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**Human rights questions: human rights questions, including
alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment
of human rights and fundamental freedoms**

Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

Report by the Secretary-General**

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* A/56/150.

** The present report is being submitted on 20 July 2001 so as to include as much up-to-date information as possible.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/110 of 4 December 2000, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to collect views of Member States on the implications and negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on their populations and to submit an analytical report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

2. In accordance with paragraph 8 of resolution 55/110, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 4 May 2001, invited Member States to transmit information relevant to the subject matter.

3. As at 3 July 2001, replies had been received from the Governments of Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Jamaica. Those replies are reproduced below; any additional replies received will be included in an addendum to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[27 June 2001]

1. The Government of the Republic of Cuba attaches particular importance to the consideration of this issue by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights. Each year, Cuba joins the group of States that co-sponsor the draft resolutions adopted in both those bodies condemning the application of unilateral coercive measures, essentially against developing countries.

2. The application of unilateral coercive measures as a means of political and economic compulsion is an attack on the identity of the State concerned and on its political, economic and cultural components. It also affects other sensitive areas such as the enjoyment of human rights by peoples subjected to such unilateral policies. Experience shows that the primary victims of coercive economic measures are vulnerable population groups, particularly children, women, older persons and the disabled.

3. The Commission on Human Rights has stated repeatedly that the application of unilateral coercive economic measures has a negative impact on the socio-economic indices of developing countries and prevents peoples subjected to such measures from fully enjoying their human rights.

4. The international community has systematically rejected the application of this policy, considering it to be a flagrant violation of the principles, goals and norms governing international trade.

5. There is no choice therefore but to condemn and demand the immediate repeal of laws of this kind adopted by the Government of the United States of America, such as the so-called Helms-Burton Act and the Torricelli Act, which are a direct attack on the enjoyment of human rights by the Cuban people, are incompatible with World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements and undermine ongoing efforts to make the multilateral trading system more equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable.

6. The aforementioned laws are part of a criminal, genocidal policy of blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States for over 40 years, a policy which has been condemned repeatedly and systematically by an overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations.

7. The harm done to the Cuban people has been established before competent judicial authorities and abundantly documented in the reports submitted to the General Assembly each year by the Secretary-General under the item "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

8. The strategic objective of the blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba is the destruction of the process of political, social and economic change undertaken by the Cuban people in exercise of its right to self-determination.

9. Ten successive United States presidential administrations, members of the legislative branch, civil servants and official and unofficial representatives of the United States Government have resorted to all kinds of aggression against the Cuban Revolution, including political pressure to isolate it diplomatically, propaganda activities to discredit it, the encouragement of defection and illegal emigration, espionage, economic warfare and various forms of violent

aggression, including subversion, terrorist activities, sabotage, biological warfare, the encouragement of armed groups, the organization and execution of hundreds of plans to assassinate top Cuban Government leaders, military harassment, the threat of nuclear extermination and direct aggression using an army of mercenaries.

10. These practices blatantly contravene the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, which provides, inter alia, that "No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind."

11. The use of a vast arsenal of economic and political instruments designed to break the Cuban people's resistance through poverty, scarcity, disease and hunger amounts to economic warfare and is a brutal violation of that people's rights to life, well-being and development.

12. It is unacceptable that the response of the United States Government to the international community's almost unanimous condemnation of its unilateral blockade against Cuba has been utter contempt, including the enactment of new laws, measures and provisions to tighten the blockade.

13. The Government of the United States of America, as part of its imperialistic drive for hegemony, maintains unilateral coercive measures against dozens of developing countries.

14. Cuba therefore firmly believes that it is more important than ever that the international community continue to condemn the use of such practices and that urgent action be taken to ensure effective compliance with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights condemning the application of unilateral coercive measures.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[7 June 2001]

1. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea believes that the resort to unilateral coercive measures against individual countries constitutes the most undisguised violation of human rights of which the main purpose is to infringe upon national sovereignty.

2. The United States of America has imposed unilateral sanctions upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, thus severely impeding the latter's economic and social development.

3. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea strongly demands that the United States lift its unilateral coercive measures against several sovereign States throughout the world.

4. The United Nations should pay due attention to the fact that the United States remains determined to influence international relations through the continued implementation of arbitrary measures despite the opposition manifested by the international community.

Jamaica

[Original: English]
[3 July 2001]

1. The Government of Jamaica has supported the many resolutions of the United Nations calling on States to respect and safeguard measures, including unilateral coercive measures, which create obstacles to the full enjoyment of human rights by peoples and individuals under the jurisdiction of other States.

2. Jamaica adheres firmly to the principle of sovereign equality of States and attaches great importance to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

3. Jamaica has not adopted any law or measure that could impact territorially on the sovereignty of any State, the legitimate interest of nations or hinder the right to development, which is considered an essential element of human rights.

4. The Government of Jamaica is strongly opposed to the extraterritorial application of national legislation that could undermine the sovereignty of States.