

STATEMENT BY MR. E. AHAMED, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, ON  
AGENDA ITEM 41 – NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND  
FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST  
CUBA AT THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON  
OCTOBER 25. 2011

**Mr. President,**

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to address the General Assembly.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by Argentina on behalf of the G 77 and Egypt on behalf of the NAM.



**Mr. President,**

We meet yet again to deliberate on the agenda item: Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

In all these years, this Assembly has repeatedly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extra-territorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures that hurt the progress and prosperity of people the world over.

The General Assembly has also called upon all States to respect their obligations under the United Nations Charter and international law, as well as repeal and invalidate laws and measures that have "extra-territorial effects" on other States.

It is unfortunate that in spite its rejection by this august assembly, year after year, the US embargo on Cuba continues to remain in full force. We see this as a violation of the world opinion, and an act that severely undermines multilateralism and the credibility of the United Nations itself.

**Mr. President,**

The nearly half a century old US embargo on Cuba has brought immense suffering for its people. It has severely undermined the progress and development of the country. The embargo, which perhaps, has no parallel in history, is a transgression of the right of a sovereign state to development and to enjoy freedom of trade, economy and navigation.

On the one hand we, the global community, make tall promises on Millennium Development Goals, of striving for human dignity and achieving equitable growth, but when it comes to action, we do the exact opposite. The embargo has denied a life of respect and basic standard to the people of Cuba. Action, Mr. President, must speak louder than words.

The embargo, particularly through its extraterritorial effects, has adversely affected the economic prosperity of the Cuban people. The global economic slowdown along with spiraling food and energy prices has made matters worse.

The embargo has denied Cuba access to US market, investment, technology, financial services and scientific, educational, cultural and sporting institutions. Cuba has had to pay enormous extra cost for sourcing products, technology and services from third countries located thousands of kilometers away.

The extra-territorial application of the US embargo has discouraged investment, technology transfer and sale and other forms of business collaborations between Cuba and third countries.

The denial of technology and related scientific support, particularly due to extra-territorial application of the embargo, has severely impacted health care, an MDG commitment, in Cuba. It has also undermined its ability to provide health assistance to developing countries as part of South-South cooperation

**Mr. President,**

The report of the Secretary General on the agenda item is illustrative of the detrimental impact the embargo has had on international efforts to undertake socio-economic advancement in Cuba. The UN Resident Coordinator in Havana has noted the high cost and negative impact of the embargo on humanitarian and development cooperation implemented by the UN system in Cuba.

**Mr. President,**

There is huge potential for strengthening economic and commercial ties between Cuba and the United States.

Taking advantage of limited openings under the US Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, the US has become the largest exporter of agricultural products to Cuba.

Congressional efforts in the United States to relax or lift the embargo lend further credence to the UN annual resolutions calling for lifting of the US embargo against Cuba

People to people contact between the two countries remain severely curtailed.

The steps taken by the US Administration in January 2011 to reduce restrictions on travel and remittances to Cuba are positive developments. However, it is far from making a fundamental change in the complex framework of laws and regulations which are part of the embargo against Cuba. Much more needs to be done.

India joins other nations in calling for an immediate end to the US embargo against Cuba. India supports the resolution moved by Cuba.

I thank you.

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