

**CUBA****PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IN  
THE FIELD OF CHEMICAL ACTIVITIES  
(AGENDA ITEM 17)**

Why is the economic, commercial, and financial, blockade imposed against Cuba by the United States of America, a violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention?

Unilateral restrictions and extraterritorial laws applied by the Government of the United States of America under the blockade imposed on Cuba constitute a violation of Article XI of the Convention on “Economic and Technological Development”, in particular subparagraph 2(b), which stipulates the commitment of each State Party to the Convention “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”, subparagraph 2(c), which stipulates the commitment of each State Party not to “maintain among themselves any restrictions, including those in any international agreements, incompatible with the obligations undertaken under this Convention, 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”; and subparagraph 2(e), under which each State Party undertakes “to review their existing national regulations in the field of trade in chemicals in order to render them consistent with the object and purpose of this Convention”.

What specific aspects of the blockade policy are prejudicial to the promotion of international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemistry pursuant to Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention?

The unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade to which Cuba has been subjected for over 50 years is a set of laws that limit, restrict and prohibit international cooperation in the field of chemistry by, inter alia;

1. Prohibiting Cuba from exporting and importing products to and from the United States of America, including chemical substances, spare parts, raw materials, materials, equipment and other components and services.
2. Prohibiting Cuba’s access to the technology of American companies, including those in the field of chemistry.



3. Restricting international exchange of scientific and technical information.
4. Prohibiting the purchase of goods and services from third-country companies, whose technology contains more than 25% of American components, even though the owners are nationals of those countries.
5. Prohibiting subsidiaries of American companies in third countries from trading with Cuba, including those in the field of chemistry.
6. Prohibiting all companies throughout the world, including those in the field of chemistry, from exporting products or equipment of any kind to the United States of America if they contain Cuban raw materials.
7. Prohibiting ships from the rest of the world from docking in Cuban ports under the threat of being included on the “Black List” and being denied access to American ports for a period of six months.
8. Forcing entrepreneurs from around the world to renounce their right and intention to invest in Cuba, under the threat of being refused entry visas for the United States of America, for them and for their families.
9. Prohibiting Cuba from using the USD in its trade transactions with the rest of the world, including those in the field of chemistry. Cuba’s payments and collections in that currency are seized. Financial transfers from Cuba are blocked.
10. Preventing Cuba from receiving any credit from US banks, its subsidiaries in third countries, as well as from international financial institutions: World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and others, including credits for activities in the field of chemistry.
11. Restricting potential investments in Cuba as a result of sanctions imposed and pressure exerted on foreign companies by the Government of the United States of America.

How does the blockade affect the implementation by Cuba of Article XI of the Convention on economic and technological development at the national level?

As of June 2015, the economic damage to Cuba as a result of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America—taking into account the devaluation of the USD against the gold value on the international market—amounts to USD 833,755,000,000. At current prices, the damage resulting from the blockade during all these years amounts to over USD 121,192 million.

The unilateral restrictions and prohibitions imposed under the blockade, together with its extraterritorial nature, significantly limits and restricts the maintenance, sustainability, development and updating of the country’s chemical industry sector.

The aggregate loss reported in the Cuban chemical industry due to the blockade from January 2013 to October 2015 amounts to USD 117,979,743.39.

This includes the cost of damages to production and services in the chemical industry due to the impossibility of accessing information on more efficient US technologies.

Cuba's losses due to the impossibility of buying chemical substances, spare parts, raw materials, materials and other components in the United States of America and the need to buy them at higher prices in more distant markets with the resulting increase in marketing costs, amount to USD 43,042,807.03.

The estimated value of damages to production and services in Cuba due to delays in replacements, extension of credits, signing of contracts, potential investments, among others, due to proven US pressure, amounts to USD 3,486,925.31.

Of the total amount of losses in the chemical industry, the estimated value of losses resulting from the impossibility to use US currency in financial transactions of all types, amounts to USD 2,951,221.52.

The aggregate amount of losses also includes USD 67,470,480.00 that Cuba was not able to receive between 2013 and October 2015 for the export of goods and for the performance of plants well below their installed capacity for exports.

Also, of the total amount of losses, damages amounting to 1,028,309.53 are estimated due to not being able to access technical and technological information originating in the US.

Additionally, the US blockade imposed against Cuba also causes damage to purchases of essential chemical products such as: caustic soda, sodium lauryl sulfate, titanium dioxide; alkylbenzene sulfonic acid, sodium laureth sulfate, sodium sulfate, among others, used in the national industries for perfumes and cosmetics, soaps, plastics, chemicals and others, known as light industries. In particular, just between April 2014 and March 2015, the Suchel Company suffered damages estimated at USD 2,467,900.6 for freight and insurance needed to move these chemical products from more distant markets.

Why should the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) be involved in guaranteeing an end to such measures?

The OPCW has the mandate to guarantee the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention. In this context, the Organisation has the important responsibility of guaranteeing the still pending full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI.

While unilateral prohibitions and restrictions incompatible with the provisions of the Convention such as those imposed by the blockade against Cuba remain in place, the OPCW must fulfill its mandate and be actively involved in guaranteeing full compliance with the letter and spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention, by putting an end to such measures.