# 1AC

Resolved: We affirm the resolution; The United States should lift its embargo against Cuba.

Weighing Mechanism: The weighing mechanism for this round should be cost benefit analysis

Despite Cuba not meeting the requirements, it’s the US job to fulfill duties other countries can’t stand up and do.

## Contention 1: Health

**Cuba is famous for its state of the art health care and health research work**, and for the help it provides to other poor countries in health care, including the training of thousands of doctors. **However, there are things that Cuba cannot do in the health care field, because of the ever-vigilant OFAC snoops.**

**Cuba cannot acquire certain types of advanced health care, diagnostic and surgical equipment, or has had to pay extra for equipment that lacks the 10 percent of U.S. origin materials or parts which makes the blockade kick in**. Cuban health care professionals are forbidden from attending some international health meetings and seminars, because part of the expenses of these activities are being paid by U.S. institutions or non-governmental organizations, who could be fined.

Cuba is supposed to be able to buy some food from the United States, but cannot do so on normal credit terms other countries are afforded, which drives up the costs.  Naturally, Cuba is not allowed to sell its products in the United States, **even medical innovations that would be helpful to U.S. people.** <http://fpif.org/3-big-benefits-for-americans-to-ending-the-cuba-embargo/>

**Impact: Better healthcare for US Citizens:**

**Cuban researchers have been conducting world-class medical research on vaccines and preventive medicines and are eager to establish collaborations with American scientists.**[**1**](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4605162/#bib1)**For several decades, Cuba’s Finlay Institute has successfully developed and produced inexpensive vaccines against hepatitis B virus (HBV), meningococcal meningitis, leptospirosis, and dengue virus t**hat have been used worldwide. In 1989, Cuba produced a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine, based on the outer membrane vesicles of specific outbreak strains, to prevent childhood meningitis. **The vaccine has been widely used throughout Latin America, but not within the US.** The US Food and Drug Administration approved its first serogroup B meningococcal vaccine, which was manufactured by a subsidiary of Pfizer, in 2014. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4605162/

With vaccines becoming cheaper, they will be more accessible to the lower income households allowing for a healthier society in total.

Impact: Cuba is given supplies while US gains economic benefits

A June 2000 report by the Stern Group projected that the U.S. could export $105 million worth of food and agricultural products and $6 million in medical supplies to Cuba within the first year of partial liberalization, and $1 billion worth of food and agricultural products and $600 million in medical supplies per year in an unrestricted trade scenario. <https://www.wola.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/Cuba/past/A%20Time%20for%20Change.pdf>

Cuba at the moment needs more medical supplies and general commodities. By lifting the embargo, the US will be able to barter these materials which will supply the Cubans with what they need while improving the US economy at the same time.

## Contention 2: Ineffectiveness

As well as inflicting economic damage, trade sanctions have been a foreign policy flop. **A comprehensive study by the Institute for International Economics found that sanctions have achieved their objectives in fewer than 20 percent of cases**. For example, the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act of 1994 failed to deter India and Pakistan from testing nuclear weapons in May 1998.

### Subpoint A: Economic objective failure

**Using trade as a weapon of foreign policy has harmed America’s economic interests in the world without significantly advancing national security.**

The proliferation of trade sanctions in the last decade has been accompanied by their declining effectiveness. From Cuba to Iran to Burma, **sanctions have failed to achieve the goal of changing the behavior or the nature of target regimes**. Sanctions have, however, **deprived American companies of international business opportunities, punished domestic consumers, and hurt the poor and most vulnerable in the target countries.**

According to the president’s Export Council, the United States has imposed more than 40 trade sanctions against about three-dozen countries since 1993.

The council estimates that those sanctions have **cost American exporters $15 billion to $19 billion in lost annual sales overseas and caused long-term damage to U.S. companies**—lost market share and reputations abroad as unreliable suppliers. <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/going-alone-economic-sanctions-hurts-us-more-foes>

## Sub point B: Human Rights

**Improving Cuba’s dismal human rights conditions remains an important policy goal of the United States**. Given the salience of these issues in U.S. domestic politics, demonstrable improvements will likely contribute to a smoother and more fruitful normalization process. We argue that U.S. human rights policy on Cuba must evolve with the Obama administration’s overall policy shift, which means moving from an approach that seeks to overthrow the Cuban government to one that works with it to attain gradual but concrete improvements in human rights conditions.

**The human rights situation in Cuba remains dismal by international standards. The Cuban government increasingly relies on short-term arbitrary detentions to silence regime critics, human-rights activists, independent journalists, and others that the regime finds threatening. Detainees are often held incommunicado for days, and may face torture. According to documentation by the Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation, an independent Cuban human rights organization, cases of arbitrary detention increased from 6,424 in 2013 to 8,889 in 2014.** Cuban law allows for detentions of up to four years of individuals who have not even committed a crime if they are deemed to meet a definition of “potential dangerousness.”37 **The move toward shorter term detentions and away from long-term prison sentences, coupled with large releases of political prisoners in response to international pressure, has sharply decreased the number of political prisoners being held.** Most recently, fifty-three were released as part of the December 2014 agreement to restore diplomatic relations with the United States. However, human rights groups report that dozens of political prisoners remain. **Prison conditions are reported to be harsh, with overcrowded facilities, poor sanitation, and lack of adequate medical care for detainees.** International and domestic human rights groups have been denied access to prisons.38 free expression and access to information continues to be deeply constrained in Cuba, with the government retaining tight control of all traditional media outlets. Only five percent of the Cuban population is estimated to have Internet access due to low penetration, high costs, and restrictions on home usage. 39 Freedom of association is also tightly controlled, with human rights and other independent civil society groups facing frequent harassment and being denied legal recognition.40 While the need for improved human rights conditions in Cuba is pressing, the longstanding policy goal of regime change (enshrined in Helms-Burton and other legislation) is unrealistic given that opposition groups remain marginalized due to a combination of the repressive tactics described above and regime propaganda that has successfully painted such groups as stooges of the U.S. government. The lack of a Human Rights 22 viable oppositional power base in Cuba calls into question existing programs that promote regime change, which have sowed distrust between the two countries while accomplishing little else. **The United States should acknowledge that human rights progress, halting as it may be, must be achieved through the present Cuban government.** **This new approach entails pressing the Cuban government to improve human rights conditions, coupled with reassurances that we are not seeking to overthrow the regime.** **It also means scaling back the public rhetoric about democratization** (to the extent possible, given U.S. domestic political pressures), which only saps the trust necessary to ensure the Cuban government’s acquiescence to U.S. requests for human rights improvements. **Failing to make the necessary changes in policy and rhetoric that signal a clear move away from regime-change aspirations will only strengthen the position of hardliners within the Cuban government who are in opposition to normalization.**

