Seventy-eighth session
Agenda item 16 (a)
Macroeconomic policy questions: international trade and development

Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/191, entitled “Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries”. It contains the outcome of the monitoring by the Secretary-General of the imposition of such measures and a brief analysis of their impact on the affected countries, including the impact on trade and sustainable development. The report reflects the replies from Member States and selected international organizations to the note verbale sent by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. It also includes additional data collected by the Secretariat.

The responses from Member States indicate diverging views on unilateral economic measures. While most respondents expressed their disagreement with the imposition of unilateral economic measures, regarding them as an instrument of political and economic coercion against developing countries, some viewed such measures as admissible in certain circumstances. Such measures are viewed as being inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the multilateral trading system. Member States expressed concerns about the adverse impacts of unilateral measures on the sustainable development of affected countries. Multiple United Nations bodies reported detrimental impacts of unilateral measures on the development outcomes and human rights situations of affected countries. The number of unilateral economic measures has been increasing in recent years.

* The present report was submitted after the deadline so as to include the most recent information and to undertake additional review.
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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 76/191, entitled “Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries”, the General Assembly urged the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries that were not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or were inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations or that contravened the basic principles of the multilateral trading system and affect, in particular, but not exclusively, developing countries.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue monitoring the imposition of such measures, study their impact on the affected countries, including the impact on trade and development, and report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its seventy-eighth session.

3. Pursuant to that request, in a note verbale dated 10 April 2023, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs invited Governments of Member States and international organizations, including United Nations agencies and entities and the regional economic commissions, to provide any information they consider relevant for the preparation of the report.

4. The replies received from Member States by 15 June 2023 are reproduced in the annex to the present report.

II. Summary of replies received from Member States, United Nations bodies and international organizations

5. There are diverging views among Members States on the issue of unilateral economic measures. While some Member States deemed them admissible in certain circumstances, most respondents expressed their disagreement with the imposition of unilateral measures and consider them inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. They consider such measures contravene international law, as well as the freedom of international trade, navigation and finance. As a result, they have unintended ramifications for sustainable development and ordinary citizens, especially the most vulnerable.

6. Member States that identified themselves as countries affected by unilateral measures reported negative impacts of such actions due to their far-reaching effects on the rules-based international trading and financial systems, including the freedom of transit. Member States indicated that unilateral measures can engender severe humanitarian consequences and curtail vital economic sectors, including through overcompliance, thereby harming the welfare of the population. Some Member States reported that unilateral measures against their trading partners or neighbouring countries were imposing indirect economic costs on them owing to the decline in bilateral trade.

7. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia reported that 5 of the 21 countries and territories that it covers (Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Syrian Arabic Republic and Yemen) are currently being affected by unilateral measures. For example, on the Syrian Arab Republic, the organization reported that such measures contribute to disrupting social and economic sectors as well as humanitarian

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1 In the present report, “unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion” is abbreviated as “unilateral measures”. 

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assistance. Overcompliance seems to reduce the effectiveness of humanitarian exemptions in practice.²

8. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean reported that unilateral economic measures against Cuba had led to persistent socioeconomic costs. While the impact was most evident during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the measures had led to a negative structural imprint on the country’s economy and its long-term development prospects, including its pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. Although some measures were lifted in May 2022, their scope was very limited, and this has not led to any meaningful improvement in the lives of its people.³

III. Monitoring the imposition of unilateral measures and studying the impact of such measures on the affected countries

9. As of the end of June 2023, 71 unilateral economic measures against developing countries were in effect.⁴

10. The number of unilateral measures has continued to increase in recent years. Since the previous report on unilateral measures was issued in 2021 (A/76/310), six new measures have been introduced.⁵ There has been an increase in targeted unilateral measures that impose restrictions on selected individuals and enterprises in identified States and, in some cases, also sanction individuals and enterprises in third States who had commercial transactions with the targeted States.

