nations entities in Cuba, creating a need for costly and inefficient alternatives. As a recent example of the direct impact on the procurement operations of FAO in Cuba, the demurrage of the company Toyota Gibraltar Stockholdings, which is one of the suppliers with which the United Nations operates globally, to accept the FAO request for the acquisition of trucks and minibuses, citing indications received from its headquarters in Japan, has caused delays in the execution of projects.

Many websites and services accessed from the Cuban Internet service provider are blocked. Therefore, the primary access to the Internet by the United Nations country offices is through satellite providers, which entails higher costs, limited bandwidth and degraded service quality for video and voice. The satellite provider for UNDP in Cuba was blocked for the same services that were banned in Cuba, forcing the use of a proxy to bypass such limitations. At times of response to emergencies, limited bandwidth constrains the United Nations effectiveness and hinders the ability of staff to connect to critical webinars and teleconferences and to manage documents collaboratively through cloud-based systems.

The suspension of consular services in the United States Embassy in Cuba hinders the obtainment of visas by United Nations national staff who travel on mission to the United States. As to medical insurance, United Nations officials are also directly affected, since many health insurance companies may not work directly with Cuban health service providers, given the restrictions imposed under the embargo.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

[Original: English]
[12 May 2020]

As in its previous contributions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expresses concern regarding the negative impact that extraterritorial sanctions have on human rights. This concern has also been voiced by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights in his latest reports to the Human Rights Council ([A/HRC/42/46](#)) and to the General Assembly ([A/74/165](#)), which contain sections on Cuba.

In his recent reports, the Special Rapporteur analysed what he refers to as the “emerging consensus” of the international community to condemn and resist the extraterritorial application of unilateral sanctions. He referred to several General Assembly resolutions in which the Assembly had called “upon all States to refrain from using unilateral coercive measures”, and explained that these measures were “laws and regulations adopted by States the extraterritorial effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation”. He added that, “[b]eing almost universally proclaimed as such by the international community, that view therefore qualifies as an emerging rule of customary international law” ([A/HRC/42/46](#), para. 46). Furthermore, he explained that “States may be under a legal obligation not

to recognize the effects of unlawful sanctions, especially those applied extraterritorially and secondary economic sanctions”. He also added that there existed an obligation in international law “of non-recognition of (at least certain) unlawful situations”, which “derives from the well-established general principle of law *ex injuria jus non oritur*, meaning that legal rights cannot derive from illegal acts” (A/HRC/42/46, para. 47).

The Special Rapporteur reiterated his concern about the re-activation of the provisions of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act of 1996. He explained that this extended the reach of the embargo to foreign companies trading with Cuba and would allow civil litigation to be initiated in the United States courts against foreign companies on the grounds of “trafficking” in Cuban properties expropriated from their previous United States owners (A/HRC/42/46, para. 12, and A/74/165, para. 32). OHCHR remains concerned that the additional restrictions imposed by the United States in 2017 to tighten the sanctions against Cuba could negatively affect the most vulnerable parts of the Cuban population by limiting their enjoyment of basic human rights, such as access to food and medicines at competitive prices, as well as life-saving technology and convertible currency.

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Briefing States members of the Human Rights Council on 9 April, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, stated that “[t]he COVID-19 pandemic is generating suffering and damage in every region. It poses a far-reaching threat to human rights. As Secretary-General Guterres has warned, it threatens not only development, but also ‘enhanced instability, enhanced unrest, and enhanced conflict’”.

On 23 March, in a letter to members of the Group of 20, the Secretary-General encouraged “the waiving of sanctions imposed on countries to ensure access to food, essential health supplies, and COVID-19 medical support”. In a press statement issued on 24 March, the High Commissioner for Human Rights called for an easing of sanctions to enable medical systems to fight COVID-19 and limit global contagion. Citing Cuba and other specific States, the High Commissioner stated that “[b]road sectoral sanctions should urgently be re-evaluated in countries facing the coronavirus pandemic, in light of their potentially debilitating impact on the health sector and human rights”.

On 31 March, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food issued a press statement in which she called for the immediate lifting of international sanctions to prevent hunger crises in countries hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. She pointed out that “[t]he continued imposition of crippling economic sanctions on [...] Cuba [...] severely undermines the ordinary citizens’ fundamental right to sufficient and adequate food”. She added, “[t]hese countries are already under stress and cannot handle the additional burden of sanctions. As the world exhibits new bonds of solidarity in response to the pandemic, it is now a matter of humanitarian and practical urgency to lift unilateral economic sanctions immediately”.

On 3 April, the new Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights issued a press statement urging Governments to save lives by lifting all economic sanctions amid the COVID-19 pandemic. She called “on all Governments that use sanctions as foreign-relation tools to immediately withdraw measures aimed at establishing trade barriers, and ban tariffs, quotas, non-tariff measures, including those which prevent financing the purchase of medicine, medical equipment, food, other essential goods”. She specified that “[s]anctioned countries are especially hard-hit as they cannot use their revenues to purchase imports of equipment, medicines, antiviral and food from global markets”.

On 30 April, seven United Nations human rights experts issued a press statement in which they called on the United States of America “to lift its economic and financial embargo on Cuba that is obstructing humanitarian responses to help the country’s health-care system fight the COVID-19 pandemic”. They added, “the impact of the comprehensive embargo has imposed additional financial burden, increased cargo travel time due to an inability to procure supplies, reagents, medical equipment and medicines necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 directly from the United States and therefore constrains the effectiveness of the response”. OHCHR received information on the alleged impact of the sanctions on the capacity of Cuba to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially with regard to the possibility of obtaining medical equipment and reagents, and dispatch personnel in 14 countries.

OHCHR reiterates its recommendation for Cuba to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which it signed in 2008. This would provide an opportunity to highlight, through the periodic reporting obligations, the negative impact that the economic, commercial and financial embargo has on Cubans. OHCHR also reiterates its call to Cuba to extend invitations to special procedures mandate holders as a way to assess independently the impact that such unilateral measures have on the human rights of Cubans.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

[Original: English]
[13 March 2020]

Cuba is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol thereto. Nevertheless, thousands of refugees have found international protection in Cuba over the years, and the Government has allowed the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to exercise its mandate to recognize refugees and grant them international protection for more than three decades.

Cuba has maintained its de facto policy of non-refoulement for all refugees recognized under the mandate of UNHCR. At the end of 2019, 33 asylum seekers were pending a status determination in Cuba, maintaining a stable tendency, with 38 in 2018 and 33 in 2017. Asylum seekers in Cuba are allowed to remain in the country while UNHCR conducts a determination of their refugee status and, upon recognition of said status under its mandate, UNHCR identifies durable solutions for them.

Although the overall population of concern to UNHCR in Cuba is relatively low and decreasing, few solutions remain available. At the end of 2019, 237 recognized refugees were in need of a durable solution and, for most, resettlement to a third country was the only viable option. However, during 2019, access to resettlement was available to only a few, owing to the limited number of resettlement spaces.

Cuba has not developed a local integration policy. Nevertheless, in recent years, a limited number of refugees were granted permanent residence permits on the basis of marriage to a Cuban national, in accordance with the current national legislation. Such individuals were given a legal status that grants them similar rights and opportunities as nationals.

While most recognized refugees are not granted work permits, they have access to free health-care and education systems on a nearly equal footing with Cuban nationals. Although groups of refugees specifically admitted to Cuba under governmental scholarships have had their tertiary education funded, the programme applies only to refugees who are pre-selected before their arrival and therefore cannot be extended to all refugees recognized under the mandate of UNHCR.

In the past, Cuba has made relevant contributions to regional frameworks aimed at enhancing international protection and promoting solutions for refugees, stateless persons and other persons of concern to UNHCR. In 2014, the country agreed to approve the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action. Similarly, Cuba participated in a constructive way in the formal consultations leading to the development of the global compact on refugees, which was affirmed by the General Assembly on 17 December 2018.

If the embargo against Cuba ends, more favourable conditions in the country could ultimately be fostered for persons of concern to UNHCR. Such conditions could also support local integration. UNHCR will continue to advocate the accession by Cuba to the international refugee and statelessness treaties and looks forward to improved international cooperation, which would encourage accession and help to promote stronger protection for refugees and displaced persons.

United Nations Children's Fund

[Original: Spanish]
[12 March 2020]

Restrictions on the procurement of essential supplies and increased transaction costs have an impact on the efficiency of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and programme implementation, both in the context of the regular programme and humanitarian response.

Purchasing processes generate additional transactional costs because of the lack of access to the United States market even though that country is the nearest market. Goods, services and technology produced in the United States, covered by United States patents, or containing components manufactured or patented in the United States, are not available to the Cuban market. While spending on purchases of supplies contracted by 23 per cent between 2018 and 2019, transportation and handling costs increased considerably, leading to higher costs of purchased products due to the need to purchase supplies in more distant markets and the hiring of transportation agencies with higher costs.

The UNICEF office in Cuba cannot benefit from transactional cost savings that are made through global UNICEF agreements with companies located in the United States for the purchase of supplies and services, specifically those related to information and communications technology, software licences and Internet services. For a 2019 acquisition for the office, it has taken more than six months to obtain a license and permits from the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control to purchase computer equipment.

The international procurement of inputs has taken three months longer than expected, meaning procuring international inputs takes twice as long as expected. As a result, the office has been forced to cancel contracts with shipping companies and start the process of finding new agencies again. Furthermore, for the purchase of materials, some suppliers require an end-user certificate indicating that the office will be the sole user of the product and not a UNICEF programme beneficiary. Specific cases include the procurement of vehicles and computer equipment.