**Seek the release of remaining political prisoners:** **Even after the high-profile release of political prisoners that accompanied the December 2014 normalization announcement, dozens more remain in Cuban jails. Securing the release of a significant number of them, particularly in the run-up to a presidential visit, would send a message that engagement works.**

**Pursue bilateral cooperation on less sensitive human rights matters. While the Cuban government will undoubtedly resist making human rights improvements that threaten** its grip on power, there are other areas that may be more ripe for cooperation. a. **Religious Freedom** – **As the State Department’s latest religious freedom report notes, the Cuban government continues to exert control over many aspects of spiritual life, monitoring religious groups, harassing outspoken religious leaders, and exerting control over financial resources.**

Citizens in Cuba will be assured with the freedom o believe in what they choose, and all the political prisoners will be released. Currently the US has no leverage on Cuba due to them having our political prisoners. With the embargo lifted the US benefits from health, trade, and access to a neighboring country, Where as Cuba benefits from a strengthened economy, greater freedom to locals, and a larger market. Thus we affirm.

## Subpoint C: Soft Power

The United States voted against a U.N. resolution criticizing the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba Tuesday, despite initial U.S. discussions about abstaining on the annual vote.

The U.S. had considered taking a less emphatic stance on the resolution in light of the new opening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. U.S. officials said they decided to cast a "no" ballot because the text did not fully reflect the spirit of the recent opening between the two former enemies.

Only Israel joined the U.S. in opposing the resolution, with 191 voting for it.

The resolution, introduced by Cuba, demanded an end to the embargo -- which it refers to as "blockade." The resolution also calls on all U.N. members to refrain from interfering in other countries' internal affairs as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation.

**U.S. delegate Ronald Godard told the U.N. that "we find it unfortunate that despite our bilateral progress, Cuba introduced a resolution nearly identical to those in years past."**

**The resolution is not enforceable, but the yearly exercise has become a symbolic ritual framing the embargo as illegitimate and demonstrating Washington's isolation on the issue. Last year, the vote count was 188-2, with Israel once again the only country to stand by the U.S.**

After opposing the resolution for 23 years, U.S. officials had sought compromise amendments to this year's text -- the first since the historic shift in U.S. policy toward the island nation -- that would allow the Obama administration to abstain.

Such a move would have been unprecedented, pitting the administration and the international community against Republicans in Congress who have refused to scrap the embargo. President Barack Obama has asked Congress to repeal it since he announced in December that Washington and Cuba would restore diplomatic ties. In the meantime, he has eased restrictions on travel and trade to Cuba. In August, the two countries re-opened embassies.

A unanimous resolution could have put further pressure on Congress to scrap the embargo. But U.S. officials said efforts to discuss revisions with the Cubans and others fell flat and that the final text did not represent the renewed engagement between the two countries, though the Cuban government did acknowledge Obama's overtures in renewing the relationship.

The statement read out by Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla concerning the vote also struck a harsh tone.

"The blockade is a flagrant, massive and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cubans; it is contrary to International Law; it has been described as a crime of genocide," the statement declared.

A large standing ovation followed the vote in the hall.

By going against what the UN is telling the United States should do, this decreases the United States soft power. This is because in an organization that relies on the majority for its decisions, if the United States stems out from the general populous they will be regarded as diverging from the UN ideals. Therefore United States will be viewed as not credible and may lose its high position in the UN. This can lead to the following impacts:

Impact: Human Rights Violation Increase

With US soft power decreasing, Russia will take control and have the most influence in the UN. Therefore, human rights violations can increase under Russian authority due to their communist Ideals Russia joined a core group in the UN Human Rights Council that presented a resolution for “protection of the family,” with a narrow, non-inclusive conception of “family,” and blocked a proposed amendment to the resolution that would have acknowledged that “various forms of the family exist.” Russia voted against a resolution adopted by a committee of the UN General Assembly calling on states to guarantee a safe working environment for human rights defenders.

Impact: Increase in terrorist attacks

By a decrease in soft power, terrorist regimes such as ISIS will be able to win the war against terror because the US will not have enough recognition to lead movements against ISIS. “A multi-level strategy—one that targets and builds grassroots trust, transparency and engagement as well as cultivating leadership roles and government liaison—is far more likely to succeed than one that is narrowly focused on selected representatives and structures.” Without the US having soft power, countries will be weary of the US and in turn will negate unification under the cause of defeating ISIS. Therefore the US will have a much harder time defeating ISIS.

Citations: