CUBA: SANCTIONED BY THE UNITED STATES?

Cuba: ¿sancionada por Estados Unidos?

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Abstract

During the last six decades, the United States has applied countless punitive measures against Cuba, especially in the economic sphere. Throughout this period Washington has used various arguments to justify these actions, however, a careful analysis of them shows that their main objective has been to force a change in the economic, political and social system in Cuba. Despite the international controversy and uncertainties regarding international sanctions, it is clear that the application of measures aimed at regime change in another sovereign state is incompatible with current international law.

Keywords: Cuba; United States; sanctions; international law.

Resumen

Durante las últimas seis décadas, Estados Unidos ha aplicado innumerables medidas punitivas contra Cuba, especialmente en el ámbito económico. A lo largo de este periodo, Washington ha utilizado diversos argumentos para justificar estas acciones, sin embargo, un análisis cuidadoso de estas demuestra que su principal objetivo ha sido forzar un cambio en el sistema económico, político y

social en Cuba. A pesar de las controversias e incertidumbres internacionales en torno a las sanciones internacionales, es evidente que la aplicación de medidas dirigidas a un cambio de régimen en otro Estado soberano es incompatible con el Derecho internacional vigente.

Palabras claves: Cuba; Estados Unidos; sanciones; Derecho internacional.

Summary

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of sanctions is one of the most controversial in contemporary international law. The theoretical and political debate is especially fiercer with respect to unilateral sanctions. The dubious legality and effectiveness of these actions generate numerous economic, political and legal conflicts, for which the international order today has no clear solution.

Since the second half of the last century, the major powers have increasingly resorted to the application of unilateral measures, replacing the use or threat of use of force as a foreign policy tool. These actions often use the protection of human rights, democracy or the rule of law as legitimizing arguments for their actions. However, they often conceal the intention to provoke regime change in the "target" state for economic, strategic or ideological purposes. For this reason, developing countries have continually opposed the imposition of these misnamed sanctions, arguing that they imply a hierarchy alien to the international legal order, which allows one State to impose restrictions of its own choosing in order to put pressure on another sovereign State.

The international sanctions par excellence are those adopted by the UN within the collective security mechanism provided for in Chapter VII of its founding treaty. Regional agreements or organizations may also apply sanctions, subject to authorization by the Security Council.[1] However, unilateral coercive measures[2] can only be considered lawful –and therefore sanctions themselves–

[1] Charter of the United Nations, Article 53.

[2] Considered as such not only those adopted by a State individually or in coordination with others, but also those taken by a regional organization in relation to non-member States,

when they constitute countermeasures,[3] subject to the limitations imposed in that regard by international law.

Since the beginning of the process of political, economic and social transformation of deep popular roots that the Cuban Revolution represented, the United States has applied a series of unilateral coercive measures that Washington has tried to present as legitimate international sanctions. This paper aims to This paper aims to conduct a doctrinal study of international sanctions in international law from the perspective of their ultimate purpose and their interaction with the structural principles of the international legal order. It also proposes to analyze the unilateral coercive system of the United States towards Cuba in its relationship with the structural principles of International Law.

2. SANCTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

The term "international sanctions" is difficult to define and is used to denote conduct of various kinds. This is due to the absence of an established concept in international literature and custom, the lack of a multilateral treaty specifically referring to international sanctions,[4] as well as the multiplicity of economic and geopolitical interests involved. Most of the doctrinal definitions of sanctions[5] agree that they seek to "influence", by means of coercion,[6] the beha-

without prior approval of the Security Council. Hovell, Devika, *Unfinished business of international law: the questionable legality of autonomous sanctions* (symposium on unilateral targeted sanctions, 2019), doi:10.1017/aju.2019.

[3] Understood as "measures of reaction of the subject affected by an unlawful act of another, which seek to restore respect for the law and induce the offending State to comply with the obligations arising from responsibility for the offense committed". Diez de Velasco Vallejo, Manuel, *Instituciones de Derecho Internacional Público*.

