

# Anti-Imperialist News Service

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## **Against the U.S. Blockade of Cuba**

*On September 27, Bruno Rodriguez, Deputy Foreign Minister of Cuba, presented Cuba's report on Resolution 59/11 of the UN General Assembly (concerning the U.S. blockade of Cuba). Below we excerpt parts of the introduction to this report.*

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba is the longest-lasting and cruelest of its kind known to human history and is an essential element in the United States' hostile and aggressive policies regarding the Cuban people. Its aim, made explicit on 6 April 1960 is the destruction of the Cuban Revolution: "to withhold funds and supplies to Cuba in order to cut real income thereby causing starvation, desperation and the overthrow of the government" (quoted from secret report by I.D. Mallory, a State Department official, declassified in 1991).

It is equally an essential component of the policy of state terrorism against Cuba which silently, systematically, cumulatively, inhumanly, ruthlessly affects the population with no regard for age, sex, race, religious belief or social position.

This policy, implemented and added to by ten US administrations also amounts to an act of genocide under the provisions of paragraph (c) of article II of the Geneva Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948 and therefore constitutes a violation of International Law. This Convention defines this as "acts perpetrated with the intention to totally or partially destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group", and in these cases provides for 'the intentional subjugation of the group to conditions that result in their total or partial physical destruction'.

The blockade on Cuba is an act of economic war. There is no regulation of International Law which justifies a blockade in times

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## **U. S. Offensive in Western Iraq Continues**

On October 6th, in a major foreign policy speech, President Bush vowed to continue the war in Iraq "for as long as it takes...area by area and city by city."

Even as Bush spoke, the U.S. military was stepping up its latest offensive operations in western Iraq.

On October 1st, thousands of U.S. troops, backed by helicopter gunships, stormed into the villages of Sadah, Karabilah, Rumana, and other towns on the banks of the Euphrates river, 180 miles northwest of Baghdad. Codenamed "Operation Iron Fist," the assault focused on the Qaim region of Anbar province near the Iraqi-Syrian border. U.S. military commanders have stated that scores of Iraqis have already been killed.

On October 4th, a second offensive, named "Operation River Gate," was launched in cities located near Haditha, Haqlaniyah, Barwana, and other sections in the same Euphrates River valley in western Iraq. An estimated 5,000 U.S. troops are carrying out the combat operations and launching raids throughout the region. Thousands of Iraqi civilians had fled the cities in advance of the operations. According to reports, airstrikes by U.S. warplanes and dozens of helicopters set off explosions that lit up Haqlaniyah, Parwana and Haditha before dawn on October 4th. Barrages of gunfire also were seen in the night sky, and large sections of Haqlaniyah were on fire.

Eyewitness reporters said that in Karabilah, U.S. troops met stiff resistance and the offensive slowed as Marine snipers fired from rooftops and U.S. helicopters flew overhead. A CNN journalist embedded with the Marines reported that families were fleeing their homes. Mohammed Hadithi, the head of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society in Haditha, charged that U.S. troops violated the rights of residents dur-

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## Against the Blockade of Cuba (from page 1)

of peace. Since 1909, in the London Naval Conference, as a principle of International Law it was defined that 'blockade is an act of war', and based on this, its use is only possible between countries at war....

By virtue of the blockade, among other restrictions, Cuba cannot export any product to the United States, or import any merchandise from this country: American tourists are prohibited from visiting; the dollar cannot be used in the country's transactions with foreign countries; the country has no access to the credit, and cannot carry out transactions with regional or American multilateral financial institutions and their boats and aircrafts must not enter American territory.

The blockade has a marked extraterritorial component. In 1992, with a view to intensifying the effects of Cuba's loss of 85% of its foreign trade after the Soviet Union and the European socialist block fell apart, the United States passed the Torricelli Act, which removed Cuba's ability to purchase medicines and food from US subsidiaries in third countries which stood at US\$718 million in 1991. The Torricelli Act placed tight restrictions on ships sailing to and from Cuba, thus making formal its serious extraterritorial provisions. A ship from a third country that docks in Cuban waters cannot enter a port in the United States until 6 months have passed and said country has obtained a new permission permit....

The 1996 Helms-Burton Act made the effects of the blockade worse, increased the number and scope of the provisions with an extraterritorial impact, instituted persecution of and sanctions on actual and potential foreign investors in Cuba and authorised funding for hostile, subversive and aggressive acts against the Cuban people.

According to preliminary, conservative estimates, the direct economic damage to the Cuban people resulting from the blockade is over US\$82 billion, an average of US\$1782 million annually. This figure does not include the more than US\$54 billion of direct damage occasioned by sabotage and terrorist acts encouraged, organized and financed in the United States nor the value of the goods not made nor the damage stemming from the onerous credit conditions imposed on Cuba. This year the damage amounted to US\$2,674 million.

The General Assembly's demand that this blockade policy be ended, contained in thirteen of the resolutions passed with the virtually unanimous support of the UN's member states has been defied by US authorities, thus confirming their total contempt for the United Nations, for multilateralism and for international law.

On 30 June 2004 the measures included in the report from the self-proclaimed "Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba" to which George W. Bush had given his ap-

proval on 6 May that year, came into effect. Its 450 pages contain proposal for new actions and measures intended to intensify the blockade by stepping up actions aimed at discouraging tourism and investment in Cuba, by restricting financial flow and visits to the island and by placing even more restrictions on family remittances and exchanges in various spheres, the aim being to bring about conditions which would allow the US to intervene in Cuba, thus permitting them to impose the "regime change" to which the US president made reference on 20 May of that year.

The period covered by this report -- the second half of 2004 and the first half of 2005 -- has witnessed the implementation of those measures; this once again proves the US administration's criminal plans for the Cuban people.

## U.S. Offensive in Iraq (from page 1)

ing house-to-house raids. The Marines "neglected the humanitarian standards," he said. "If the American people come and see [what] the army [is] doing to unarmed women and children, they would have disowned the army."

Bush's speech and the ongoing military operations again shows that U.S. imperialism will not get out of Iraq until it is forced to do by the combined struggles of the Iraqi people, the American people and the people of the world.

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