Restrictions on bank transfers of United States dollars to and from Cuba remained in place in the last year. The UNICEF office in Cuba must use an intermediary bank to replenish the funds in its local account in United States dollars, incurring a loss of approximately 3 per cent of the total value transferred owing to exchange rate differences. Based on past experience, transfers have taken more than 30 days to clear. To maintain the office's operations, a local bank balance is maintained to guarantee operations for the following 30 days. This is an exception to

UNICEF liquidity account handling rules, (the office has exceeded the account balance limit by 150 per cent).

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

[Original: English]

[31 March 2020]

The Nairobi Maafikiano ([TD/519/Add.2](#) and Corr.1), adopted at the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in July 2016, “From decision to action: moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development”, provided as follows:

“States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries, and that affect commercial interests. These actions hinder market access, investments and freedom of transit and the well-being of the populations of affected countries. Meaningful trade liberalization will also require addressing non-tariff measures including, inter alia, unilateral measures, where they may act as unnecessary trade barriers.”²⁴

Cuba has been under the United States economic embargo since 1962. The current United States policy towards Cuba was laid down in the National Security Presidential Memorandum entitled “Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba”, enacted on 16 June 2017.²⁵ The directive established a major policy direction, which, inter alia, sought to tighten the embargo against Cuba, including through restrictions on transactions with companies controlled by certain government entities and the elimination of individual people-to-people travel.

Subsequently, steps were taken to further strengthen restrictions on Cuba, including by enforcing all provisions of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996, known as the Helms-Burton Act.²⁶ In April 2019, the United States imposed sanctions on companies involved in transporting oil from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to Cuba. In June 2019, the United States restricted non-family travel. In September 2019, the country placed a cap on the amount of remittances and prohibited dollar transactions through third-party financial institutions. In December 2019 and January 2020, flights between the United States and Cuba were restricted to Havana alone.²⁷ The embargo against Cuba thus remains in force and operational in 2020.

Overall economic trends

Trade plays an essential role in the Cuban economy. As a small island country short on natural resources, capital, technology and domestic demand, Cuba critically needs access to international markets to sell its products and to reach a larger quantity and variety of goods and services, as well as foreign capital, technology and investment, to meet the domestic needs of its population, build a robust productive base and fuel its economy to sustain its growth and development. In 2018, exports of goods and services amounted to 14 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of

²⁴ UNCTAD, [TD/519/Add.2](#) and Corr. 1, 5 September 2016.

²⁵ Federal Register, Vol. 82, No. 202, 20 October 2017.

²⁶ White House, “President Donald J. Trump is taking a stand for democracy and human rights in the Western Hemisphere”, 17 April 2019.

²⁷ Congressional Research Service, “Cuba: US policy overview”, 13 February 2020.

Cuba, and imports accounted for 11 per cent. Between 2000 and 2018, the country's per capita income at constant prices (2010) rose from \$3,481 to \$6,739. In 2018, Cuba was ranked seventy-second in the United Nations Development Programme human development index and qualified as a country with high human development.

The overall economic conditions facing Cuba today, however, do not seem to be favourable for dynamic trade growth in the immediate future. Between 2013 and 2018, the Cuban economy grew at an average rate of only 1.8 per cent, significantly lower than the 5 per cent growth rate deemed necessary for the country to attain a sustainable growth path.²⁸ While it is estimated that the economy grew at a slower rate of 0.5 per cent in 2019, and is forecasted to grow at the same pace in 2020,²⁹ some recent estimates suggest that the Cuban economy could contract by 0.7 per cent in 2020.³⁰ The slowdown may be attributable to some extent to the effect of increased sanctions that impede financial transactions with Cuba and adversely affect tourist arrivals, and by the economic hardship of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, resulting in reduced bilateral support and oil supply. The growth forecast for 2020 would require a massive downward revision given the effect of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on tourism.

The deceleration of growth is symptomatic of chronic stagnation in domestic production and the erosion of competitiveness, affecting productive sectors in Cuba. As a small island economy with a GDP of \$97 billion (2017), Cuba has a small and labour-intensive agricultural sector that generates 4 per cent of GDP but absorbs 18 per cent of the workforce,³¹ and a capital-intensive industrial sector that contributes 25 per cent to GDP but employs just 9.6 per cent of workers. In contrast, services are the dominant sector of the economy, contributing 72 per cent to GDP and employment; they have emerged as the main export sector.

Bilateral trade between Cuba and the United States

Bilateral trade between Cuba and the United States is small in view of the size, economic complementarities and geographical proximity of the two economies.³² In 2018, the United States market remained virtually closed to Cuban products under the embargo. Existing Cuban exports to the United States were below \$2 million, less than 0.1 per cent of Cuba's total exports to the world.

By contrast, Cuba's imports from the United States were far greater and substantial. In 2018, Cuba's bilateral imports were valued at \$432 million, accounting for 4.3 per cent of its total imports. Those imports consisted mainly of basic food items (87 per cent of the total), such as meat and meat preparations (29 per cent) and cereals and cereal preparations (27 per cent), including edible meat (e.g., poultry), wheat, rice, maize and oilseeds. This reflects the fact that United States commercial agricultural exports have been authorized since 2001, albeit subject to numerous restrictions and licensing requirements. The United States today is one of Cuba's primary suppliers of food and agricultural products. Commercial exports of medicines and medical products have also been authorized since the early 1990s.³³

²⁸ Richard E. Feinberg, "Cuba's economy after Raúl Castro: a tale of three worlds", The Brookings Institution, February 2018.

²⁹ United Nations, *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2020*.

³⁰ The Economist Intelligence Unit.

³¹ International Labour Organization Department of Statistics.

³² The source of all data referred to in the text is UNCTADStat unless otherwise specified.

³³ Congressional Research Service, "Cuba: US Policy in the 116th Congress", 29 March 2019.

Trade pattern and trends

Partly reflecting the domestic production structure, the overall trade pattern of Cuba is marked by a persistent deficit in merchandise trade (\$7.4 billion in 2018)³⁴ and a persistent surplus in services trade (\$8.6 billion). Over the past few years, there has been a decline in the overall trade surplus: it has fallen from \$3.9 billion in 2014 to \$1.1 billion in 2018.

It is particularly notable that Cuban merchandise exports have steadily and substantially fallen from 2011 to 2016, partly reflecting the weakening of domestic productive capacities and competitiveness. In 2018, the value of Cuban merchandise exports was \$2.8 billion, less than half the historic high of \$6.4 billion attained in 2011. Consequently, the share of Cuba in the world's merchandise exports halved, from 0.035 per cent in 2011 to 0.014 per cent in 2018.

The export product basket of Cuba includes basic food, beverages and tobacco, ores and metals, chemical products and other manufactured goods. In 2018, tobacco (19 per cent), sugar (15 per cent), metalliferous ores (13 per cent) and medical and pharmaceutical products (11 per cent) figured prominently among the export products. Despite their diminishing role in the economy, traditional cash crops – sugar and tobacco – remained the country's main foreign exchange earners. In addition, a biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector that supplies the domestic health-care system has become a significant export industry, while nickel mining has also produced viable export activities.

In 2018, the main export markets of Cuba were the European Union (accounting for 24 per cent of total exports), Canada (17 per cent), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (16 per cent), China (15 per cent) and the Russian Federation (5 per cent). Despite a slight recovery in 2018, the relative importance of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as an export market has declined since 2010. That of the European Union remained stable, even though the group used to absorb a far higher proportion of Cuban exports – over 40 per cent in 2005. In the world markets, Cuban exports faced a weighted average tariff of about 15 per cent.³⁵

Estimated at \$10 billion in 2018, merchandise imports were four times larger than merchandise exports, as Cuba relies heavily on imports for the supply of essential energy and foodstuffs, as well as capital goods. The main imported items are basic food (21 per cent), including cereals and meat; mineral fuels (10 per cent); manufacturing categories, such as machinery and transport equipment (31 per cent); manufactured goods (16 per cent); and miscellaneous manufactured articles (9 per cent). Cuba reportedly meets 70 to 80 per cent of domestic food needs from imports. As to energy, since 2000 the country has maintained a preferential oil agreement with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, under which Cuba used to receive the amount of oil equivalent to two thirds of its domestic consumption. The provision decreased in early 2019 to one third of consumption.³⁶ The sanction imposed in April 2019 on several shipping companies transporting the oil between the two countries may have adversely affected the bilateral trade.

³⁴ As reported in the balance of payments. Balance of payment-based statistics of trade in goods may differ from international merchandise trade statistics reported elsewhere in the text owing to differences in the concepts and definitions.

³⁵ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Trade Analysis and Information System database, accessed through the World Integrated Trade Solution.

³⁶ Congressional Research Service, "Cuba: US policy in the 116th Congress", 29 March 2019.

Services and remittances

Cuba has developed important export capabilities in the services sector. In 2018, the country's services exports amounted to \$10.7 billion, and imports to \$2.2 billion, generating a services trade surplus of \$8.6 billion, as noted. Key export activities are professional services – largely medical personnel supplying services in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela – and booming tourism services.

Tourism has grown significantly since the mid-1990s. Tourist arrivals reached 4.7 million in 2018, but then declined to 4.3 million in 2019, hurting private sector businesses and tourism revenues.³⁷ In 2018, related travel services generated \$3 billion in exports, representing nearly 30 per cent of total services exports. Further development of tourism services has been constrained by United States measures such as the prohibition of people-to-people educational travel. The United States regulations currently restrict travel to Cuba to licensed travellers engaged in certain specified activities.

Remittance flows to Cuba sent by migrants and workers abroad were valued at \$4.5 billion in 2018. In 2017, \$3.5 billion was estimated to originate from the United States.³⁸ The amount of total remittance inflows was greater than the country's total merchandise export receipt and equivalent to 4.3 per cent of its GDP. Remittances have been the major source of external finances and could potentially serve as investment capital for households and private enterprises. The decision of the United States in September 2019 to cap family remittances to \$1,000 per quarter, *inter alia*, is expected to curb remittance flows to the country.

