



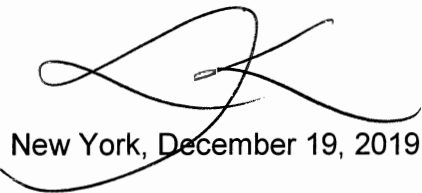
REPUBLIC OF CUBA  
Permanent Mission to the United Nations  
315 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

Note No. 824 | 12 | 19

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and has the honor to transmit the response of the Republic of Cuba to the comments of the United States regarding the Country Programme Document for Cuba of UNICEF (2020 - 2024).

The Permanent Mission of Cuba kindly requests that the response referred to above, be published on the website of the entity dedicated to this matter.

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) the assurances of its highest and most distinguished consideration.

  
New York, December 19, 2019.



To the Secretariat of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
New York

**Template for delegations providing comments on the  
country programme documents**  
2020 First Regular Session

**Delegation name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Cuba \_\_\_\_\_

**Draft country programme document:** \_\_\_\_\_ Cuba \_\_\_\_\_

Delegations are kindly invited to use this template to share their comments on any of the draft CPDs being presented during the forthcoming Board session.

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, country programme documents (CPDs) are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. All comments received by the Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board before the deadline will be made public on the Executive Board website, and considered by the respective regional office, in close consultation with the country office and the concerned Government.

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**Cuba's Response to the comments of the U.S. Delegation on the Country Programme Document for Cuba (2020 - 2024)**

The comments of the Government of the United States on the Country Programme Document for Cuba 2020-2024, constitute a new maneuver to thwart international cooperation with Cuba. The United States persists in its objective to bring the Cuban people to their knees by causing hunger and despair and to destroy their political system, chosen in a sovereign manner.

Cuba does not hide the economic problems the country faces as a result, *inter alia*, of the deformations associated with development and centuries of deformations associated with underdevelopment and centuries of colonialism, neo-colonialism and unjust international economic relations.

Yet, the multimillion dollar economic damage accrued for nearly 60 years indicate that the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by Government of the United States against Cuba, without a shadow of a doubt, is the main obstacle to Cuba's economic and social development, as well as to the implementation of the National Economic Development Plan and, therefore, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As a result of the blockade, Cuba must carry out its commercial operations under extremely disadvantageous conditions. Its financial transactions are persecuted with rage and those banks that conduct any type of transaction of funds related to our country are fined.

If Cuba has resisted, if our economy has overcome all these obstacles, it has been due to the heroic resistance of the Cuban people.

In order to achieve the development goals that we have set ourselves, the lifting of the blockade would represent a relief that would allow the Cuban economy and people to fully develop their capacities under normal conditions.

With the foregone income from exports of goods and services and the costs associated with the geographical relocation of the trade, which forces us to have very high inventories in place, GDP would have soared up, at current prices in the last decade, at an average annual rate of about 10%.

### **On the impacts of the blockade on Cuba's access to international financial sources and markets:**

- It is cynical and ironical that the Government of the United States asserts that the blockade does not affect Cuba's access to international sources of financing.
- The U.S. economic siege is the main hindrance for Cuba to obtain international credits, due to the impossibility of using the U.S. dollar in its transactions, the deterrent effect of the numberless sanctions and threats of retaliation against financial institutions, and the resulting increase in the country risk factor.
- The deceitful and false arguments of the United States Government are based on the strategy of making the Blockade be viewed as a strictly bilateral issue. However, during Donald Trump's administration alone, more than a hundred events have been recorded that constitute flagrant extraterritorial applications of the blockade and that have added extraordinary difficulties to our international financial and commercial activity.
- Cuba's commercial and financial operations are subject to constant and thorough persecution, by legislative mandate, specifically the 1996 Helms-Burton Act. The refusal of banks to conduct transactions with Cuba, the closing of our accounts in third countries and the termination of contracts reflect the extraterritoriality and the deterrence that the policy of the blockade generates.
- Recently, the United States has launched an extensive persecution and imposed sanctions against more than 60 vessels and companies involved in the shipment of fuel to Cuba. Based on unfounded pretexts, the U.S. Government has tightened these economic sanctions with the open purpose of damaging our economy. It is evident that the blockade remains the main hindrance to Cuba's economic development, which has an impact on all spheres of society.