11. There are reports that unilateral measures can exacerbate pre-existing socioeconomic challenges and have unintended adverse impacts on human rights⁶ and sustainable development.⁷ They can also limit access to critical health supplies, food and humanitarian assistance, especially during the onset of an emergency, often owing to “overcompliance”.⁸

² Response by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to the note verbale, received on 1 June 2023.
³ Response by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to the note verbale, received on 1 June 2023.
⁴ Department of Economic and Social Affairs database, on the basis of inputs from Member States and desk research.
⁵ Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, additional sources of information about unilateral measures have become available. These have augmented the ongoing monitoring by the Secretariat, increasing the comprehensiveness of its coverage.
⁶ Based on inputs from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
⁷ Based on findings of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.
⁸ Ibid.
Annex

Replies received from Member States and the European Union

Armenia

[Original: English]  
[31 May 2023]

The Republic of Armenia strongly condemns the imposition of the unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The position of the Republic of Armenia in this regard has been reiterated on numerous occasions, including in framework on the relevant United Nations Committees.

In the context of the enjoyment of human rights, the unilateral coercive measures are specifically detrimental for the vulnerable groups of the population, such as women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, socially disadvantaged families, unemployed persons, unregistered employees, refugees, etc.

Azerbaijan since 1991 and Turkey since 1993 have imposed unilateral coercive measures against Armenia by closing the land borders. In early May 2023, Turkish authorities cancelled permits of overflight through the airspace of Turkey granted to Armenian air operators by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. Prior to this, Turkey has often unilaterally revoked the permits granted to Armenian airlines to fly through its territory without any preliminary notice.

Moreover, Turkish authorities have regularly hindered the activities of foreign airlines, operating mainly charter flights to Armenia, as well as from Armenia using the airspace of Turkey. The imposition of the unilateral coercive measures against Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan, in particular, the land blockade, is a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including the Convention on Transit Trade of Land-locked States. Today, nearly 82 per cent of the land border of Armenia remains closed, including all roads, railways and pipelines connecting Turkey and Azerbaijan with Armenia. The unilateral coercive measures detrimentally affect Armenia’s economy, in particular the export of goods and pricing policy of imported goods, thus hindering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The unilateral coercive measures also undermine the exercise of human rights, including the right to the freedom of movement and the right to development.

The politicization and obstruction by Turkey of overflights of Armenian airlines constitute a direct breach of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, notably its provisions related to freedom of overflight and non-discrimination, and the International Air Services Transit Agreement, in particular its Article I, which defines that “Each contracting State grants to the other contracting States the following freedoms of the air in respect of scheduled international air services: The privilege to fly across its territory without landing”. These actions also have a negative impact on the safety and security of both Armenian citizens and foreign nationals.

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1 Some replies have been edited to adhere to the word limit.
The Republic of Belarus does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion and believes that such measures must be abolished as they violate the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and multilateral trade system. They negatively affect the sustainable development of targeted countries and violate basic human rights.

Unilateral economic measures cause significant harm to a whole range of sectors of national economy of the targeted country (including fulfilment of social obligations, the health-care sector, the education sector, the finance sector, machinery production, the petroleum industry, etc.), hinder trade and investment cooperation with foreign partners and prevent economic growth.

Unilateral sanctions are forcing Governments of targeted developing states to divert limited resources to alleviate the negative impacts of such measures on the population in general, and the most vulnerable groups, in particular. Thus, unilateral coercive measures, whatever form or nature they have, negatively affect the human right to well-being, to work, to decent remuneration, depriving people of confidence in the future.

Additionally, all types of unilateral coercive measures are associated with overcompliance, which exacerbates the negative impact of such unilateral sanctions and produces unintended and deeply problematic economic consequences without any potential remedy.

The following countries have imposed unilateral economic measures against Belarus:

1. European Union
2. United States
3. United Kingdom
4. Poland
5. Canada
6. Lithuania
7. Latvia
8. Estonia
9. Ukraine
10. Japan
11. Republic of Korea
12. Australia
13. New Zealand

The application of unilateral measures negatively affects the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals in Belarus and other countries.

The application of such measures hinders the use of international trade as a tool for sustainable development. This leads to reduced economic productivity, hinders technological upgrading and innovation, making it difficult to achieve sustainable economic growth (Goal 8: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic
growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”) and negatively impacts well-being.

Limited access to international financing hinders investments, including those aimed at creating and developing infrastructure, introducing innovations (Goal 9 “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”); in turn, this negatively affects the achievement of sustainable development of cities and settlements (Goal 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”).

Moreover, international financial institutions and banks, under excessive pressure from shareholders/states that apply unilateral coercive measures, are forced to limit their investment activities and suspend the financing of existing projects. Due to the use of international organizations by individual countries as platforms for exerting political pressure and achieving private goals, it is not possible to consider socially significant projects and allocate appropriate funding, which hinders the sustainable development of states. Sanction methods of influence through international organizations are unacceptable and contradict the goals and objectives of the international organizations themselves, specified in their statutory documents.