[4] Hovell, Devika, *Unfinished business…., cit.*

[5] Rahmat, Mohamad, "Unilateral Sanctions in International Law: A Quest for Legality", in Ali Z. Marossi and Marisa R. Bassett (eds.), *Economic Sanctions under International Law. Unilateralism, Multilateralism, Legitimacy, and Consequences*, pp. 71-83; Milaninia, Nema, "Jus ad bellum economicum and jus in bello economico: The Limits of Economic Sanctions Under the Paradigm of International Humanitarian Law", in Ali Z. Marossi and Marisa R. Bassett (eds.), *Economic Sanctions…, cit.,* pp. 95-125; Hovell, Devika, *Unfinished business…., cit.*; Del Olmo Díaz, Marçal, "La práctica de las sanciones internacionales en el derecho internacional ¿son legítimas las sanciones que se le aplican a Venezuela?", Tesis de grado, p. 10; Velásquez Cruz, Lisbeth and Pérez Salas, Alan, "Medidas coercitivas internacionales: una afectación a los derechos humanos y libertades fundamentales", *Política Internacional*, No. 5, 2020, p. 54.

[6] Entendida coerción como coacción potencial o posibilidad de uso de la fuerza. Herrera Guerra, Jorge, "Las sanciones del derecho internacional", *Agenda internacional*, Vol. 4, No. 10, 1998, p. 115.

vior of the sanctioned State. It is therefore essential, in order to determine the legality of the measures and their correct qualification as international sanctions, to unravel what type of modification is being sought.

A common element in several of the current sanctions regimes is the purpose of forcing a change in the political regime of the "target" States, rather than correcting violations of international law. This type of pressure measures on sovereign states has no international legal basis. The International Court of Justice has ruled against the use of coercive methods with regard to choices that should remain free, such as the choice of their political, economic, social, cultural and foreign policy formulation.[7]

The stated purposes of sanctions and their true objective or ultimate aim highlight the recurrent contradiction between "ought" and "might" in international law. The real objectives of the "sanctioners" may differ from those that have been made public. The boundaries between legitimate foreign policy actions and acts in violation of international law are thus blurred.

It should be recalled that unilateral coercive measures can only exceptionally be considered lawful when they seek to induce a State to comply with the obligations arising from the relationship of responsibility resulting from the commission of an internationally wrongful act. Consequently, objectives naturalized in international legal literature[8] and practice, such as changes in the internal or foreign policy of a State, its destabilization, as well as showing disapproval of its actions or even responding to conflicts between internal political forces in the sanctioning country, create a hierarchy between "sanctioners" and "sanctioned" that contradicts the horizontal structure of the international system, as long as they are not related to or go beyond the cessation of a violation of international law.[9] This type of measures, adopted as a kind of international punishment, are incompatible with the principle of sovereign equality of States.

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[7] Military and Paramilitary Activities (Nicaragua v. United States of America), STC I.C.J. de 27 de junio de 1986.

[8] Del Olmo Díaz, Marçal, *La práctica de las sanciones…, cit.* pp. 14-16; Cetina Contreras, Álvaro, Natalia Serrano Cortes and Laura Torrado Rojas, "Análisis de las sanciones económicas en el derecho económico internacional", *Tesis de grado*, pp. 53-54; Téllez Núñez, Andrés, "Una mirada a la vivencia del derecho internacional desde la perspectiva de las sanciones económicas unilaterales", revista *Derecho del Estado*, No. 42, 2019, pp. 311-338.

[9] Hofer, Alexandra R., "Creación y contestación de la jerarquía: efecto punitivo de las sanciones en un sistema horizontal", *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals,* 125, 2020.

Sovereignty is a pillar of interstate relations. Its double affirmation is generally accepted: internally as the supreme authority to make decisions and enforce them in a given territory and with respect to a given population; externally as the absence of supreme international authority, which implies the independence of States.[10] It is expressed in the principle of sovereign equality of States, a peremptory norm of customary international law, codified in Article 2(1) of the Charter of the United Nations and developed by the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations of 1970.[11]

