# 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

## Contention 1: Health

Claim: The Cuban Embargo restricts medical research in Cuba and the implementation of medical knowledge in the US

**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 that 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/

By lifting the embargo, collaborations between Cuban and American medical researchers will yield vaccines that are more accessible to the lower income population. Therefore, the quality of life per capita in the USA will increase significantly because more people will be unlikely to contract diseases that are treated by the more affordable vaccines.

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>

Lifting the embargo will allow larger amounts of medical supplies to be transferred to Cuba from the USA. This will allow Cuba to increase the productivity of their research. In turn, this will help America economically by providing almost 2 billion dollars in exchange for these commodities such as food and other products.

## 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

Claim: The Cuban embargo has backfired economically and is hurting the USA

**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 to 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.

“Advise the Cuban gover

Citations:

1. 5 The list of 53 prisoners reportedly had been drawn up by the Obama Administration and included those jailed for having peacefully exercised their rights of freedom of expression and assembly. David Adams, Matt Spetalnick, and Lesley Wroughton, “How Prisoners Names Were Drawn Up in U.S.-Cuba Secret Talks,” Reuters News, January 12, 2015.
2. 16 AI defines prisoners of conscience as those jailed because of their political, religious, or other conscientiously held beliefs, ethnic origin, sex, color, language, national or social origin, economic status, birth, sexual orientation, or other status, provided they have neither used nor advocated violence.
3. 17 AI, “Prisoners of Conscience Released in Cuba,” January 9, 2015.
4. 18 AI, “Government Critics Under House Arrest,” December 15, 2014.
5. 19 AI, “Political Dissident Must Be Released,” April 2, 2015; “El Régimen Excarcela al Opositor Ciro Alexis Casanova Pérez,” Diario de Cuba, June 11, 2015.