Conclusion

Recent actions taken by the United States have intensified economic sanctions and tightened the embargo against Cuba. The embargo therefore remains in force and continues to hinder the healthy development of commercial relations between the two neighbouring countries. This continues to be a matter of concern for Cuba as trade plays a crucial role in its economy. To date, the embargo has hindered the country's efforts to use trade as an instrument of sustainable development, including through the further expansion of promising tourism and professional services activities, as well as the productive use of remittances. This is all the more significant in the light of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, which profile international trade as an essential means of implementation.

United Nations Development Programme

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[31 March 2020]

Cuba continues to maintain a high human development index ranking. President Miguel Díaz-Canel has ratified the commitment of Cuba to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Cuban development model continues to change. The document entitled “Economic and social policy guidelines of the Party and the Revolution” was updated at the Seventh Communist Party Congress, held in 2016, and it continues to provide guidance for ongoing reform. The Cuban Parliament also approved the conceptualization of the Cuban economic and social model and the 2030 national plan for economic and social development. The plan defines key strategic priorities for: an

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ United States Department of State, “US relations with Cuba”, 22 November 2019.

effective and socialist government and social integration; changes in the production sector and participation in international trade; infrastructure development; the development of human potential, science, technology and innovation; natural resources and the environment; and human development, equity and justice.

The economic and social policy guidelines are innovative within the national context and represent a challenge for the country. The main objective of the guidelines is to stimulate foreign investment and accelerate economic growth and competitiveness, recognizing that local governments have a vital role in the forthcoming decentralization framework. In late 2013, Cuba initiated a process of monetary unification that represents a key challenge for the country. In 2019, new measures were adopted in this complex, ongoing process, for which rigorous preparations are required to address possible impacts on the population. In this context, universal social services and social development remain a priority for the Government. The traditional social protection network is thus being adjusted to ensure sustainability and greater focus on the most vulnerable groups, such as older persons.

Guideline No. 85 of the economic and social guidelines calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration to support the 2030 national plan for economic and social development, with direct reference to the United Nations system. In that regard, the United Nations system supports national authorities in addressing emerging issues and challenges.

The Seventh Communist Party Congress also approved the State plan to respond to climate change and to promote resilient development, known as Life Task (*Tarea Vida*).

A new constitutional text was endorsed by a broad referendum process in 2019. The new Constitution recognizes citizens' rights, as well as different types of property; reaffirms the local role in development; and legalizes changes in the governance structure, among others. The legislative changes derived from the Constitution are under implementation. To this end, a work schedule has been approved for the presentation of the new legal documents that will come into force to operationalize the constitutional changes.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports national authorities' efforts to address emerging development issues and challenges. The partnership between UNDP and the Cuban authorities is based on a long-standing relationship. UNDP has supported major local and national development strategies and policies for over 40 years. Until December 2019, cooperation was carried out within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the UNDP country programme document for 2014–2019. The new country programme for 2020–2024 was approved in 2020 and contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework agreed between Cuba and the United Nations system. It addresses the strategic priorities of the country, as expressed in the 2030 national plan for economic and social development, and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Each expected result will prioritize a multidimensional development approach, combining economic improvement, people's well-being and empowerment, sustainable management of natural resources, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and comprehensive risk management. UNDP will promote coordination between State, non-State, civil society and community-based organizations whose actions contribute to change.

UNDP supports priority areas of cooperation that contribute to the implementation of the economic and social policy guidelines in areas that are at times innovative within the national context and have a high strategic relevance in view of the changes made to the Cuban development model. Fostering sustainable human

development will continue to be at the heart of the cooperation programme, which promotes South-South cooperation, innovation and technology and knowledge transfer.

Diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States

In December 2014, the Presidents of Cuba and the United States of America, Raúl Castro and Barack Obama, announced the decision to initiate conversations, focusing on steps to be taken to officially re-establish diplomatic relations. After some rounds of negotiations, the Embassies of Cuba and the United States were opened in Washington, D.C., and Havana, respectively, in the summer of 2015. A bilateral commission was established to help move towards the full normalization of diplomatic ties. However, the current United States Administration has adopted measures that have negatively affected bilateral relations.

The process towards the normalization of relations has been strongly affected by the measures adopted by the current United States Administration. Among the measures that negatively affect bilateral relations are: the suspension of consular services in the United States Embassy in Havana for Cuban citizens who wish to travel to the United States; the significant reduction in United States diplomatic personnel in Cuba; the elimination of the granting of tourist visas valid for five years for Cubans; and the entry into force of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, entitled “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act”, which reinforces the general conditions of the embargo, by allowing legal claims for property confiscated in Cuba from United States citizens and companies, as well as Cuban citizens nationalized in the United States.

In 2019, new measures were taken to significantly limit financial transactions with Cuba, including the expansion of the list of restricted entities and subentities associated with Cuba with which it is prohibited to have direct financial transactions to more than 200 such entities and subentities;³⁹ the amendment of the general licence relating to “U-turn” financial transactions; the elimination of the authorization for donative remittances and the placement of a cap on family remittances. In May 2019, Title III of the Helms-Burton Act was allowed to come into force, permitting legal action to be brought against companies from third countries that do business with Cuba and use properties that had previously been nationalized by the Cuban Government and were owned by United States citizens. The Helms-Burton Act was passed in 1996 as legislation that further strengthens the economic embargo, although the implementation of Title III had been suspended every six months by previous administrations. Further restrictions on travel were imposed, such as banning cruise ships from stopping over in Cuba, narrowing travel authorizations with the elimination of the people-to-people travel category that allowed United States citizens to visit Cuba as part of organized group educational tours and banning United States flights to all Cuban cities except Havana.

Furthermore, several sanctions, including penalties and the freezing of financial assets, were imposed on international crude oil providers and financial entities. The most relevant cases were: the Venezuelan oil company *Petróleos de Venezuela* (34 vessels), *Ballito Bay Shipping Inc.*, based in Liberia, and *ProPer In Management Inc.*, based in Greece, as well as *Standard Chartered*, based in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with a settlement of \$947 million (of which \$639 million went to the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Department of the Treasury) and European subsidiaries of *UniCredit Group* in

³⁹ See list of restricted entities: www.state.gov/cuba-sanctions/cuba-restricted-list/list-of-restricted-entities-and-subentities-associated-with-cuba-effective-as-of-november-19-2019/.

Austria, Germany and Italy, with a settlement (of which \$611 million went to the Office of Foreign Assets Control).

Specific effects of the United States embargo

In this context, the embargo remains in place, and its negative impact has been more specific and significantly larger than in previous years, particularly on commerce and financial activities. The embargo affects the external economic relations of Cuba, and its impact can be observed in all spheres of the country's social and economic activities; the embargo maintains the restrictions on the use of the United States dollar and on imports from Cuba. It affects opportunities for national and local development and creates economic hardship for the population. The embargo has an impact on the population's most vulnerable groups and on human development in general.

According to official estimates, the cumulative direct and indirect losses to the Cuban economy due to the embargo from the early 1960s until March 2019 amount to \$138.8 billion at current prices.

The embargo has limited the access of Cuba to development credits granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. This has narrowed the possibility of obtaining resources to provide financial support for the national and/or local development plans of Cuba.

In the context of updating the Cuban economic model, the embargo also limits the participation of foreign investors – particularly United States companies – in prioritized economic projects, including the special development zone in Mariel. In that regard, the embargo impedes investment flows and limits access to regional and global value chains.

Travel by Cuban experts and researchers to the United States in the framework of cooperation agreements has been limited by the process of obtaining visas.

The embargo has continued to negatively affect day-to-day work in external cooperation initiatives, creating many difficulties for the implementation of programmes and projects owing to trade restrictions or prohibitions on purchasing inputs from United States companies and subsidiaries established in the United States or in other countries. It also reduces the number of possible suppliers and limits competitive processes.

On a financial level, the embargo continues to prevent the UNDP country office in Cuba from making transfers in United States dollars. For this reason, and although budgets of all projects are recorded in United States dollars, transfers abroad are made in other currencies (mainly euros, British pounds, Canadian dollars, Japanese yen and Swiss francs). However, even when payments are made in any of these currencies, bank withholdings have significantly increased, with constant requests by banks for additional information in order to comply with the Office of Foreign Assets Control all along the banking chain system (issuing, intermediate and beneficiary). Most suppliers that have had fluid commercial relations with Cuban companies and with the UNDP country office for years have continued to have their accounts closed because of policies implemented by many banks, mainly in Mexico and Panama, directly and explicitly related to United States sanctions against Cuba. In 2019, the UNDP country office in Cuba and its projects faced several issues, with most financial transactions involving intermediary banks that were subject to United States jurisdiction and ending in automatic rejections by the banks as part of compliance policies. These measures have affected the ability of the country office to honour payments to suppliers within agreed time frames and have implied additional transaction costs, affecting project budgets.

In addition, the embargo places practical restrictions on transportation for shipping lines whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. This significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, thus limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading of goods. Costs associated with intermediaries and long-distance transportation negatively affect access to key inputs to implement development projects, as well as the final cost of imported project goods and equipment. Likewise, products for development projects must be purchased and imported from more distant places at much higher costs.

Effects on projects

The embargo has had a direct impact on all UNDP development projects and emergency activities, because it increases the transaction costs of obtaining project inputs, the shipping cost of imported goods and transportation time. Finding alternative shipping companies requires additional time and effort. As a result, projects have suffered significant delays in the purchase and distribution of project inputs, which has had a negative impact on the timely implementation of project activities and on results.