The sovereign equality of States is consubstantial with the horizontality of the international legal order and refers fundamentally to legal equality, without ignoring the enormous de facto inequalities between States.[12] As a structural principle of international law, it is expressed in normative, formal and existential practice.[13] The plurality of the international legal order is based on it, insofar as it guarantees the freedom of States to choose and develop their own political, social and economic systems. It implies the right of States to their existence, embodied in their territorial integrity and political independence, which is linked to the principle of refraining from intervening in their internal affairs. That is why sanctions that openly or covertly propose a change of regime, as well as those that unilaterally qualify and treat sovereign States as "criminal", "failed" or "illegal" deprive them of their sovereign rights,[14] undermining the international legal order in terms of sovereign equality, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and other principles such as good faith and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The limitations of the collective security mechanism of the United Nations related to the veto of the permanent members of the Security Council, who can block the application of international sanctions, should not be replaced by the unilateral action of countries with sufficient power to apply coercive measures in "defense of the common good". This practice not only undermines the au-

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[10] Brotóns, Antonio Remiro, *et al.*, *Derecho internacional Curso general*, pp. 89-93.

[11] Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, G.A. Res 2625 (XV), U.N. Doc. A/RES/25/2625 (24 October 1970).

[12] Diez de Velasco Vallejo, Manuel, *Organizaciones internacionales*, pp. 168-169.

[13] Hofer, Alexandra R., *Creación y contestación de la jerarquía…*, *cit*., p. 17.

[14] Simpson, Gerry, *Great Powers and Outlaw States Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order*, p. 55.

thority of the universal organization, but also creates the conditions to clothe acts in violation of the international legal order with apparent legality.

The argument that the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States must give way to the "democratic principle" is legally erroneous and politically dangerous for the preservation of international peace and security. Today there is an emerging principle, based on the practice of States and certain international organizations –notably the European Union and the Organization of American States– in favor of the development of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which grants individuals and peoples the right to be governed democratically. However, it cannot yet be considered as a fundamental or structural principle of international law, on a par with the principle of non-intervention.[15]

The tension between the emergence of the democratic principle and the validity of the right of States to freely choose their political system is palpable in contemporary international society. Every day, examples are reported of how powerful states impose unilateral coercive measures under the pretext of favoring the establishment of democratic regimes in all parts of the world, with effects radically contrary to these "democratizing" objectives. This pattern of behavior in turn reveals a contradictory positioning of the promoters of democracy, which goes so far as to violate fundamental norms of international law.

The success of these intrusions into the conduct of another sovereign state –with regime change as the ultimate expression– is only possible because of the profoundly unequal essence of international society, expressed in all spheres of international relations. The marked asymmetry between developed and underdeveloped countries is what allows the former to "influence" the latter, bending their will. In such circumstances, the "sanctioners" perceive themselves as subjects with the power and the "responsibility" to defend international legality. This implies a unilateral evaluation of the conduct of the "offending" country and the extraterritorial application of the sanctioned country's domestic law, sifted by its national interests. As a result, a system of standards, norms, values or patterns of conduct is imposed, not necessarily international or written, which may be alien to the sanctioned country and even to the international legal order.[16]

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[15] Díaz Barrado, Cástor M., *El Derecho Internacional del tiempo presente*, pp. 76-98.

[16] Álvarez Zárate, José M., "Las sanciones económicas internacionales", *Con-Texto*, 3, 1998, pp. 50-56.

On the other hand, in recent years there has been growing international concern about the negative impact of coercive measures in general, and in particular those of an economic nature. Particularly alarming has been the deterioration of basic human rights such as life, food and health of civilian populations as a consequence of the application of international sanctions.[17] This "collateral damage" is often a result calculated to catalyze the regime change pursued by the sanctions, which not only violates the most elementary ethical and moral principles, but also the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and International Humanitarian Law. Additionally, the harmful effect of this conduct on the development of the sanctioned countries and the international economy undermines the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the international community in 2015.[18]

As outlined above, the increase and diversification of conflicts, globalization and interdependence have favored the perception of unilateral coercive measures as valid alternatives to the use of force, regardless of their legality. Their lower economic cost, compared to military action, for the country applying them and their better international reception have made economic sanctions measures the tool of choice of the major powers. However, as has been pointed out, their high impact on the economy and life of "target" states can often be equated with that caused by the use of force.[19]