For instance, the participation of Belarus in the Central European Initiative, the Energy Charter Treaty, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (as an observer), the Northern Dimension regional initiative, the European Broadcasting Union, the European Union cross-border cooperation programmes and other regional formats of European cooperation was suspended, limiting access to financial tools and technical support for sustainable development.

Moreover, the International Olympic Committee recommended that international sports federations and organizers ban Russian and Belarusian athletes from participating in competitions. Belarusian athletes are prohibited from participating in competitions in figure skating, speed skating, short track, athletics, handball, volleyball, modern pentathlon, team competitions in tennis (Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup), ice hockey and weightlifting. Belarus is excluded from the governing body of the Paralympic Games.

The use of unilateral measures as a means of political and economic coercion is contrary to Sustainable Development Goal 17, which calls for increased international cooperation, increased international support, increased exports and strengthened the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Unilateral economic measures have a counteractive effect on imposing countries, equally threatening their own sustainable development. One example is as follows. According to the Lithuanian State Data Agency, in the first quarter of 2023, Lithuania’s real gross domestic product (GDP) was 2.7 per cent lower than in the first quarter of 2022. With GDP declining for the second quarter in a row, Lithuania is currently in a technical recession. The results of 2022 show a decrease in cargo trans-shipment at the Klaipeda State Seaport by 21 per cent. On January 5, on the air of the Ziniu Radijas radio station, the Minister of Communications and Transport of Lithuania, Marius Skuodis, said that Lithuania believes that the losses of the Klaipeda seaport may be associated with the refusal to reload fertilizers produced in Belarus. The minister noted: “The biggest losses are due to the fact that the port refused to trans-ship Belarusian fertilizers in the light of international sanctions.”

Referring to the restrictive measures imposed by the European Union and USA against the Belarusian Airlines and Belarusian airspace, Belarus finds these actions damaging to the normal functioning of international civil aviation, mutually beneficial inter-state cooperation, as well as people-to-people contacts.
The Belarusian side considers restrictive measures against Belavia as hasty, unprecedented, unsubstantiated and taken in violation of the international law.

The European Union ban on the use of Belarus’ airspace for flights not only creates unnecessary inconvenience for passengers and additional financial costs for airlines, but is also extremely dangerous for Europe’s ecology. The European Union’s decision to effectively ban European carriers from entering Belarusian airspace has had an unfortunate knock-on effect on the environment. Air traffic management agency EUROCONTROL estimates that the longer routes taken by airlines to avoid the former-Soviet nation are responsible for around an extra 250,000 kg of carbon dioxide emissions per day. Therefore, experts consider the boycott to be dangerous for the European ecology.

Sanctions imposed by Western countries (European Union, USA, Canada, UK, Lithuania) against the potash industry of Belarus have a direct negative impact on global food security.

The shortage of potash fertilizers on the world markets contributes to their scarcity and appreciation and, accordingly, leads to a decrease in their use, a decrease in crop yields, and increase in food prices. The situation in the world’s poorest countries is particularly dangerous, and could turn into a large-scale famine.

These conclusions are confirmed by authoritative international organizations and agencies including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the World Bank, the United Nations, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and others.

Burundi

[Original: English] [15 June 2023]

Like other countries, Burundi does not agree with unilateral economic measures as instruments of coercion against developing countries.

Burundi once again condemns the application of such measures, which constitute a flagrant violation of international law and seriously undermine the principle of sovereignty, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.

Even if there are countries that have been victims of coercive economic measures, we propose that the regimes for imposing these measures must take into account the humanitarian consequences, and exceptional measures must also be taken

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in certain cases for humanitarian reasons, because they have an impact on the most vulnerable population, in particular children, refugees and displaced persons.

**Cuba**

[Original: Spanish]  
[9 May 2023]

Cuba rejects the imposition of all unilateral economic coercive measures, since they are inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and contravene the principles of the multilateral trading system. Cuba considers these measures in violation of the sovereignty of developing countries, and an obstacle for national development programmes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba since 1962 constitutes a flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people. It is the most unfair, severe and prolonged unilateral system of sanctions that has ever been applied. It is destructive for the material, psychological and spiritual well-being of the Cuban people and impedes economic, cultural and social development, in the context of a global crisis.