The situation has been particularly complex and worrisome in the case of projects related to food security and local development, given the lengthy process to access and import agricultural inputs such as irrigation systems, machinery and agricultural tools. In general, procurement processes take longer, delaying project activities and their results. Therefore, financial proposals and new projects must consider, in their design, an extended period for procurement processes; they must also allocate additional financial resources to cover incremental costs that could otherwise be allocated for development activities. Those additional costs are covered by the funds provided by international development partners, which are channelled through UNDP.

Many of the assets required by country office projects involve United States technologies or include United States manufacturing components. The Torricelli Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996 are still in force. Both explicitly prohibit sales to Cuba by United States companies and subsidiaries in third countries and include sanctions against those who violate the prohibition. The full application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which began in May 2019, has limited new partnerships and agreements.

In the current context of the full application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, restrictions have been more rigorously applied and new challenges have emerged for the implementation of development projects in Cuba. This has not only affected business transactions with the United States, but also had a deterrent effect in other countries whose persons, companies, banks and other entities are more apprehensive about sanctions. The decrease in available international suppliers is a direct result of sanctions and a setback in the context of a local market that depends on imports.

This situation also affects the acquisition of computer technology.

The projects financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, of which UNDP is the principal recipient, provides medicines, reagents and laboratory equipment for the benefit of 21,946 persons of all ages living with HIV/AIDS. These products are purchased from third countries and secondary suppliers at prices significantly higher than those of comparable products sold on the international market. Even when long-term corporate agreements between UNDP and international suppliers apply to the project in Cuba, the embargo hinders purchases of products that are manufactured or have a component manufactured in the United States. In such cases, the providers must obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign

Assets Control to deliver services or products to projects in Cuba, a bureaucratic process that takes much time and effort.

Effects of the embargo on country operations of the United Nations Development Programme

The embargo also affects the day-to-day work of the UNDP country office. There are limits on the use of corporate long-term agreements that are meant to effectively implement and monitor development, among others. For example, although there is a signed long-term agreement with Toyota Gibraltar Stockholdings Ltd, to date, the company cannot supply spare parts manufactured in the United States. As a result, the transaction costs increase by at least 15 per cent for UNDP Cuba owing to prices obtained from alternative, and less competitive, suppliers. Furthermore, in 2018, Toyota Gibraltar Stockholdings announced the cancellation of the supply of vehicles to the country office, which has put the office and its projects in a critical situation for the renovation of the vehicle fleet and the purchase of new vehicles.

In addition, access to Internet services is limited owing to the embargo. Many websites and services, such as Adobe, Amazon, Cisco and VMware, are blocked for the Cuban Internet service provider.

Consequently, the country office obtains access to the Internet through a satellite provider, resulting in higher costs, limited bandwidth and inferior quality for video and voice services through the Internet. This situation restrains the effective use of corporate platforms, increasing the amount of time required to perform online processes and activities. Access to online training and webinars is also limited, while cloud-based services cannot be used.

In addition, the country office's satellite provider has been blocked from some of the websites and services that are banned for Cuba, thus imposing the use of a proxy. There are no local distributors or representatives of information and communications technology (ICT) companies, such as Cisco, Dell, Google, HP, Lenovo, Microsoft or VMware. For this reason, there is no local technical support or spare parts and equipment must be returned to the supplier in case of failure, with associated delays and extra costs. Furthermore, there are no local training capacities for ICT staff learning or access to certification programmes.

In ICT, the embargo prevents the country office from directly accessing products and services from the United States, for example, from Cisco, Dell or HP. The same situation applies to software licences and support. For example, the long-term contract between HP and UNDP cannot be used by the country office. The same applies to authorized distributors.

The country office is also affected by not being able to use corporate accounts with United States banks or the United States dollar as a currency of payment. The office has to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations; for example, it must use third-country banks, which results in higher costs for the office and its projects, as well as a heavier administrative burden. These additional costs have been covered by UNDP and project funds from donors, therefore using resources that could otherwise have been used for development activities.

A significant number of suppliers that had maintained fluid commercial relations with Cuban companies and with the UNDP country office for years saw their accounts closed in 2018 and 2019 as a result of policies implemented by Multibank, Panama, directly and explicitly related to United States sanctions against Cuba. As a result, contracts have had to be cancelled in the case of two emergency projects,

whose implementation was seriously delayed. Payment difficulties for other development projects have negatively affected UNDP operations in general.

Another way in which UNDP is affected by the embargo is that national staff travelling to UNDP headquarters in New York have to request their visas well in advance.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]

[13 March 2020]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States on Cuba for almost 60 years has been intensified over the past year and continues to cause harm to the Cuban people and to obstruct the country's economic development. The entry into force of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the "Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act", tightens the general conditions of the embargo, allowing the proliferation of lawsuits over properties that were confiscated, nationalized or expropriated in Cuba from United States citizens and companies, as well as from Cuban citizens nationalized in the United States. These include facilities that today are schools and cultural centres, among other institutions.

People-to-people educational travel to Cuba has been prohibited, flights of United States airlines have been restricted to the capital and the arrival of cruise ships has been ended, all of which generated negative effects on the tourism sector. Likewise, remittances that United States citizens and residents sent to relatives in Cuba have been further restricted, thereby reducing their purchasing power. New sanctions have been announced by the Government of the United States against maritime companies shipping oil to the country, which has caused a significant reduction in supply and availability, resulting in an adverse impact on agriculture, public transport, food distribution and other areas of economic and social importance. These sanctions have also made it more difficult for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to conduct collaborative ventures in the country. Capacity-building workshops that were scheduled for 2019 could not be held, owing to the effect of limitations on the transport of participants from different areas of the country for those events.

The embargo continues to have a negative effect on the implementation of important transformations that are part of the upgrading of the educational system, including modernizing the curricula and reordering institutional processes to improve efficiency and quality. The upgrading process requires the use of new teaching materials and laboratory equipment, the printing of new textbooks, and other inputs for which import costs have increased considerably owing to the effects of the embargo. In higher education, Cuba's access to the technology and equipment needed for advanced learning and scientific research – including research materials and supplies, scientific instruments and other resources – has become more limited, making these resources more difficult and costly to obtain. In addition, the embargo impedes the proper dissemination of and remuneration for results, as well as support for university extension programmes in the community that foster local development. Similarly, the embargo hinders free exchange and academic cooperation between Cuban and United States universities and research institutions, activities that would be highly beneficial for the advancement of scientific knowledge.

The culture sector also continues to be affected by the embargo, as it limits the promotion, dissemination and marketing of the artistic talent of Cuba. Cuban musicians are still unable to make full use of the advantages of the United States market, forcing them in many cases to sell their music in markets with a lower

demand. The strict regulation of bank transactions prevents direct transactions between Cuba and the United States regarding the sale of cultural goods and services, especially in the field of music. Obstacles to accessing equipment and materials for creating and recording Cuban music, as well as cutting-edge technology, are still in effect. This includes the purchasing of musical instruments for instructing new talent in Cuba, which results in relying on higher-cost alternatives from distant markets. Artistic training, particularly in the field of music, is limited by the barriers imposed on access to capacity-building courses at United States institutions. The embargo limits the purchase of updated bibliographic materials, resources for the conservation of cultural property and state-of-the-art technological equipment under the protection of United States patents.

In the telecommunications field, it is difficult to purchase materials, equipment and software licences, as well as other merchandise and supplies, from the United States and other suppliers that market these products under United States patents. Despite recent advances in the introduction of 4G technology and the expansion of access points to Wi-Fi connectivity across Cuba, the availability and diversity of Internet services continue to be limited owing to the embargo. Internet providers interested in introducing their products and services to the Cuban market are limited in doing so, owing to the sanctions that the Government of the United States could impose. In addition, some websites and Internet services hosted on United States servers are not accessible from Cuba.

The extraterritorial nature of the embargo has shown itself in the financial restrictions that prevent or hinder bank transactions, even in currencies that are not the United States dollar. This far-reaching impact does not exclude international agencies that have offices in Cuba, including UNESCO. As a result, the embargo limits financial transactions conducted by the international and national personnel of UNESCO. For example, local personnel find it difficult to conduct bank transfers between personal accounts associated with United States-based banks or credit institutions, such as the United Nations Federal Credit Union, and their accounts in Cuba. The salaries of international personnel cannot be directly deposited into their Cuban bank accounts, and neither national nor international personnel can use their Cuban bank accounts to make reservations or pay for plane tickets, hotel accommodations and related services outside of Cuba, regardless of whether these transactions are for personal or official purposes.

Unable to access the United States market, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean is required to pay much higher freight costs since it has to import its inputs from more distant countries. In addition, when there are fewer options for suppliers, the purchasing process becomes more complex. Some of the companies with which UNESCO has long-term agreements in order to reduce costs and obtain better conditions are not allowed to make any offers to UNESCO in Cuba. United States-based companies supplying information and communications technologies with which UNESCO maintains global supply agreements are obliged to request special licences from the United States Department of the Treasury to export their products to the Cuba office. These permits are issued under the condition that said property not be transferred to any national entity. This affects the implementation of the UNESCO collaboration projects at the local level, increasing purchasing costs and eliminating the possibility of benefiting from post-sales services and better commercial warranties.

The definitive closing of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Havana Field Office, previously housed in the United States Embassy in Cuba, hinders requests for visas for UNESCO officials, consultants and participants in events and training who travel on mission to the United States or to countries to which the flight route would cost less in terms of time and money via the United

States. In terms of medical insurance and care, UNESCO officials are directly affected, since many health insurance companies cannot work directly with Cuban health service providers given the restrictions imposed by the embargo, making it difficult to ensure health services for the personnel of the Cuba office.

United Nations Environment Programme

[Original: English]

[31 January 2020]

From an environmental perspective, the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba not only affects that Caribbean country but also the subregion and the United States itself.