This new reality has fueled the debate on the objective scope of the principle of prohibition of the threat and use of force, as a general peremptory norm of customary law enshrined in Article 2(4) of the Charter. The majority of the iuspublicist doctrine continues to affirm that the use of force is reserved almost exclusively to armed force,[20] thus excluding political and economic coercion.[21]

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[17] Rahmat, Mohamad, "Unilateral Sanctions in International Law…", *cit.,* pp. 74-75; Milaninia, Nema, "Jus ad bellum economicum…", *cit*., pp. 99-100; De Waar, Paul, "Economic Sanctions Infringing Human Rights: Is There a Limit?", in Ali Z. Marossi and Marisa R. Bassett (eds.), *Economic Sanctions…, cit.*, pp. 125-145; Simonen, Katariina, "Economic Sanctions Leading to Human Rights Violations: Constructing Legal Argument", in Ali Z. Marossi and Marisa R. Bassett (eds.), *Economic Sanctions…, cit.,* pp. 179-197.

[18] Gordon, Joy, "Unilateral Sanctions: Creating Chaos at Bargain Rates", in Surya P. Subedim (ed.), *Unilateral sanctions in International Law*, pp. 87-106.

[19] Milaninia, Nema, "Jus ad bellum economicum…", *cit*., p. 108.

[20] *Ibidem.*

[21] A la confirmación de esta postura tributan el proceso codificador de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y las negociaciones de posteriores resoluciones de la Asamblea General de la organización, donde no fue aceptada la propuesta de incluir la coerción económica entre los usos

It seems too early to consider the normative framework of the Charter in this matter as superseded, however, it is not idle to reevaluate the scope of the use of force in the context of unilateral coercive measures aimed at regime change.

The abuse by one State of its dominant position in international relations to directly or indirectly demand a change of policy from another sovereign State is based on the same reasons why States have traditionally resorted to war, transgressing diplomatic, ethical and moral principles. Unilateral coercive measures are not peaceful means of settling international disputes, and their potential for endangering international peace and security grows with their destructive capacity in "target" States. Consequently, it would not be unreasonable in the future for them to be classified as acts of violence or unauthorized uses of force.[22]

This argument gains force when it comes to unilateral coercive measures under the term "economic warfare"[23], whose impact on civilian populations can reach proportions similar to those produced by conventional military attacks.[24] Even when these measures are intended to redress an international wrong, if they additionally pursue economic, political or territorial objectives and benefits contrary to the interests of the "target" States, they could be considered acts of war because of their intentionality, scope and destructive potential.[25]

Economic and financial measures aimed at regime change are generally classified as economic warfare insofar as they seek to alter the normal development of international economic, commercial and financial relations without any real justification, by means of excessive violence. Their ultimate objective of political, economic and social destabilization of the affected countries is incompatible with current international law.

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de la fuerza. El uso del término, tanto en el preámbulo de la Carta, como en los artículos del 43 al 47, también apunta en este sentido. Por otra parte, algunas interpretaciones amplias de la Resolución 42/22 de la Asamblea General pretenden acoger la posición contraria. Diez de Velasco, Manuel, *Instituciones…*, *cit*., pp. 1069-1072.

[22] Álvarez Zárate, José M., "Las sanciones…", *cit*., p. 52.

[23] Cetina Contreras, Álvaro, Natalia Serrano Cortes, and Laura Torrado Rojas, *Análisis de las sanciones económicas…, cit*., pp. 14-16; Joyner, Daniel H., "International Legal Limits on the Ability of States to Lawfully Impose International Economic/Financial Sanctions", in Ali Z. Marossi and Marisa R. Bassett (eds.), *Economic Sanctions…, cit.,* pp. 83-95.

[24] Milaninia, Nema, "Jus ad bellum economicum…", *cit.,* pp. 83-95.

[25] Téllez Núñez, Andrés, "A look at the experience of international law…", *cit.,* pp. 311-338.

The absence of a specific international regulation of unilateral coercive measures and of an impartial authority empowered to control their legality and effectiveness not only reflects, but deepens the inequality in international relations, hindering peace and international cooperation and weakening the international legal order.

