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CUBA

**REPORT ADDRESSED TO THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES AT ITS TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION
ON FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IN THE FIELD OF CHEMISTRY
(AGENDA ITEM 18)**

**Difficulties and obstacles encountered by Cuba affecting the full implementation of
Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention**

The economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America (hereinafter “the United States”) against Cuba for nearly six decades is the most complex and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures that has ever been imposed by any country. The imposition of this extreme form of (this) illegal policy, amidst the struggle against the COVID-19 pandemic, has been a considerable challenge for our country.

Since April 2019 until March 2020, the escalation of the embargo continued to be the focus of the policy of the Government of the United States towards Cuba. Its notable extraterritorial effects have created an obstacle hindering the economic and technological development of the country.

The aggressive, threatening, and disrespectful rhetoric with the highest level of constraints set by the Government of the United States generates greater distrust and uncertainty within United States financial institutions, businesses, and suppliers due to the real fear of being penalised for having any connection to Cuba.

The extraterritorial restrictions and laws of the Government of the United States against Cuba violate Article XI of the Convention, which stipulates that the States commit to “[...] facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and scientific and technical information relating to the development and application of chemistry for purposes not prohibited under this Convention” and to “not maintain among themselves any restrictions, including those in any international agreements [...] which would restrict or impede trade and the development and promotion of scientific and technological knowledge in the field of chemistry for industrial, agricultural, research, medical, pharmaceutical, or other peaceful purposes [...]”.

It is neither conceivable nor acceptable, and it is in contradiction of international law, for the United States to limit, restrain, and prohibit in many cases, the free exchange of chemicals, equipment, and scientific and technical information in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes between Cuba and other States Parties, which constitutes, without exception, the right of all.



What effects does the embargo have on Cuba's national implementation of Article XI of the Convention with regard to the economic and technological development of the States Parties?

The quantifiable damages accumulated from the embargo over the course of nearly six decades have reached the figure of 1,098,000,000,000 dollars,¹ taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against gold on the international market. Calculated at current prices, the embargo has resulted in damages of over 144,413,400,000 dollars. In the past year alone, it has caused losses for Cuba amounting to approximately 5,570,300,000 dollars.

The economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed against Cuba continues to hinder the development of all of the potentials of the Cuba economy, for the implementation of the National Plan for Economic and Social Development of the country, as well as for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set in the 2030 Agenda.

The blockade significantly limits and restrains the maintenance, sustainability, development, and modernisation of the country's industrial chemistry sector. The most substantial effects include the supply of raw materials, equipment, and spare parts destined for industrial use, as well as the development of export operations. The following are among the examples of damages resulting from the embargo policy within the field of chemistry in Cuba between April 2019 and March 2020:

- a) QUIMIMPEX, the import-export business in the chemical industry, has stopped seeing significant revenue amounting to 19,307,170.26 dollars due to the decline in exports, the geographic repositioning of trade, monetary and financial effects, and the technological embargo.
- b) The purchase of the business Pruftechnik by the United States-based company Fluke has impeded access to spare parts and specialised equipment maintenance services for the fertilizer industry in Nuevitás.
- c) Joint ventures with foreign capital, such as Vidrios Mariel S.A. and OxiCuba S.A., are suffering a slowdown in the investment process due to the lack of clarity regarding external financing. In the case of Vidrios Mariel S.A., over 43 financial entities have been contacted without result, now that approximately 70% of the international-level glass industry is dominated by United States-based companies. In the case of OxiCuba S.A., the reactivation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act has blocked any progress in the investment process.
- d) Other damages incurred by the chemical industry include: cancellations of credit cards by banks that cannot work with Cuba, a delay in tankers carrying raw materials, interference in the fuel supply, and the impossibility of acquiring automation packages and other spare parts.

¹ Data offered in Cuba's report on resolution 74/7 of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", available at: <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/en/informes>.

Why should the States Parties get involved in guaranteeing an end to this type of unilateral measure, which is contrary to the Convention?

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has an important mandate in the promotion of the economic and technological advancement of the States Parties, especially of those that are less developed. Within this context, the Organisation and its States Parties have the important responsibility to guarantee the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI.

The unilateral prohibitions and restrictions stemming from the embargo against Cuba are clearly incompatible with the provisions of the Convention. It is the obligation of the States Parties to achieve its object and purpose, including the elimination of these kinds of measures.

Cuba reiterates its strong commitment to the strict implementation of all of the aspects of the Convention and calls for the unilateral and unconditional lifting of the United States embargo, which includes the field of chemistry, in compliance with the 28 resolutions approved by the international community at the General Assembly of the United Nations, where the overwhelming majority has asked to put an end to this absurd policy.

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