Conservation efforts in the Caribbean islands biodiversity hotspot are fragmented and incomplete and they lack a necessary common strategy, since Cuba is excluded from several of the most important projects in the subregion, owing to the fact that they are being implemented with United States funds. This not only prevents Cuba from benefiting from the projects but also affects the Caribbean subregion, as it cannot be approached as a whole.

When we consider the overall transformation towards sustainability, Cuba has a lot to share with neighbouring and other countries in terms of models and solutions to combine social and human development with environmental sustainability. In this sense, the United States embargo also hampers the ability of the world to benefit from experience, know-how and models from Cuba.

The embargo also significantly affects the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems shared between Cuba and the United States.

The embargo eliminates the possibility of implementing common strategies for the integrated management of the environment and natural resources that surround these two countries and no important integrated progress can be made in the absence of agreements and dialogue between the two Governments to focus on their shared environments.

Much of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is conducted through South-South cooperation that involves knowledge transfer, capacity-building and technical support from and to Cuba and other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, by way of training events, capacity-building activities and workshops. Therefore, the continuing embargo translates into missed opportunities for environmental cooperation in the region.

When working in Cuba, there is often a need to search for alternatives in the use of technology, for example, the Global Information System software used for remotely sensed and spatial data gathering and processing, which is needed for certain activities and projects. Given the existing trade restrictions, common suppliers are unable to deliver products and services in Cuba; therefore, the alternatives in terms of other capable software are limited.

The embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba also affects the operations of UNEP. Simple things, such as Cuba making its financial contribution to the Programme, are affected, as banks often block transfers and transactions of funds coming from the country. Cuba's financial contribution is important in supporting the implementation of the programme of work.

The embargo poses a series of challenges for project implementation. Cuban consultants hired by UNEP may not receive their salary, because intermediary banks withhold their payments or make many inquiries. The transfer of funds to Cuba faces

challenges, as it must often be done through the United Nations Development Programme, which entails additional costs. Funds that would otherwise be invested in projects are used to pay those expenses. This creates problems in the general implementation of the projects. In addition, the embargo prevents UNEP from applying for United States funds for the benefit of activities in Cuba and from partnering with important non-governmental organizations or institutions based in the United States to work in Cuba.

Other examples of the impacts linked to the embargo are:

(a) As United States companies are not allowed to sell equipment, technology or products, among others, to Cuban companies, Cubans are forced to buy them in other markets, increasing cargo travel times and subsequently increasing carbon emissions associated with transport;

(b) Cuba continues to increase energy efficiency, under its energy revolution programme, as well as to promote recycling and other green technologies. The aim is to decrease oil consumption and carbon dioxide emissions and to achieve general resource efficiency. However, United States companies or their subsidiaries in other countries are not allowed to sell technologies that could benefit this endeavour to Cuba. The same is true of products of non-United States companies that contain parts or components provided by United States companies or subsidiaries that could assist in advancing such developments;

(c) Cuba will face difficulties in meeting the obligations derived from the Minamata Convention on Mercury as a consequence of limited access to mercury-free technology, as well as in phasing out products containing mercury, such as dental amalgams, leading to uncontrolled mercury releases that have regional and global effects;

(d) The participation of Cuban experts in environmental and sustainable development conferences and training activities is often constrained by travel restrictions, and thousands of dollars are spent on more expensive and often longer routes for travel. In addition, their daily subsistence allowance cannot be provided through bank transfers because of the financial restrictions. Similarly, the challenges in processing the financial transactions and Internet connections make it difficult for UNEP staff to participate in missions to Cuba;

(e) The embargo also restricts Cuba's access to information from leading scientific and technical journals and publications, as well as Internet access to specialized companies and institutions in the United States. This limits access by Cuban academics, engineers and students to cutting-edge developments in energy and environmental sciences; such access could increase their capacities to implement sound environmental technologies;

(f) Connectivity restrictions also limit Cuba's ability to implement and comply with certain environmental treaties that require the constant use of the Internet. There is an important issue of connectivity between the United States and Cuba with respect to migratory birds and several marine species. An approximate amount of 200 species of migratory birds that breed in North America stop by or spend the winter in Cuba, and marine species such as snappers and groupers have a spawning spot in the north of the province of Pinar del Río in Cuba. The country exports most of its larvae from this spawning spot to Florida, one of the most important sites for sport fishing of these species in the United States. The embargo restrictions prevent fluid and efficient cooperation between conservationists and biodiversity protection agencies of Cuba and the United States to achieve effective protection of these connectivity processes;

(g) Cuba also has limited bandwidth as a result of the embargo, which affects the participation of Cubans in Internet-based conference sites and webinar platforms to attend virtual meetings and training sessions, which are increasingly being implemented to decrease travel costs, among other reasons;

(h) Cuba and the United States are located in a region where disasters, particularly hurricanes, are seriously affecting ecosystems and populations. Both countries are working to attain higher levels of prevention of and preparation for disasters. In this sense, cooperation would benefit both countries, as well as other countries of the wider Caribbean area.

For the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is imperative to facilitate cooperation among countries and remove barriers. The complete elimination of the obstacles that limit normal exchange between Cuba and the United States would contribute to advancement in the sustainable management of shared ecosystems, cooperation among scientific and academic communities and the increased contribution of both countries in the fight against climate change, in ecosystem management, in addressing natural disasters and in the prevention of accidents. It would also benefit other countries with which Cuba and the United States have cooperative programmes.

Notwithstanding the difficulties posed by the embargo, UNEP supports Cuba within its possibilities, trying to offset the limitations posed by this embargo. However, the ending of the embargo would significantly facilitate the processes and operation of projects and programmes in Cuba.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

[Original: English]
[24 March 2020]

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has been working in Cuba since 2001 and has had a country programme since 2010. The main objective of the programme is to support the Government of Cuba in the implementation of its development agenda and priorities in line with the priorities and mandates of UN-Habitat.

Over a number of years, UN-Habitat has supported Cuba in the implementation of several projects whose priorities are reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the UN-Habitat country programme. Notable projects include planning and urban management at the national and municipal levels; housing and urban recovery after the impact of hurricanes; supporting changes in the housing and habitat sector; and promoting the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national and local levels.

The projects that are being implemented are oriented towards development issues. There have been some restrictions on their execution owing to the international implications of the economic, commercial and financial embargo. It restricts financial transactions and access to international markets that are of great importance for guaranteeing the acquisition of supplies, equipment, technologies and infrastructure for the urban and territorial development of Cuba and the gradual improvement of the quality of life of the Cuban people.

With the new scenario of Cuba-United States relations and the different measures that have been approved and put into practice by both countries, the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo has become more obvious, as new opportunities are affected by it.

From the perspective of UN-Habitat, the implementation of General Assembly resolution 74/7 will enable Cuba to contribute decisively to the achievement of the New Urban Agenda and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 11, to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

[Original: English]

[7 February 2020]

Currently, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is supporting the efforts of the Government of Cuba to promote foreign direct investment and create strategic alliances conducive to strengthening the country's industrial capabilities and competitiveness in priority industrial sectors through the implementation of a country programme.

The country programme focuses on three main objectives: (a) improving the business environment and sustainability; (b) improving industrial competitiveness; and (c) attracting foreign investment. The country programme includes various projects in strategic sectors for the economic and social development of Cuba, such as industrial policy, the use of renewable energies, the fresh food industry and the integrated management of hydraulic resources.

An overall budget of €50 million for four years has been tentatively identified, to be mobilized for the implementation of the programme.

However, owing to constraints in funds mobilization and partnerships caused by the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, UNIDO has not been able to make the expected and needed progress in the country programme.

Nonetheless, UNIDO is implementing seven ongoing projects with an overall budget of \$8.8 million, and two new initiatives are in advanced stages of funding negotiations for \$3.8 million.

In addition, UNIDO has the support of the Government of Cuba to launch a new country programme, which is envisaged to start in 2021.

UNIDO is convinced that, without the restrictions caused by the embargo, this interregional effort to promote foreign direct investment, one of the key elements of the Programme for Country Partnership approach of UNIDO, could have brought more benefits.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

[Original: English]

[27 March 2020]

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction coordinates international efforts in disaster risk reduction, and guides, monitors and reports on the progress of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The support provided by the Office involves facilitating the participation of Cuba in disaster risk reduction knowledge-sharing processes and initiatives, in particular through the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean. It also involves engaging Cuba in the subregional projects carried out by the Office in the Caribbean, which aim to contribute to the implementation of the Sendai Framework by increasing capacities in disaster risk reduction and disseminating good practices in risk-sensitive investment, as well as to strengthen and streamline early warning systems in the Caribbean.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction acknowledges the expertise of Cuba in reducing disaster risks and commends the country for its sustained efforts to implement the Sendai Framework. The support of Cuba for the adoption of the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas, in 2017, has been crucial to solidify regional commitments and ensure regional coherence. The cooperation of Cuba with its regional neighbours, sharing its expertise, is also of great importance for the advancement of the disaster risk reduction agenda. Cuba has been among the first countries to offer technical assistance to Caribbean countries to cope with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Finally, the Office also commends Cuba for its efforts to ensure that disaster risk reduction issues are part and parcel of the sustainable development agenda. The willingness of Cuba to host the now-postponed Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development on from 28 to 31 March is a testament to the commitment of Cuba to regional coordination among multiple stakeholders to implement the sustainable development agenda in the Americas.

In the light of the goals and targets agreed to in the Sendai Framework, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction recognizes that achieving further progress in reducing the human and economic impacts of disasters in Cuba will require access to scientific and technical advances, as well as to optimal technology. Efforts to achieve further progress would also benefit from accessing resources from donors and international finance institutions currently aiming to build resilience in the region. The achievements in protecting the population against natural and human-made hazards need to be complemented by strengthening preparedness, early response and recovery planning processes with a “build back better” approach that would be further enhanced by accessing disaster response, health and early warning equipment, risk modelling, adapted infrastructure and other information technology.