Unilateral sanctions have often been openly associated with the objective of a change in the political-ideological system, the initiation of transitions or the calling of presidential elections in the "target" State, under the gnoseology of third States on democracy. Such pretensions are based, as Sepúlveda pointed out, on the inequalities in the international order, resulting from the assimilation of the condition of "power" by some nations such as the United States, the European Union (EU), Canada and Australia, based on their real superiority in economic, military and technological terms.

The interests of the "sanctioning" states are related not only to the better development of international relations, but also to the assumption by other states of specific internal models of political-state organization. Each unilateral coercive action aimed at making another State exercise its internal and external powers in accordance with the expectations of the "sanctioner" has repercussions not only on the actions of the "target" State, but also on the life of the social actors within it, whatever their status.

Unilateral coercive measures, particularly economic ones, often do not in themselves achieve the intended change in the political system of the "target" state. They do, however, cause unquantifiable damage to institutional structures and the lives of the population. At present they have delayed or nullified options for economic, social, labor, cultural and educational development. In particular, they have hindered the optimal way in which the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic should be circumvented.

3. CUBA: A SANCTIONED COUNTRY?

With the 1959 Revolution, a model of political and legal subordination between the United States and Cuba was broken. It quickly led to a confrontation of interests between the two states, which dominates bilateral relations to this day. It marked the international positioning of the Cuban state. The foreign policy of the new government of the Island was articulated around a marked preponderance of national interest, the defense of sovereignty and self-deter-

mination. This quickly led to a confrontation of interests that came to dominate Cuba-US bilateral relations to the present day.

On February 3, 1962, President John F. Kennedy announced the decision to prohibit the exchange of goods and services with Cuba, in Proclamation 3447 "Embargo on All Trade with Cuba".[26] This prohibition, historically presented as a response to the nationalization of U.S. properties in Cuba, transcended from its genesis the Cuban-U.S. relations as it had its cause in a regional collective action as a result of the exclusion of Cuba from the Organization of American States (OAS). Thus began a long history of unilateral actions that constitute the hard core of the hostile US policy towards Cuba.

This trade ban has been expanding and nurtured by the initiatives of each new U.S. administration, always with the aim of imposing more restrictions and brakes on the Cuban economy. The measures have originated both in the executive and in the U.S. legislature, which has led to a convergence of regulations of different nature and scope, with a multiplicity of mechanisms for their modification, termination and abrogation, which does not allow in any scenario the automatic elimination of the penalties against Cuba.

Among the laws and sections of laws that make up the normative framework of this policy can be mentioned, following the most recent Report of Cuba to the General Assembly of the UN: Trade with the Enemy Act of 1917, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, Export Administration Act of 1979, Cuban Democracy Act (Torricelli Act) of 1992, Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (Helms-Burton Act) of 1996, Section 211 of the Supplemental and Emergency Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999 and the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000. In addition, other regulations to which the aforementioned regulations refer are indirectly applicable.

The vocation of permanence in time of these legal instruments guarantees the continuity of the policy of strangulation towards Cuba, even beyond the particular vision of whoever occupies the White House. With these norms, Washington intends to legislate all aspects of life - commercial, political, electoral, etc. - of another equal in international society, Cuba in this case. In this line, it goes so far as to make explicit, with potential legal consequences, the treatment that the US will give to third States that do not assume as their own the po-

[26] Proclamation 3447-Embargo in all trade with Cuba (February 03, 1962) [online], Available online: https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-3447-embargo-all-trade-with-cuba

sitions of the northern power *vis-à-vis* the Caribbean archipelago. Laws such as Torricelli and Helms Burton constitute clear violations of the principles of sovereign equality and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States as set forth in International Law, for the violation of which no State can hide behind its domestic law.