Over the past few years, the blockade has been strengthened, with the inclusion of highly aggressive measures imposed during the Trump Administration and which, for the most part, remain in force.

Since 2019, the blockade has become more harmful and inhumane, with a reinforced extraterritorial component. The activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act; the prosecution of companies, ships and shipping companies that send fuel to the country; the arbitrary and unjustified inclusion of Cuba on the United States’ list of State sponsors of terrorism; the attack on all sources of income and foreign currency inflows to the country; the intimidation and prosecution of third parties; and the exertion of stronger pressure on Governments, banking institutions, business people and citizens around the world who have established or wish to develop economic relations with Cuba, have been consolidated as an essential part of the United States’ strategy to isolate Cuba and cause its socioeconomic collapse.

In just the first 14 months of the Biden Administration, the blockade caused $6,364 million in losses, representing more than $454 million per month and more than $15 million per day.

The continued application of the Helms-Burton Act, including the authorization to file lawsuits in United States under Title III of the Act, has further expanded the scheme designed to hamper the economic, commercial and financial relations between Cuba and third countries.

The continued inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism has worsened the dissuasive and intimidating impact of the blockade and made international trade and financial transactions more difficult. This has resulted in the termination of contracts, the loss of relations with banks, indebtedness, and delays in sending and receiving funds and goods, with incalculable costs for the Cuban people.

Not a single sphere of economic and social activities of the Cuban people is exempt from the destructive and destabilizing action imposed by this illegal policy.

As a result of the blockade, Cuba remains unable to trade with the United States, and it cannot use the US dollar in its international financial transactions or hold accounts in that currency in third country banks. It is also not allowed to obtain loans
from banks in the United States, from their branches in third countries and from international financial institutions.

At current prices, the cumulative losses in six decades of application of the policy amount to $154,217.3 million. Taking into account the performance of the US dollar against the price of gold on the international market, the blockade has caused losses of more than $1,391,111 million.

As a result, the Cuban economy has come under extraordinary pressures, reflected in a decline in consumption levels and general welfare of the population.

The blockade violates the right to life and health of all Cubans. The impact of this policy is reflected in the shortage of essential consumer goods, as well as the challenges faced by national industry in acquiring supplies needed for the production of pharmaceuticals and the provision of vital services.

Cuba is capable of producing more than 60 per cent of its essential medicines; however, this level has not been attained for months owing to the blockade on the country’s capacity to pay; the impossibility of accessing medical technologies with more than 10 per cent of components originating in the United States; the need to resort to alternative transportation routes; and the growing refusal of financial institutions to conduct operations with Cuba.

During the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, not a single measure to ease the blockade was applied. This hindered the delivery of donations and syringes to the country to support the vaccination process; the procurement of cylinders, spare parts and other components required for the supply of medical oxygen; and the purchase and transport of indispensable materials for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19, as well as for the research, production and evaluation of Cuban vaccines against the virus.

The impact of the blockade is not limited solely to Cuba. Through pressure and scandalously anti-democratic and interventionist practices, the United States aims to make all other countries and international organizations abide by its political decisions regarding Cuba.

Not even in disasters has the interventionist policy of maximum pressure applied by the United States allowed the country to recover rapidly and appropriately.

Recently, Cuba experienced a period of great distress due to a large-scale fire at the supertanker base in the province of Matanzas, which caused regrettable human and material losses. While dozens of nations, friends and Cubans living abroad showed their solidarity with Cuba, the blockade continued to hinder the arrival of international aid to the country.

Cuba has made systematic efforts to attain energy stability under complex conditions, given the insufficient readiness of power plants resulting from the lack of fuel, spare parts and other essential resources for their repair and maintenance. The few providers that have decided to continue supplying Cuba with these products have increased their prices considerably based on risk.

The data do not illustrate the true impact of these outcomes on the daily lives of Cubans, nor the constant stress generated by the intermittent interruptions to electricity service, despite the Government’s willingness and efforts to solve this problem.

Under these circumstances, Cuba is deeply grateful for solidarity it has received, the steady demands within United States and Cubans living abroad, as well as the near-unanimous rejection of this cruel system of unilateral coercive measures by the international community.
Three decades since the first United Nations General Assembly resolution against the blockade, the Government of United States continues to ignore the Assembly’s many pronouncements calling for it to unconditionally eliminate its failed, unilateral and criminal policy against Cuba.