In line with the above, ending the embargo would allow Cuba to access key information, knowledge, technology and assets that are of the utmost importance for building the necessary capacities to deliver on the commitments of the Sendai Framework and to build further resilience in the country, thus achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

[Original: English]
[14 April 2020]

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) notes that the Caribbean region continues to be confronted with challenges related to the illicit production and trafficking of cocaine originating in Latin America. UNODC is further strengthening its presence in the Caribbean to support member States in their efforts to counter these challenges and expects to strengthen its cooperation with Cuba in the context of initiatives for the region, including new initiatives to enhance border controls.

Cuba is covered by the UNODC Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean, based in Panama. In addition, UNODC has established a presence in Barbados and the Dominican Republic. From these locations, UNODC supports Cuba as part of a strengthened UNODC presence in the Caribbean region, in close coordination with key regional and national counterparts. UNODC does not have a presence in Cuba and does not implement national programmes in that country. All technical assistance is covered by UNODC global programmes.

In the area of anti-corruption, Cuba is a State party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and participates actively in its review mechanism exercise. During the first review cycle, Cuba was reviewed by Brazil and Guatemala and chose to publish its country review report on the UNODC website. For the second review cycle, which began in 2018, Cuba is being reviewed for a third year. Mozambique and Uruguay have been selected as reviewing States. A country visit took place in June 2019.

In the area of law enforcement and interdiction capacity-building, Cuba takes part in the global Container Control Programme of the World Customs Organization and UNODC. The programme established one port control unit in the port of Mariel and one air cargo control unit at the José Martí International Airport. Both units received basic theoretical, practical and specialized training on trafficking of cultural heritage and on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. In addition, the Container Control Programme officers participated in work-study tours of international benchmarking ports and in mentoring activities. In 2019, both Container Control Programme units in Cuba reported five cases of undeclared goods, one case of commercial fraud and two cases of firearms trafficking.

In cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organization, UNODC also established the Airport Communication Project. This multi-agency project aims to strengthen the capacities of participating international airports in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Middle East to detect and intercept drugs, illicit goods and high-risk passengers in origin, transit and destination countries with the overall objective of disrupting illegal criminal networks. UNODC secured funding to support the implementation of the Airport Communication Project in Cuba. The initial stage of implementation will be at the José Martí International Airport, bringing together key law enforcement agencies: national customs, immigration, police and INTERPOL. National authorities have confirmed interest in having the Project support the country's efforts to address the following areas of concern: trafficking in drugs, arms, persons and wildlife; smuggling of cash and bearer negotiable instruments; and art trafficking.

Cooperation was also established in the context of the fight against firearms trafficking. Cuba has actively participated in regional activities organized by the Global Firearms Programme, such as the regional meeting on strengthening regional cooperation in Latin America to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in firearms and related crimes, held in November 2019, in Mexico City, to exchange good practices and foster international cooperation.

In the context of regional cooperation, Cuba participated in the twenty-ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Peru, in October 2019. The Meeting is a subsidiary body of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

In the health sector, Cuba will benefit from a UNODC regional programme for 11 countries in Latin America on drug demand reduction, treatment and rehabilitation that was launched in 2020, with the objective of strengthening quality standards in the treatment of disorders associated with drug use.

UNODC is committed to sustaining and strengthening its collaboration and operational partnership with Cuba to address challenges related to drugs and crime. The regional office for Central America and the Caribbean is making every effort to include Cuba as a beneficiary/partner in new initiatives to be presented to donors for funding. An end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo would presumably facilitate the future operational engagement of UNODC in the country, in close partnership with the Cuban authorities.

United Nations Population Fund

[Original: English]

[11 May 2020]

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continues to support the efforts of Cuba to further strengthen and maintain the progress attained in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights, in particular among adolescents and young people, enhancing the quality of sexual and reproductive health services, population data systems, comprehensive sexuality education, maternal health, family planning, gender programmes, sociodemographic data generation, analysis of population dynamics and sustainable development.

The UNFPA country office in Cuba supports the Government through its country programme, guided by a number of important frameworks, including the Cuba-United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018–2021, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNFPA is one of the few organizations present in Cuba that supports sexual and reproductive health, population and development, gender and youth programmes.

Since the embargo by the United States of America against Cuba was imposed, UNFPA has continued to face challenges with the acquisition and purchase of commodities, equipment, medical supplies, medicines and laboratory materials manufactured in or covered by United States patents. Sexual and reproductive health commodities and inputs necessary for UNFPA operations cannot be procured on the local market. As a result of those commodities and inputs having to be procured internationally, increased costs negatively affect the implementation of the country programme.

Those challenges continue to impact the economic and social development of Cuba, affecting the country's efforts to preserve the social indicators attained. UNFPA also remains concerned about vulnerable groups, such as older people, especially in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Universal Postal Union

[Original: English]

[31 March 2020]

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has always regarded Cuba as a full-fledged member of the organization. As such, Cuba enjoys the same rights and obligations as any other UPU member country.

Cuba currently serves as a member of both the UPU Council of Administration and the UPU Postal Operations Council, following the elections that took place on 5 and 6 October 2016, respectively, during the twenty-sixth Universal Postal Congress, held in Istanbul, Turkey.

Moreover, Cuba regularly benefits from postal development assistance provided within the framework of UPU technical cooperation activities. In terms of any relevant developments since June 2019, the following activities may be highlighted:

- With UPU fellowship support, Cuba participated in two workshops concerning the UPU Operational Readiness for E-commerce initiative, which were held in Montevideo in June and December 2019.
- Within the framework of the UPU Postal Financial Services project for the Latin American region, the designated operator of Cuba (Correos de Cuba) is expected

to receive information technology equipment (computers and printers) that will allow the extension of its Correogiros (a postal financial service initiative) network to 44 post offices in the country.

- Within the framework of the aforementioned project and with UPU fellowship support, the designated operator of Cuba participated in a workshop held in Montevideo in August 2019.
- Cuba also attended, with UPU fellowship support, a postal remuneration meeting held in San José in August 2019.
- Finally, Cuba attended the UPU regional strategy conference for the Latin American region, which was held in San José in August 2019.

UPU has not encountered difficulties in implementing the aforementioned assistance or undertaking any other joint activities with Cuba as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States against that country.

World Food Programme

[Original: English]
[12 February 2020]

Over the past 60 years, Cuba's comprehensive social protection programmes have largely eradicated hunger and poverty. Cuba was one of the most successful countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and is ranked seventy-second on the human development index of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

During the 1990s, Cuba faced a severe economic crisis, which had a lasting impact on food security and nutrition. The 2008 global financial crisis, frequent natural disasters – including the drought spells currently affecting the country – high global food prices, limited access to credit, low productivity and the embargo by the United States have further exacerbated the food security situation in the country.

In 2011, the Government of Cuba launched a process to improve the efficiency, reduce the costs and increase the sustainability of social protection programmes. Those efforts are guided by the Government's commitment to ensure that no Cuban is left unprotected. Under the process, food security was identified as a national priority, with an emphasis on food-related social protection systems, the decentralization of the decision-making process regarding food resources, the adoption of a new management model for agriculture, reinforcing value chains and reducing food imports.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has been working in Cuba since 1963 to support the Government's efforts to promote food security and nutrition. In 2015, the agency launched its first four-year country programme for Cuba. In January 2020, WFP started the implementation of activities under its new one-year interim country strategic plan. During this period, WFP will finalize the new country strategic plan for the period 2021–2024.

The World Food Programme works in the five eastern provinces (Granma, Guantánamo, Holguín, Las Tunas and Santiago de Cuba), which have the lowest development rates and are prone to drought, torrential rains and occasional earthquakes. In addition, WFP works in the provinces of Pinar del Río and Matanzas in western Cuba, which are exposed to tropical cyclones that severely affect food security and nutrition. WFP activities are aligned with the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Cuba 2020–2024. The current WFP programme of work in Cuba focuses on capacity-building and augmentation,

using focused transfers to meet critical food and nutrition needs and to strengthen the overall food-related safety nets in Cuba. The programme supports national and local authorities in shifting to more sustainable and targeted social protection systems.

Effects of the United States embargo

Throughout 2019, the United States embargo continued to have a negative impact on the economy of Cuba as well as on the operational conditions of WFP. The high costs of importing agricultural equipment and inputs are a limiting factor for agricultural productivity in Cuba, affecting the country's ability to cover all its food requirements. This represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and poses challenges to food security in Cuba.

The ability of WFP to procure services and products from United States-based companies or companies that process payments through United States subsidiaries is also affected by the embargo, directly affecting projects and the ongoing running of the WFP office.

The procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities, including fortified food provided by WFP, are also delayed owing to the above-mentioned logistical challenges. Because of the embargo, vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for trans-shipment, causing delays and additional costs that also affect WFP shipments. Owing to the fuel crisis experienced during the last quarter of 2019, the WFP country office in Cuba faced considerable difficulties in monitoring its activities in the five eastern provinces and in the offloading of food and non-food items in the different ports of the country.

The ongoing work of WFP in Cuba is also affected by difficulties in purchasing equipment at more competitive prices, given that suppliers both in the region and elsewhere are often prevented from selling directly to Cuba. This applies to project equipment, office equipment, information technology equipment, spare parts for cars, office stationery and other specialized technical equipment for projects, increasing the regular costs for WFP. Moreover, voice and data communications are extremely expensive as they have to bypass United States telecommunications infrastructure.