The rhetoric in these regulations, particularly visible in the Helms Burton Act, revolves around the supposed "support for the people of Cuba", while establishing restrictions on trade, transactions with Cuba, travel to and from the island, the purchase and sale of property in which Cuba or Cuban nationals have an interest, among others. The Act goes beyond anything imaginable by explicitly providing for how a change of government should be implemented in Cuba. Throughout the Helms-Burton Act, 75 times the President of the United States is granted prerogatives related to the Cuban political development, such as: promoting in the Security Council a mandatory international embargo similar to the one applied in Haiti; encouraging other countries to restrict trade and credit relations with Cuba in a manner consistent with the purposes of the Act; adopting immediate measures in order to apply the sanctions foreseen against countries that help Cuba; submit to Congress periodic reports on the progress of the implementation of the Act, including the status of Cuba's trade with third countries and the provision of assistance by third countries to Cuba; instruct the U.S. chief executive officers of international financial institutions to permanently oppose Cuba's access to such institutions until the President makes known his assessment that a democratically elected government exists in Cuba. In the same vein, the US President will provide assistance to individuals and independent non-governmental organizations in support of Cuba's democratization efforts; take the necessary steps to urge the OAS to create a special emergency fund specifically for the purpose of deploying human rights observers and supporting the holding of elections in Cuba, to which it will provide no less than $5 million as a voluntary contribution; among many others.

By 1996, Cuba was already a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and had made constitutional and legislative modifications to insert itself into the international value chain. In 1992 a constitutional reform had taken place, in 1994 the Foreign Investment Law and the Tax Law were enacted, and the Central State Administration was reformed. By that time, the interest of European, Canadian and even American capitals in the Island was growing, after the implementation of the first investments and the good pace of tourism. It is no coincidence then that this Law was passed, which, in addition to the desired transition to the democratic modality dissected in the law, focused on

distancing Cuba from trade, development aid and foreign investment, in order to continue betting on the worsening of the living conditions of the population in the midst of the economic crisis following the disappearance of the socialist camp.

The duration, extent and disproportion of the coercive measures applied by the United States in the case of Cuba reveal the true objective of this regime of so-called "sanctions". The creation of internal norms whose sole purpose is to intervene in the normal insertion of Cuba in the international system, seeks to legalize intervention in the internal affairs of the island. With this complex system of unilateral measures, the US not only intends to eliminate all forms of economic support for the Cuban government and ensure the failure of its public functions, but also to define the actions that will be supported in a foreign territory, supervised by the US President, to achieve the change of the political system sovereignly elected by the Cubans.

4. CONCLUSIONS

States may sovereignly determine the limits of their relations with other members of international society. Not all "unfriendly" actions violate international law, while a wide range of conduct constitutes retaliation, and others are considered countermeasures in response to internationally wrongful acts, subject to limits set by the international legal order. However, the subjects par excellence of International Law cannot impose, through their economic, political or military power, behavioral changes within the scope of the free choice of sovereign States, in correspondence with the current international legal system.

The analysis of some relevant sanctions programs reveals that, behind the declared objectives, the purpose of forcing a change of political regime in the "objective" State is glimpsed. The intention to bring about a fundamental change in the internal order of sovereign states has been revealed in these pages as incompatible with the constitutional principles on which international law is based. It has also been noted that in the practice of international relations, a set of simple violations of the international legal order are classified as sanctions. No unilateral coercive measure aimed at regime change in the "affected" State can be regarded as lawful. By classifying it as an international sanction, it is intended to dilute its true character as an international wrongful act, by covering it with an aura of authority.

The proliferation of coercive measures taken by great powers seeking regime change is a deliberate attempt to rewrite international law to suit their purposes. That is why there is a need for an international legal instrument that outlaws the use of sanctions outside the collective security mechanism of the United Nations and enshrines regime change as an illicit purpose, which in the case of economic sanctions can be equated to an act of economic warfare.

The duration, scope and disproportionality of the coercive measures applied by the United States in the case of Cuba reveal, behind the declared objectives, the purpose of forcing a change of political regime on the Island. The creation of internal norms whose sole purpose is to intervene in the normal insertion of Cuba in the international system, seeks to legalize the intervention in Havana's internal affairs. With this complex system of unilateral measures, the US not only intends to eliminate all forms of economic support for the Cuban government and ensure the failure of its public functions, but also defines the actions it will support to be carried out in a foreign territory (Cuba), supervised by the US President, in order to achieve the change of the political system sovereignly elected by Cubans.

In practice, Washington insists on qualifying as sanctions a set of simple violations of the international legal order. No unilateral coercive measure aimed at regime change in another state can be considered in accordance with the law. By labeling it as an international sanction, the intention is to dilute its true character as an illegal international act, by dressing it with an aura of authority.

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