The next administration’s policy toward Cuba will hinge on who is elected president. Both major Democratic candidates, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, have expressed support for normalization. However, of the six Republican candidates currently leading the polls, only Donald Trump supports normalizing ties with Cuba, while the other five (Senators Rubio and Cruz, Dr. Carson, and Governors Bush and Christie) have vocally opposed the policy. Donald Trump will allow us to continue the legacy Barack Obama set forth. (5) Donald Trump wants to convert the Cuban government in to a democracy and further normalization’s. This will be made more possible if Raul Castro, retires as Prime Minister.

(Oppman 13) (6) Cuban President Raul Castro said Sunday that he would step down from power in 2018, when his second term as president is set to end. Also Sunday, lawmakers elevated Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez, 52, to the position of first vice president, putting him next in line to succeed Castro. Raul Castro’s stepping down from power means that the Castro regime will have finally come to an end. Miguel Diaz – Canel Bermudez wants change and can possibly move towards normalizations. Normalizations will support international financial Institutions and will lead to humanitarian aid.

**The united states main contingency against the lifting of the embargo was the political prisoners held in Cuba. However, the Cuban government has released all those who were deemed safe**. The Cuban government has released a number of political prisoners in recent years. With the intercession of the Cuban Catholic Church, the Cuban government released some 14 White House, “Statement by the President on the Passing of Fidel Castro,” November 26, 2016**. (White House Statement) Cuba: Issues and Actions in the 114th Congress Congressional Research Service, released 125 political prisoners in 2010 and 2011, including the remaining members of the “group of 75”** that were still in prison. **In the aftermath of the December 2014 shift in U.S. policy toward Cuba, the Cuban government released another 53 political prisoners.** (although as noted below, six were rearrested in 2015). 15 **Among the 53 released were five jailed dissidents whom Amnesty International** (AI) had named as prisoners of conscience in 2016 as well as several other dissidents whose cases AI was following. Two of the five prisoners of conscience, Emilio Planas Robert and Iván Fernández Depestre, had been imprisoned since September 2012 and July 2013, respectively, and had been convicted of “dangerousness” (a preemptive measure defined as the special proclivity of a person to commit crimes). The other three “prisoners of conscience,” brothers Alexeis, Django, and Vianco Vargas Martín, were members of UNPACU. They were detained in late 2012 and convicted in June 2014 after a summary trial in which they were charged with “public disorder.”**17 Three other dissidents whose cases were followed by AI were released from prison on December 9, 2014**—Ladies in White member Sonia Garro Alfonso; her husband, Ramón Alejandro Muñoz González; and a neighbor, Eugenio Hernández. They had been held since March 2012.18 In 2015, the Cuban government released two additional political prisoners named as prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International, but one of them was rearrested in late 2016. Ciro Alexis Casonova Pérez, who had been placed under house arrest in June 2014 after demonstrating in the streets, was convicted in December 2014 of public disorder and sentenced to one year in prison. In April 2015, AI declared Casonova. In 2010, for example, the Associated Press [vetted](http://archive.boston.com/news/world/latinamerica/articles/2010/07/23/number_of_political_prisoners_in_cuba_still_murky/?page=1) a list of 167 political prisoners by Elizardo Sanchez, the head of the independent Cuban Commission on Human Rights and National Reconciliation**. (Qiu, 2016) About 50 people on the list "were convicted of terrorism, hijacking or other violent crimes, and four are former military or intelligence agents convicted of espionage or revealing state secrets," according to the AP.**

Even for those who are traditionally recognized as political prisoners, Cuba rejects the term, Salim Lamrani, a Cuba expert at the University of Paris, told PolitiFact. "Cuba’s point of view is the following: People condemned to jail sentences were not imprisoned because they expressed ideas against the authorities but because they accepted money from the U.S. government," he said, adding that he agrees with Castro that Cuba has no political prisoners.   **Nonetheless, in 2015, Cuba**[**released**](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-cuba-prisoners-idUSKBN0KL10K20150113)[**53 people**](http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/cuba/article6386535.html)**the United States named as political prisoners as part of the deal to normalize trade relations**, even though the regime had denied their existence for decades, said Ponce of Freedom House. Out of the 97 people in our aggregate tally, here are examples of a few who are most in line with the traditional definition of political prisoner:

**What this is telling us is that the political prisoners that we continue thinking are there have already been released. Both sources point that all prisoners have been either given back to the US, or have been in jail in Cuba because of a crime they committed.**

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43926.pdf>

the US could gain 1.2 billion dollars every year though exports to Cuba. Additionally, US companies will have access to a new market, which could ultimately create more jobs for US citizens.