### **On the alleged exports of authorized goods from the United States to Cuba:**

- U.S. regulations and laws (such as the 1963 Department of the Treasury Cuban Assets Control Regulations, the 1979 Export Administration Act, and the 2000 Trade Sanctions Reform and Exports Enhancement Act, among others), determine that the import into Cuba of authorized products from the United States is subject to discriminatory conditions that are not applied to any other country in the world.
- According to the complex regulatory framework of the blockade, Cuba is forced to pay in advance, i.e. the amount must be received by the supplier even before the goods are shipped. Additionally, payment must be made in cash and there is no possibility of accessing credits. All these are conditions, which are impossible to meet as a whole for a small developing country like ours.
- These obstacles hinder and sometimes prevent the realization of projects that have the noble purpose of contributing to the objectives of UN agencies and programs, such as UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.

### **On the process of adoption the new Constitution of the Republic of Cuba:**

- The elaboration, adoption and ratification of the new Constitution of the Republic of Cuba was a genuinely popular and democratic exercise. The new Constitution was ratified by popular referendum on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019, through the favorable vote of 86.85% of the voters.
- Each citizen, at the time of exercising their right to vote, had two options before them: To ratify or not the new Constitution. The overwhelming majority of Cubans, 8 out of 10 voters, ratified the new Constitution with their free and secret vote.
- Previously, during 2018, the draft Constitution was submitted to an extensive process of popular consultation, which included 133,681 meetings in workplaces, education centers and communities. This process involved 8,945,521 people out of a population of just over 11 million.

- At these consultation meetings, the people had the opportunity to express not only their endorsement of or disagreement with, in whole or in part, the draft Constitution, but they could also propose direct amendments, including additions or deletions, and express doubts.
- In the process of consultation, our people made 1,706,872 statements, out of which 783,174 were proposals related to the text discussed. On the basis of those proposals, almost 60% of the draft Constitution was modified. The text ratified in the referendum was modified according to the process of popular consultation.

**On the alleged existence of arbitrary detentions in Cuba:**

- Arbitrary detentions are not enforced in Cuba. Arrests are carried out in accordance with current law of criminal procedure and in compliance with the broad guarantees of the due process established by our legal system.
- The Law lays down the procedures and circumstances requiring detention, as well as the terms under which a detainee must be subject to precautionary measures, be instituted criminal proceedings or be released.
- Detentions are carried out in compliance with all the guarantees and formalities laid down in Law No. 62 of 1989, "Criminal Code", regardless of the political opinion of the person in custody.
- The decision whether or not to continue the criminal process is evaluated in each case by the competent authorities, in observance of all the guarantees recognized by our laws; and is based on the application of a rational, objective, preventive and individualized criminal policy.

**On the access to information and information and communication technologies in Cuba:**

- The U.S. Blockade remains the main obstacle to the free flow of information and Internet access for all Cubans.
- On October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Bureau of Industry and Security of the U.S. Department of Commerce further restricted Cuba's ability to import telecommunications-related products by conditioning possible authorizations on obvious internal subversion purposes.
- Depending on the available resources, Cuba has made enormous efforts to promote the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to offer Internet service to the largest number of people.
- Intensive work has been carried out on Internet access in navigation rooms, the growing incorporation of new public Wi-Fi sites, and the expansion of connectivity in national institutions, Internet access in homes and through cell phones with greater connectivity of mobile networks.
- The number of navigation rooms of the Cuban Telecommunications Company (ETECSA) has been increased, both in hotels and airports, Computer and Electronics Clubs for Youths, Electronic Postal Service, among others.
- The use of the Internet and the ICTs has posed challenges for the protection of children and adolescents, and action has been taken against websites that encourage or promote behaviors detrimental to the normal development of childhood and adolescence.
- The opinions expressed by children and adolescents in different processes in the country have provided their own perspective and have influenced decision-making, policy formulation and the evaluation and monitoring of results.