**European Union**

[Original: English]
[14 June 2023]

The European Union decides sovereignly on its foreign and security policy and adopts within its jurisdiction any measure it considers necessary to advance its foreign policy interests, in full compliance with its international obligations. The Union foreign and security policy has among its objectives to consolidate democracy, rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law, to maintain peace, prevent conflicts and consolidate international security, in conformity with the objectives and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Union restrictive measures are peaceful means aiming to bring about a change in policy or activity by a given country, part of country, government, entities or individuals, in line with the Union’s foreign policy objectives. The Union’s restrictive measures are targeted, temporary measures, which are regularly reviewed and adapted to take into account developments on the ground. They are of a temporary and reversible nature.

**Honduras**

[Original: English]
[31 May 2023]

The Republic of Honduras reaffirms its respect for the fundamental principles on which contemporary international law and the United Nations are based, as well as the primacy of the Charter of the United Nations. The Republic of Honduras objects to all forms of unilateralism, including threats or the application of sanctions or unilateral coercive measures, even more so those that for decades have not yielded any positive result. The Republic of Honduras rejects the extraterritorial application of laws and/or the unilateral imposition of economic, commercial, financial blockades, and trade measures, while recalling that multilateralism is the only option and must be the shared commitment of the international community, as well as the only way to contribute to the development of all peoples.

Along the same lines, Honduras wishes to emphasize that unilateral coercive measures are a major impediment to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable development in general. Honduras also highlights the socioeconomic impact of unilateral coercive measures, which have negative repercussions on the capacity of targeted States to respond efficiently to the interrelated and cascading challenges confronting humanity, and recalls the obligation of states to lift and refrain from imposing those sanctions.

**Malawi**

[Original: English]
[15 June 2023]

Unilateral coercive measures play a harmful role in the social and economic development of developing countries illegally subjected to such measures. The number and scope of unilateral coercive measures has expanded in recent years, thereby heavily affecting the ability of affected countries to access development
finance, engage in free trade and investment, etc. The imposition of laws and regulations with an extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, against developing countries not only undermines the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law or the rules-based multilateral trading system, but also severely threatens the freedom of trade and investment.

Unilateral coercive measures hamper trade flows, negatively impact socioeconomic development in affected countries and slow their contributions to international sustainable development.

Nicaragua

[Original: English]
[31 May 2023]

The Government of Nicaragua is a firm defender of peace, justice, dialogue, self-determination, fair trade and unconditional foreign cooperation, as basic principles of respectful and sovereign relations among all nations, and part of our economic, social, environmental and cultural rights, to advance poverty reduction and good living for everyone, everywhere, leaving no one behind.

No country or group of countries can take upon itself the power to violate the sovereignty and legitimate right to development of peoples, under any mechanism, including financing for political destabilization, sanctions against government officials, lies/fake news, trade blockades, or pressure on multilateral organizations and banks to restrict access to financial resources. These measures directly affect citizens, especially the poorest, distancing developing countries from their goals of reducing overall poverty and eradicating extreme poverty.

Like Cuba, Venezuela, Russia, China, Iran and other countries that do not align themselves with the positions of the United States and its allies, the Nicaraguan people have been and continue to be affected by restrictive and coercive measures aimed at affecting the political, economic and social development of the country. The strategy of the United States and its allies has been oscillating between interventionism in the administration of institutions and institutional blackmail and extortion, to achieve its foreign policy goals, originally expressed in the “Monroe Doctrine” and “Manifest Destiny”.

Among the unilateral, arbitrary, illegitimate, inhumane and unjust measures, which they have applied to Free and Sovereign Nicaragua, are:

(a) Act 115-335 of 2018, of the 115th Congress of the United States (still in force), referred to by its short name as the “Nicaraguan Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Act”, aimed at opposing the Government of Nicaragua from accessing loans or other financial or technical assistance from international institutions, including the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank;

