

**CUBA****STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CUBA AT THE
TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
ON PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES
IN THE FIELD OF CHEMICAL ACTIVITIES
(AGENDA ITEM 17)****Difficulties and obstacles for Cuba's full implementation of Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention**

The economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba remains in force, which means the continuation of prohibitions and restrictions. In 2015 and 2016, the Departments of Treasury and Commerce amended some of the regulations of this policy; while these are positive steps, they are insufficient due to their limited scope.

Likewise, the executive measures that were adopted by the Government of the United States are also positive steps, but are also of very limited effect and scope.

The blockade, which is strongly condemned by the international community, continues to significantly affect the implementation of Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention"). As a result of this policy, our country faces serious obstacles hindering international cooperation, assistance, and exchange in the field of chemistry, including as regards equipment and materials for peaceful purposes.

Why does the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba constitute a violation of the Convention?

The unilateral restrictions and extraterritorial laws enforced by the United States Government under the blockade imposed against Cuba constitute a violation of Article XI of the Convention, under which each State Party shall:

- “(b) Undertake 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;
- (c) Not maintain among themselves any restrictions [...] 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...”

Which specific aspects of the blockade policy are detrimental to the promotion of international cooperation in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes under Article XI of the Convention?

The unilateral economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba for over 50 years, comprises a set of laws and regulations that limit, restrict, or prohibit international cooperation in the field of chemistry by establishing, *inter alia*:

- A ban on Cuban exports and imports of products, including chemicals, spare parts, raw materials, materials, equipment, and other components and services to or from the United States.
- A restriction on the international exchange of scientific and technical information, including in the field of chemistry.
- The prohibition of subsidiaries of United States companies in third countries trading with Cuba, including in the field of chemistry.
- The prohibition of all companies in the world, including in the field of chemistry, exporting a product or equipment to the United States—whatever it may be—if it contains raw materials from Cuba.

How does the US blockade against Cuba affect the national application of Article XI of the Convention in terms of economic and technological development?

Until April 2016, the economic damage inflicted upon Cuba by the application of the United States economic, commercial, and financial blockade, considering the depreciation of the dollar against the value of gold on the international market, amounts to **USD 753,688,000,000**. At current prices, over all these years, the blockade has resulted in damages amounting to over **USD 125,873,000,000**.

The unilateral restrictions and prohibitions imposed by the blockade, together with its extraterritorial dimension, significantly limit and restrict the maintenance, sustainability, development and modernization of the chemical industry in the country.

The losses reported by the Cuban chemical industry between April 2015 and April 2016 as a result of the blockade amount to **USD 22,106,244.92**. Some examples of the consequences of the blockade affecting the chemical industry in Cuba in the above-mentioned period are as follows:¹

- The Cuban company QUIMIMPEX, which specialises in the import of products for the chemical industry, made requests to acquire raw materials and spare parts from 16

¹ Data provided in the report by Cuba on the United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/5, <http://www.uh.cu/sites/default/files/InformeBloqueo2016EN.pdf>

United States suppliers. In particular, FC-TEC was asked to provide chlorine valves for cylinders used in water purification; the supplier refused to provide these parts.

- The company FARMACUBA requested means of protection and chemical and biotechnological products for the production of medicines in Cuba from four United States suppliers. Among them, the multinational company SIGMA-ALDRICH refused to respond to the Cuban request due to complications arising from the application of the United States blockade.
- The Natural Products Center, which belongs to the National Center for Scientific Research (CNIC), has been unable to purchase spare parts for two U.S.-brand Agilent chromatographs. These are fundamental for the quality control of the products that are investigated and developed in that center's Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry. When these two chromatographs could not be used, the rest of the laboratory's equipment had to be used beyond its specified parameters, resulting in losses of USD 600,000.

Why should States Parties be involved in ensuring the end of this type of unilateral measure, which comes in contradiction to the Convention?

The mandate of the OPCW is to ensure the implementation of all of the provisions of the Convention. Within that context, the Organisation has the important responsibility to ensure the full, effective, and non-discriminatory application of Article XI.

Unilateral prohibitions and restrictions such as those imposed by the blockade against Cuba are clearly incompatible with the provisions of the Convention. States Parties should be actively involved in ensuring, through the lifting of such measures, full compliance with the letter and spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention, including Article XI. Cuba reiterates its firm commitment to the strict implementation of the Convention in all of its aspects.

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