

**CUBA****STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IN THE FIELD OF CHEMICAL ACTIVITIES
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9****Difficulties and obstacles facing Cuba related to the full implementation of Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention.**

The economic, trade, and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America (hereinafter “the United States”) against Cuba for nearly six decades constitutes the most unjust, severe, and prolonged system of unilateral sanctions ever imposed against any country.

In 2018, the embargo policy has expanded and continues to present obstacles to the country’s economic and technological development. This increase in the embargo against Cuba has been accompanied by an aggressive, threatening, and disrespectful rhetoric, in addition to conditions from the highest levels of the United States Government, which gives rise to a greater lack of trust and uncertainty in American financial institutions, business, and suppliers due to the real fear of being penalised for having any association with Cuba.

The unilateral restrictions and extra-territorial laws applied by the United States through the embargo imposed against Cuba constitute a violation of Article XI of the Convention, because the United States committed to “[...] facilitate [...] 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 [...] 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 inconceivable and unacceptable that the United States limits, restricts, and even prohibits in many cases the free Exchange of chemicals, equipment, and scientific and technological information in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes between Cuba and other States Parties; without exception, this is the right of all.

How does the embargo affect Cuba’s implementation of Article XI of the Convention with regard to the economic and technological development of the States Parties?

The quantifiable damages incurred as a result of the embargo over the nearly six decades it has been in place amount to USD 933.678 billion, taking into account the depreciation of the



dollar against the value of gold on the international market. In today's prices, the embargo has caused the loss of more than USD 134,499,800,000. In the last year alone, the embargo has resulted in losses for Cuba amounting to approximately USD 4,321,200,000.

The integral development of Cuban industry constitutes an indispensable element for the completion of the National Economic and Social Development Plan to the Year 2030. However, this sector has also been affected by the imposition of the economic, trade, and financial embargo by the United States.

The unilateral restrictions and prohibitions set out in the embargo, together with their extra-territorial nature, limit and considerably restrict the maintenance, sustainability, development, and modernisation of the chemical industry in the country. The following are among the examples of the effects brought on by the embargo policy suffered by the field of chemistry in Cuba over the period of 2013–2018:¹

- a) The Cuban company QUIMIMPEX, specialising in the import of products for this sector, requested primary materials and spare parts from 16 United States suppliers. In particular, it requested chlorine valves from the company FC-TEC for cylinders that are used for the purification of water, and it requested chlorine from the Columbiana Boiler Company, LLC, which specialises in the production of the pressurised containers needed to contain chlorine; these companies refused to provide the required materials.
- b) The company FARMACUBA requested protective gear and chemical and biotechnical product from four providers for the purpose of developing medications in Cuba. Among others, the multinational company SIGMA-ALDRICH did not respond to this request from Cuba due to the complications associated with the United States embargo.
- c) The Cuban company QUIMIMPEX requested from this same United States-based company SIGMA-ALDRICH indispensable chemical products, services, and technical information for the purpose of developing the Cuban chemical industry; the company refused to provide the required materials.
- d) The Center of Natural Products under the National Center for Scientific Research (NCSR) has found it impossible to purchase spare parts for two chromatographs made by the United States brand Agilent. These are fundamental for controlling the quality of products being researched and developed at the Pharmaceutical Chemistry Department of this Center. Without being able to use these two chromatographs, it had to resort to using the laboratory's other equipment, which led to losses of more than USD 6 million.

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This information is provided in the REPORT BY CUBA regarding resolutions 67/4, 68/8, 69/5, 70/5, 71/5, and 72/4 of the General Assembly of the United Nations and entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/en/informes>

- e) The company QUIMIMPEX, which specialises in the import of products for the development of Cuba's chemical industry, again found it impossible to purchase primary materials, spare parts, and necessary equipment on the United States market. The companies that were contacted indicated that they are still subject to the laws imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba. For this reason, the cost of importing products from third countries led to an increase of 20 percent.
- f) In order to acquire 98 percent liquid chlorine, this company had to pay an additional fee of over USD 111 per metric tonne. The supplier contracted by Cuba was put under major pressure by the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) to specify the final destination of the imports. It was then necessary to triangulate the product, which came from Colombia directly to Cuba using the Colombia–Panama–Havana route. It was impossible to obtain spare parts and replacement equipment for Burton Corblin- and GARO-brand equipment due to the presence of United States shareholders among the suppliers. This situation put national chlorine products at high risk.
- g) The Chemical Industry Business Group reported that the Spanish company LOMISA was unable to provide spare parts for the LEFI and RHEINHUTTE centrifugal pump used in the Chlorine/Soda Project of the electro-chemical company Sagua la Grande. This was because RHEINHUTTE, the product manufacturer, declined the offer because Cuba was the final destination.

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

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has an important mandate to promote the economic and technological growth of its States Parties, particularly for less developed States. It is within this context that the Organisation and its States Parties have the important responsibility of guaranteeing the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI.

The unilateral prohibitions and restrictions set out in the embargo against Cuba are clearly incompatible with the provisions of the Convention. It is the obligation of the States Parties to carry out its object and purpose—and that includes the elimination of this type of measure.

Cuba reiterates its firm commitment to the strict implementation of the Convention in all of its aspects and calls for the unilateral and unconditional lifting of the United States embargo, in compliance with the 27 resolutions adopted by the international community at the General Assembly of the United Nations, whose Member States have requested to put an end to this absurd policy.

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