Banking transactions are also restricted by the limitations that the embargo imposes on financial institutions dealing with Cuba. This can affect the payment of staff entitlements, as well as their personal financial activities. The country office's payments, though processed through UNDP, are also vulnerable to these limitations.

World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization

[Original: English]
[22 May 2020]

The present submission, prepared by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Americas in response to General Assembly resolution [74/7](#), entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", points to some of the most pressing issues regarding the impact of the embargo on public health and on WHO technical cooperation with the country.

In 2019, Title III of the Helms-Burton Act took effect for the first time, affecting the development of various investments, particularly in the health sector.

The Cuban Government estimates the cumulative impact on the health sector, from the beginning of the embargo to the present time, to be greater than

\$2.913 billion. The data submitted by the Cuban authorities have not been independently verified.

In 2019, at the seventy-first session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Americas, held in Washington, D.C., the delegate of Cuba reported that members of the delegation from the Ministry of Health had not been able to obtain visas to enter the United States and, therefore, could not attend the session.⁴⁰

Ten WHO collaborating centres located in Cuba indicated that limited access to online platforms for knowledge exchange had an impact on the effectiveness of the work carried out. The extent to which this limited access is the result of the embargo is unclear.

World Intellectual Property Organization

[Original: English]
[19 February 2020]

As a result of the embargo, the circumstances outlined below have been observed in Cuba as an obstacle to the country's advancement in the field of intellectual property and as having a direct impact on its technological, social and economic development.

By restricting the access of Cuban citizens to the United States, the embargo limits the possibilities of human resources development in the United States. As a result, specialized professionals from Cuba may not fully benefit from greater specialization opportunities in the field of intellectual property, especially those available in the United States. These include, notably, aspects of intellectual property asset and office management, as well as the opportunity to become acquainted with successful experiences in the implementation of technology transfer offices, technology management, intellectual property valuation and intellectual property collateralization.

Visa restrictions also hinder the possibilities for intellectual property professionals from Cuba to participate in regular training programmes, meetings and other events organized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in the United States.

Restricted telecommunications infrastructure hinders the widespread dissemination of WIPO online distance-learning courses in Cuba, despite the efforts and commitment of local authorities to foster a nationwide culture of respect for intellectual property. Videoconference facilities, which allow a most efficient, cost-effective means of communication, especially for educational and training purposes, are also unavailable, since a major portion of the necessary technical equipment and software tools originating from the United States cannot be acquired.

Poor telecommunication facilities also have a negative impact on and obstruct the access of Cuban nationals to WIPO online databases and other digital services in the field of intellectual property. This situation, in particular the obstructed online access to global intellectual property databases, such as Patentscope (patent information) and the Global Brand Database, that are available only through the Internet, is detrimental to the advancement of technological research and other innovation programmes carried out by the Government of Cuba in the field of environmental, medical and life sciences, as well as bio- and nanotechnologies. It

⁴⁰ See https://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=51396-cd57-fr-e-final-report&category_slug=cd57-en&Itemid=270&lang=en, para. 7.

limits the possibility of learning about the behaviour of brands in potential export markets.

The embargo affects the availability of information technology equipment and software for the performance of administrative operations regarding filing and granting procedures, in particular patent and trademark search and examination services. Although Cuba is administratively equipped to perform such functions because of a capillary presence of provincial branches of the Cuban Industrial Property Office, the lack of specialized software critically hinders such performance. External procurement formalities to obtain the required equipment and software are extremely burdensome. This situation continues to cumulatively delay the delivery of the services that these offices are required to render and prevents the normal growth and expansion of such services. Most importantly, this situation stifles the possibility of taking full advantage of the functionalities available under the WIPO intellectual property automated system, since some of the system's operating tools are not freely accessible for users in Cuba. As such, the possibilities of expansion and customization of the system to the needs of Cuban users (in both the capital and the provinces) are seriously compromised.

The extraterritorial effects of the embargo extend to the financial arena as well. Payments from Cuba to WIPO under the WIPO-administered treaties (the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid System) may be effected only in euros or Swiss francs, not in United States dollars, in order to avoid the restrictions imposed by the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control. Payments from WIPO to the Cuban Industrial Property Office must be made in the same currencies. The cost of these indirect transactions for the purpose of avoiding the United States banks amounts to considerable financial losses and discourages the use by Cuban nationals of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid System.

The financial implications of the embargo also extend to the payment of copyright royalties based on the rights granted under the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. A number of national banks cannot receive deposits from or send deposits to the Cuban collective management society of authors. In addition, the exercise of rights based on the said Convention through reciprocal representation agreements between the collective management societies of Cuba and the United States is not possible.

World Meteorological Organization

[Original: English]
[27 April 2020]

In the framework of the activities of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Office for the Americas, Cuba is often present through its representatives in meetings, courses and workshops; the exchange of meteorological and hydrological data; and projects covering the Caribbean and Central America. During the year 2019, WMO did not encounter any inconvenience or limitation regarding Cuba in the framework of regional scientific collaboration.

World Tourism Organization

[Original: English]
[12 May 2020]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba persists in general activities, including restrictions on travel of United

States citizens to Cuba, which has a direct effect on the Cuban tourism sector, as well as on the country's contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In terms of tourism promotion, Cuba and the Cuban travel agency "Destination Cuba" do not have access to United States advertising companies or other promotion channels.

According to the latest *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*, issued in January 2020, international tourist arrivals worldwide grew by 3.8 per cent and the Caribbean subregion experienced an increase of 5 per cent. It states that Cuba saw a weaker performance in the second quarter of 2019, which worsened during the third quarter. Travel restrictions from the United States, including a ban on cruises, have affected tourism on the island.

The Caribbean Tourism Organization reported that Caribbean nations received 31.5 million tourists in 2019, an all-time record for visitor arrivals. However, the region's second most popular destination, Cuba, reported a decline in arrivals of more than 9 per cent, largely due to the aforementioned restrictions.

In 2019, the number of visitors from the United States by air (who stay overnight and provide more income at destination) was only 500,000. According to projections by the Caribbean Tourism Organization, a higher number of United States tourists would have travelled to Cuba in the same period.

International and domestic tourism in Cuba, in the period from April 2019 to March 2020, continued to experience severe losses in important areas, which amounted to an estimated \$1.4 billion.

World Trade Organization

[Original: English]

[17 March 2020]

The scope and functions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are defined in the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization. The preamble of the said Agreement recognizes that trade and economic endeavours should be conducted with a view to, among others, attaining higher living standards and ensuring full employment, in accordance with the objective of sustainable development and in a manner consistent with members' needs and concerns at different levels of development. The preamble stresses the desirability of the elimination of discriminatory treatment in international trade relations.

The issue referred to in General Assembly resolution 74/7 was raised orally in the context of the WTO General Council meetings held on 7 May and 14 October 2019. During the May meeting,⁴¹ Cuba mentioned that the United States had tightened its embargo through the implementation of new financial and commercial measures, including the full activation of the Helms-Burton Act. Cuba argued that the measures were contrary to WTO law and international law and that the international community had called for the end of the embargo on several occasions. In its statement, Cuba also referred to Cuba's Law 80 of 1996, which defined the Helms-Burton Act as "unlawful, inapplicable and lacking any legal value". Law 80 also empowered the Government to adopt any necessary provisions to ensure legal certainty for foreign investors and trading and economic partners.

At the General Council meeting in October,⁴² Cuba reaffirmed that the current United States Administration had significantly deepened the economic sanctions

⁴¹ See World Trade Organization, document WT/GC/M/177.

⁴² See World Trade Organization, document WT/GC/M/180.

against the country. The tightening of the embargo involves the implementation of new measures that hinder financial and commercial relations with other partners. Cuba referred to Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, arguing that the Act had extraterritorial implications and constituted a violation of international law, as it represented an attempt to dictate to other WTO members how they ought to conduct their economic relations with Cuba.

The issue was also referred to in the annual report of Cuba to WTO of 22 November 2019⁴³ on the waiver extension granted under the decision of 12 December 2016.⁴⁴ This waiver was originally granted to Cuba under the decision of 14 October 1996⁴⁵ in relation to Article XV:6 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994. In the annual report, Cuba mentioned, inter alia, that the economic, commercial and financial embargo had been maintained in 2019 and that it had been tightened since November 2018. In that context, Cuba referred to new financial measures implemented by the United States, new restrictions preventing United States tourists from visiting the Caribbean country and the termination of the moratorium on Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. Moreover, Cuba argued that the tightening of the embargo was generating additional difficulties and costs for Cuban banking and commercial operations.

Finally, the issue was raised in the annual report by the WTO Director General on the overview of developments in the international trading environment.⁴⁶ In the report, the Director General provided information on the termination of the moratorium on Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, explaining that the Act allowed parties whose property had been confiscated by the Government of Cuba in 1959 to sue in courts of the United States companies and individuals who “traffic” in the property in question. He further explained that the Act prevented individuals and companies from engaging in international trade with Cuba. At the meeting of the WTO Trade Policy Review Body on 12 December 2019⁴⁷ dedicated to the report, Cuba referred to the extraterritorial implications of the Helms-Burton Act and stated that, between 1996 and 2019, no Government of the United States had applied it. Cuba further mentioned that the embargo was hindering normal trade operations in the country and harming third-party countries wishing to trade with Cuba. Moreover, Cuba mentioned measures not covered in the report, such as those embodied in the Trading with the Enemy Act, in the decision of the Department of the Treasury of 5 June 2019 and in the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List published by the Office of Foreign Assets Control.

IV. Replies received from entities and organizations that have received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly

International Civil Defence Organization

[Original: English]
[6 April 2020]

The International Civil Defence Organization is an intergovernmental organization whose objective is to “assist countries, upon their request, in establishing and developing organizations for protection and rescue of the populations and

⁴³ World Trade Organization, document WT/L/1076.