## 1 trillion accumulated cost

http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/ga11445.doc.htm

Introducing the text, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Cuba’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, said the human damages caused by the blockade were incalculable, with 76 per cent of Cubans living under its devastating effects since the day they were born.  **The resulting economic damages accumulated after half a century amounted to more than $1 trillion**.  **The embargo was also the main obstacle to broader access to the Internet, the free circulation of persons, the exchange of ideas and the development of cultural, sport and scientific relations.**

The essence of the United States’ Cuba policy remained unaltered and anchored in the Cold War, he said.  There were big differences between both Governments, but the only productive way to proceed would be to find a civilized way to relate to one another.  **Dialogue, negotiation and cooperation must prevail for the benefit of both peoples and hemispheric relations.**  The recent resumption of talks on migration, the reestablishment of direct post services and the development of contacts on issues of mutual interest, such as combating oil spills and maritime and air search and rescue missions, showed that such an approach was both possible and useful.

**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.

Economic sanctions are especially damaging when applied to “duel use” technology. U.S. companies face a web of controls that inhibit exporting high-speed computers and other high-tech goods that, while civilian in nature, could conceivably be used by a hostile regime for military purposes.

Export controls on high-tech goods suffer from two fatal flaws: The first is that similar technology can often be obtained off the shelf from foreign competitors. Export controls succeed only in cutting U.S. firms out of fast-growing foreign markets without enhancing national security one bit.

The second flaw is that whatever controls are written into law are quickly outdated by Moore’s law of technological advancement. Today’s “supercomputer” inevitably becomes tomorrow’s high-end PC.

## < 20 % ofcases

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.

**Trade sanctions seldom work because of the competitive global marketplace and the nature of regimes** most likely to arouse America’s ire. Although the United States is by far the world’s largest economy, its global economic leverage is limited. The United States accounts for only 13 percent of the world’s merchandise exports and 16 percent of its imports. If Washington seeks to punish another country by unilaterally withholding exports, such as farm products, computers, or oil-drilling services, other global suppliers stand ready to fill the gap.

Even if sanctions inflict some pain on the target country, they typically fail because of the nature of regimes most likely to become targets of sanctions. Human rights abuses tend to vary inversely with economic development. Governments that systematically deprive citizens of basic human rights typically intervene in daily economic life, resulting in underdeveloped and relatively closed economies. Such nations are the least sensitive to economic pressure. The autocratic nature of their governments also means that they are relatively insulated from any domestic discontent caused by sanctions. If anything, sanctions tend to concentrate economic power in the hands of the target government and reduce that of citizens.

America’s ongoing embargo against Cuba illustrates the failure of sanctions. When the United States first imposed a comprehensive trade embargo in 1961, Cuba was conducting most of its trade with the United States. Since then, sanctions have utterly failed to influence the government of Fidel Castro, which has used the embargo to excuse its own policy failures and gain international sympathy. Although the embargo once enjoyed a measure of international support, today no other nation stands behind it. The reason is obvious: **nearly 40 years after its imposition, the embargo has only hurt American companies and the Cuban people, while leaving the Castro regime firmly entrenched with little prospect of change**. The manifest failure of U.S. policy prompted Pope John Paul II during his historic visit to Cuba in January 1998 to declare that sanctions are “always deplorable, because they hurt the most needy.”

## Medical benefits from Cuba

<http://fpif.org/3-big-benefits-for-americans-to-ending-the-cuba-embargo/>

Felicia Gustin

**Cuba has one of the most advanced medical biotechnology industries in the world**. With 12,000 employees, including 7,000 scientists and engineers, it enjoys hefty government investment and prolifically produces new treatments and medications.

All told, according the World Health Organization, the Cuban biotech industry holds around 1,200 international patents and markets pharmaceutical products and vaccines in more than 50 countries — but not in the United States.

**Ending the embargo on these products could make life better for millions of Americans suffering from a range of diseases.**

For the 26 million people in the United States who have diabetes, this has special significance. Each year, some 80,000 American diabetics suffer amputations. **Cuba has developed a safe and effective medication** — Heberprot P — that **reduces the risk of amputation by as much as 78 percent**. It’s being used successfully by tens of thousands of patients in Cuba and in over 20 countries.

There’s also great potential to open up treatments for less familiar diseases.

Dengue fever, carried by the aedes aegypti mosquito, was previously only found south of the U.S. border. Yet according to Gail Reed — founder of the group Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba — due to climate change, the mosquito has been spotted in Florida, Texas, and California. “Cuba has the most expertise in dengue of any country in the hemisphere,” she pointed out. “They know more about this killer disease than the CDC.” Cooperation on dengue prevention and treatment is going to be crucial.

**Cuba is also a leader in the development of therapeutic vaccines for lung, throat, and childhood brain cancer.** A number of anti-cancer drugs and vaccines are in development at the Center of Molecular Immunology in Havana. **Imagine the potential when these researchers are allowed to collaborate with their colleagues in the United States.**

The list goes on and on. Cuban scientists have developed an advanced drug that effectively destroys coronary clots, an innovative burn treatment, and vaccines for meningitis B and hepatitis B and C. They’ve also made advances in developing a vaccine against HIV-AIDS.

“More than 90 new products are currently being investigated in more than 60 clinical trials,” says Dr. José Luis Di Fabio, head of the WHO Country Office in Cuba. “These numbers are expected to grow.”

**For Americans who can benefit from these medical advances, ending the embargo isn’t just an ideological question. It’s a matter of their health, even life or death.**