

The United States takes steps in the right direction, but the blockade remains in force

Declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba

On January 14, 2025, the government of the United States announced the following decisions:

1. Remove Cuba from the State Department list of countries that allegedly sponsor terrorism;
2. Make use of the presidential faculty to prevent US courts from taking action with regards to lawsuits that might be filed by virtue of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act; and
3. Eliminate the list of restricted Cuban entities that designates a group of institutions which US citizens and institutions are not allowed to make financial transactions with, which has had an impact on third countries.

Despite its limited scope, this is a decision that points to the right direction and is in line with the sustained and firm demand by the government and the people of Cuba, as well as the broad, emphatic and reiterated call by numerous governments, particularly those of Latin America and the Caribbean; Cubans residing abroad; political, religious and social organizations and numerous political figures of the United States and other countries. The government of Cuba expresses its gratitude to all of them for their contribution and sensitivity.

This decision puts an end to specific coercive measures which, together with many others, seriously damage the Cuban economy and have a severe impact on the population. This is, and has been, an ever-present issue in all official exchanges between Cuba and the Government of the United States.

It is important to point out that the economic blockade and a large part of the tens of coercive measures entered into force since 2017 to further strengthen it, still remain in force, with their full extraterritorial impact and in violation of International Law and the human rights of all Cubans.

The following are just a few examples: The illegal and aggressive persecution of the fuel supplies that Cuba is legally entitled to import continues. The cruel and absurd persecution of the legitimate international medical cooperation agreements that Cuba has signed with other countries is maintained, thus threatening to deprive millions of persons of health services and limiting the potential of Cuba's public health system. The international financial transactions of Cuba or those of any national that might be

linked to Cuba continue to be subject to prohibitions and reprisals. Merchant vessels touching Cuban ports continue to be under threats.

Besides, US citizens, companies or subsidiaries of US corporations are not allowed to trade with Cuba or Cuban entities, with very limited and regulated exceptions. Harassment, intimidation and threats against a national from any country intending to trade with Cuba or invest in this country continue to be part of the official policy of the United States. Cuba continues to be a destination banned for US citizens by their government.

The economic warfare is still in place and persists in posing a major obstacle to the development and recovery of the Cuban economy, with a high human cost for the population; and continues to be an incentive for emigration.

The decision announced today by the United States, rectifies, in a very limited way, some aspects of a cruel and unjust policy. This is a rectification that is being introduced right now, on the verge of a change of government, when it should have been materialized years ago, as an elemental act of justice, without asking for anything in return and without fabricating pretexts to justify inaction, if there was a true intention to act properly. Recognition of the truth, the absolute absence of reasons for such designation and the exemplary performance of our country in the combat of terrorism, something that has been recognized even by several US government agencies, should have sufficed to remove Cuba from the arbitrary list of State sponsors of terrorism.

It is known that the government of that country could reverse in the future the measures that have been adopted today, as has already happened in the past, and as an expression of the lack of legitimacy, ethics, consistency and reason in its behavior towards Cuba.

To do that, US politicians usually do not take time to find an honest justification, as long as the vision described in 1960 by the then Deputy Assistant Secretary, Lester Mallory, and his expressed intention to put Cubans on their knees by way of economic siege, misery, hunger and desperation, remain in force. They will not take time to find justifications as long as that government continues to be unable to recognize or accept Cuba's right to self-determination, and as long as it remains ready to pay the political cost meant by the international isolation caused by its genocidal and illegal economic suffocation policy against Cuba.

Cuba will continue to face and condemn that economic warfare policy, the foreign interference programs and the disinformation and discredit operations financed every year with tens of millions of dollars of the US federal budget.

It will also continue to be ready to develop a respectful relation with that country, based on dialogue and non-interference in the internal affairs of both countries, despite the differences.

Havana, January 14, 2025