⁴⁴ World Trade Organization, document WT/L/1003.

⁴⁵ World Trade Organization, document WT/L/182.

⁴⁶ World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/OV/22.

⁴⁷ See World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/OV/M/17.

property”, as well as to “foster and ensure the exchange of information, experience, personnel and experts among the various countries in the field of protection and rescue of the populations and property” (art. 2 (b) and (d) of the International Civil Defence Organization Constitution).

The International Civil Defence Organization reaffirms its view that the United Nations is an appropriate forum in which to address questions related to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. It therefore welcomes the positive consideration of resolution 74/7, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 November 2019, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Republic of Cuba became a full member of the International Civil Defence Organization on 18 December 2014. Its needs are great in all the four steps related to disaster management: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Thus, and to fulfil its obligations towards its member States, the International Civil Defence Organization is in the process of providing technical assistance in different areas of civil defence in Cuba, by transferring equipment and technology and supporting training courses in civil defence.

Inter-Parliamentary Union

[Original: English]
[31 March 2020]

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has for many years held the view that “economic sanctions are to be avoided as far as possible because they inflict suffering on too many innocent persons” and has opposed “the adoption, by a State or groups of States, of laws or other measures with extraterritorial effect which are aimed at obliging third party States or their nationals to apply economic sanctions adopted by it”.⁴⁸ In April 2017, at its 136th Assembly in Dhaka, IPU adopted a resolution, by consensus, entitled “The role of parliament in respecting the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States”. The resolution underscores that “the people of each country have the inalienable right to determine their own political future, and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, in accordance with international law”.

In the past years, IPU has welcomed the interaction between legislators from Cuba and the United States aiming to normalize relations, and very much hopes that this parliamentary diplomacy can be further pursued.

Particularly, this very difficult time of the global health crisis arising from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic requires solidarity and joint action so that vulnerable populations may have access to the medicine, food and health care that they require. IPU is hopeful that, through political dialogue, humanitarian challenges can be addressed and the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba can finally be lifted.

IPU would like to restate its firm support for the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba and express its solidarity with the Cuban people, who continue to suffer from its consequences.

⁴⁸ See Inter-Parliamentary Union resolution adopted at the 104th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Jakarta, October 2000.

South Centre

[Original: English]
[10 March 2020]

The General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority resolution 74/7, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”. The resolution was adopted by 187 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions. The vote was preceded by statements from Member States, starting on 5 November 2019. The State of Palestine, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, condemned the embargo and expressed regret that the United States had strengthened it under the current Administration.

It was the twenty-eighth consecutive year in which a resolution on the United States embargo against the Republic of Cuba, which is rooted in the Cold War, was adopted. Tensions between the United States and Cuba eased only when the Administration of the President of the United States, Barack Obama, re-established diplomatic relations with Cuba, modifying several aspects of the embargo, such as lifting some travel restrictions. Those policies contrast with the measures implemented by the President of the United States, Donald Trump, since 2017, which have aggravated the socioeconomic effects of the arbitrary and unjust blockade imposed on Cuba. For example, international fuel shipments to the island have been seriously jeopardized and consular services have been scaled down. The activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act has significantly scaled up the aggression against the Cuban people. The embargo has continued to create economic hardship, with humanitarian impacts for the people of Cuba; the country’s socioeconomic reforms have also been hampered.⁴⁹

In the resolution, the General Assembly reiterated the content of previous resolutions, reports and declarations adopted by the United Nations and other intergovernmental forums and bodies rejecting the use of unilateral coercive measures such as “trade sanctions in the form of embargoes and the interruption of financial and investment flows between sender and target countries”,⁵⁰ as in the case of the United States embargo on Cuba. Such measures have had negative impacts on the full enjoyment of all human rights of the people of the countries concerned, particularly of the most vulnerable groups, including women, the elderly and children. They have also had an adverse impact on the ability of the countries under sanctions to contribute to international development cooperation, an area in which Cuba over the years has demonstrated a strong engagement.⁵¹

In the light of the concerns expressed above, the General Assembly, in resolution 74/7, paragraph 2, “reiterates its call upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the present resolution, in conformity with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation”.

In paragraph 4 of the resolution, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the

⁴⁹ See United Nations, “Cuba: UN Members overwhelmingly support end of US embargo, as Brazil backs Washington”, UN News, 7 November 2019.

⁵⁰ See United Nations, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Human rights and unilateral coercive measures”, a detailed explanation by OHCHR. Available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Seminars/Pages/WorkshopCoerciveMeasures.aspx>.

⁵¹ See South Centre and Islamic Development Bank, *Developing National Ecosystems for South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Achieve Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development* (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 2019).

United Nations system, to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law and to submit it to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. Over the years, the annual report of the Secretary-General has become an important vehicle for highlighting the adverse impact of the United States embargo on Cuba and calling for an end thereto.

In that regard, the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, Idriss Jazairy, also denounced, on 6 May 2019, the United States blockade against Cuba. The Special Rapporteur emphasized that the use of economic sanctions for political ends violated human rights and the norms of international conduct; he also stated that the extraterritorial application of unilateral sanctions was clearly in violation of international law.⁵²

The input of the South Centre has been prepared in response to the request for a contribution to the report of the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution [74/7](#), with respect to the imposition of unilateral economic, financial and trade measures against Cuba in violation of the basic principles of the Charter.

The South Centre is the intergovernmental organization of developing countries established in 1995 pursuant to the Agreement to Establish the South Centre, deposited with the United Nations following the recommendations contained in *The Challenge to the South: The Report of the South Commission*. The report was prepared by the South Commission and its outcomes were considered by the General Assembly in its resolution [46/155](#). The Centre holds observer status with the General Assembly and currently has 54 developing countries as members, including Cuba. It supports developing countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by promoting their common interests in the international arena. It also undertakes policy-oriented research in various international areas with a view to contributing to the strengthening of the United Nations system and multilateralism. It joins the international community in condemning unilateral coercive measures, which impinge on the principles of self-determination and international cooperation.

As noted, the blockade imposed against Cuba has reached new levels under the 1996 Helms-Burton Act of the United States, which is incompatible with the principles of the Charter and the call upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures that are against international law and the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs. The implementation of the Act is a crude manifestation of the exercise of economic and political power in full ignorance of the internationally accepted rules of law.

Repercussions on the health sector

In its report on General Assembly resolution [73/8](#) (see [A/74/91/Rev.1](#), section II), Cuba presented evidence regarding the repercussions of the blockade, including on the sectors that have the greatest social impact. The present submission is focused on the obstacles created in respect of access to pharmaceutical products and other medical products and the equipment necessary for the realization of the right to health.

In its report, Cuba highlighted how the United States measures hindered the acquisition from United States companies of technologies, raw materials, reagents, diagnostic means, equipment and spare parts, as well as medicines for the treatment of serious diseases such as cancer. These consumables must be bought in faraway

⁵² See United Nations, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “US sanctions violate human rights and international code of conduct, UN expert says”, 6 May 2019.

markets, on many occasions via intermediaries, which necessarily increases the time and cost of delivery.

During the period analysed, MediCuba S.A., the Cuban company exporting and importing medicines, sent out requests to 57 United States companies to buy consumables needed for the health system. At the time of writing of the report, 50 of those companies had not answered and another 3 alleged that, owing to the blockade regulations, they were not authorized to sell Cuba any medicines or equipment.

Moreover, the embargo affects the potential contribution of Cuba to addressing health problems on a global scale. Cuban scientists, who have received 10 gold medals from the World Intellectual Property Organization over a period of 26 years,⁵³ have originated a large number of scientific discoveries and biotechnological innovations, including a meningitis vaccine and new cancer treatments. The scientific and technological achievements in this field have allowed Cuba to create the “capacity for large-scale production of Cuban and generic drugs for export cheaply to developing countries”.⁵⁴ The number of patents obtained, the supply of biotechnological products to around 50 countries and a diversity of production and scientific partnerships in developing countries⁵⁵ point to the progress that Cuba has made in the biotechnological field as a result of a visionary and consistent policy. While the progress made shows the resilience and scientific competence of Cuban professionals,⁵⁶ Cuba’s contributions through innovative biotechnology-based treatments would likely have been greater and benefited more patients around the world, not only in developing countries,⁵⁷ if the United States blockade had not systematically denied Cuba access to resources, markets and technology transfer.

Conclusion

The information set forth above is illustrative of the deleterious impact on the health sector of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba, but the blockade equally affects other sectors, such as finance, industry and foreign trade. It jeopardizes the country’s overall socioeconomic development of and its capacity to engage in international cooperation. Given that almost six decades have passed since the establishment of the blockade, it constitutes the most severe and prolonged case of unilateral coercive measures ever applied against any country in contemporary history. The countries that voted in favour of resolution 74/7 should cooperate to put an end to this unjust denial of Cuba’s right to development and self-determination.

⁵³ See Organización Mundial de la Salud, Organización Panamericana de la Salud, Comisión Europea, *Experiencia cubana en la producción local de medicamentos, transferencia de tecnología y mejoramiento en el acceso a la salud* (Geneva, 2015).

⁵⁴ Helen Yaffe, “The curious case of Cuba’s biotech revolution”, in *History of Technology*, vol. 34, 2019, Ian Inkster, ed., (Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

⁵⁵ One recent example is the establishment of a Cuban-Chinese centre on biotechnology innovation in Hunan Province. See Cubadebate, “Concluye montaje de primer centro conjunto de innovación biotecnológica Cuba-China”, 2 January 2020.

⁵⁶ Yaffe, “The curious case of Cuba’s biotech revolution”.

⁵⁷ Including patients from the United States. See BBC News, “Why an American went to Cuba for cancer care”, 20 April 2017.