



Joint Statement

June 24, 2021

U.S. Vote at U.N. Maintains Trump Policy as U.N. Votes to Condemn Sanctions on Cuba

Washington, D.C.— Yesterday’s [statement](#) by the U.S. delegation to the United Nations explaining its vote against a resolution condemning the U.S. unilateral embargo on Cuba makes clear that the Biden administration is maintaining and defending a Trump-era policy toward the island. This is a distressing departure from then-candidate Joe Biden’s [pledge](#) to “reverse the failed Trump policies that inflicted harm on Cubans and their families.” The comprehensive unilateral sanctions approach has failed to advance democracy and human rights, as recognized by then-Ambassador (and current USAID administrator) Samantha Power in 2016 when she [abstained](#) on the U.N. vote on a similar resolution and said that “**rather than try to close off Cuba from the rest of the world, we want the world of opportunities and ideas open to the people of Cuba.**”

At a time when President Biden is committing to work alongside others to lead international efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, **this stance undermines efforts to improve U.S. standing in the world, which is a centerpiece of Biden’s foreign policy.** (At the General Assembly only Israel joined the U.S. in opposing the resolution, as it had in previous years).

Neither does this approach help the Cuban people, now facing food and medicine shortages and scarcity that are exacerbated by U.S. sanctions, as well as by the pandemic. [U.S. sanctions harm Cuban women](#) foremost and obstruct Cuba’s ability to manage COVID-19 and speed up mass vaccination. **Seeking to provoke hunger, especially during a global pandemic, is unjust and [immoral](#).** Sixty years of the embargo have not advanced U.S. interests and have come at the expense of the most vulnerable population in Cuba, affecting family livelihoods and hindering progress toward a more fair and inclusive society. It’s a shameful embarrassment that the Biden Administration is voting to defend it.