(b) The Global Magnitsky Act, applied by the United States against Nicaragua since 2018 (still in force), imposing arbitrary sanctions against more than 60 public officials and institutions of the State and Government of Nicaragua. For their part, the European Union has sanctioned 21 officials and 3 institutions; the United Kingdom imposed sanctions against 8 officials; and Canada applied sanctions against 11 officials. In reality, these measures are intended to break the institutional structure of the country to reduce the capacity to generate public goods and services that satisfy the human needs of the Nicaraguan population;
(c) The United States is pressuring Nicaragua with possible reductions to the benefits of the Free Trade Agreement between the United States, Central America and the Dominican Republic, in the framework of the RENACER Act, enacted by President Biden in November 2021, indicating the revision of the participation of Nicaraguan products in free trade between the countries;

(d) The United States and its allies have applied restrictions to the entry of foreign investments in Nicaragua, through intimidation and disinformation actions, to limit foreign companies and/or investors, mainly of United States origin, to invest in Nicaragua.

An estimate of the accumulated losses in economic transactions due to the failed coup attempt in Nicaragua, financed by the United States, is approximately $17 billion for the period 2018–2023 (more than three times the real GDP of 2022). At least 26 projects have been affected by the coercive measures, which encompass an amount of $1,418.3 million, as an effect of having gone from an average loan contracting of $819.44 in the period 2014–2017 to $291.09 in the period 2018–2021.

In 2021, Nicaragua exported 456,310 tons of sugar to the world (50 per cent of which was destined for the United States market, which was the initial quota that the United States granted to Nicaragua under the WTO quota). As of 2023, Nicaragua has not been able to export 22,114 tons of sugar to the United States. Under the WTO Uruguay Round Agreements (1995), the United States committed to a total tariff rate quota allocation for raw sugar set at over 1.11 million tons for 40 countries (including Nicaragua). On July 21, 2022, the United States published in the Federal Register the 2022–2023 WTO quota allocation, in which Nicaragua was excluded.

Nicaragua respects international law and demands reciprocity. It advocates for a fair, equitable and solidary multipolar world that reduces poverty and inequalities around the world. We will continue to strongly defend peace and implement our Model of Christian Development and Solidarity, for the well-being of our families and communities.

We demand the immediate cessation of all coercive measures applied to any country in the World and we claim the right of all peoples to decide their future without interference of any kind. There are many challenges to be overcome by Humanity as a whole, especially Poverty and Climate Change, so it is no longer appropriate to continue pretending at all costs to maintain a hegemony in decline, which only brings suffering and harm to the inhabitants of the planet.

**Papua New Guinea**

[Original: English]
[24 May 2023]

Under international law this is not allowed.

**Russian Federation**

[Original: English]
[5 June 2023]

Such measures, taken in circumvention of international law, are illegitimate, contrary to the generally accepted principles of free trade and investment, as well as fair competition. They undermine trust between countries and the role of the United Nations as the sole legal arbiter on this matter. The decision on the use of sanctions instruments can only be made by the Security Council in accordance with the provisions of Articles 39–42 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.
The nature of the measures: restrictive measures are both personal (in relation to individuals and legal entities) and sectoral in nature, including trade, investment and financial prohibitions.

Countries imposing the measures: Australia, the European Union, Canada, Switzerland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Principality of Monaco, the Republic of San Marino, the Principality of Andorra, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of Iceland, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Albania, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, the United States of America, Singapore, Taiwan, New Zealand, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Bahamas, the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom, the United States, the United Kingdom, the United States, the United Kingdom, the United States, the United Kingdom, the United States, the United States, the United States, the United States, the United States, the United States, the United States, the United States, the United States, Ukraine. 10

Dates when the measures were imposed: After 2014, since then, in total, more than 14,000 sanctions have been imposed. As of mid-May 2023, the United States added more than 1,500 Russian citizens and more than 1,400 legal entities to its restrictive lists; the EU – more than 1,200 people and 600 legal entities; the UK – more than 1,300 people and 100 legal entities.

It is planned to freeze bank accounts, seize real estate and other assets of state authorities and large businesses, as well as a ban on their entry into countries imposing restrictions. Restrictions on financial transactions and loans have affected certain Russian companies, including large banks. There is a de facto ban on export of certain types of equipment and technologies to Russia. Large-scale transport and logistics restrictions are involved, affecting both international trade and the freedom of movement of citizens.

Economic sanctions attempt to put pressure on Russia’s sovereign foreign policy. The human rights and humanitarian component of anti-Russian restrictions is crucial. In practice, the principle of collective responsibility of residents of individual regions for the desire to make full use of basic civil rights and freedoms, primarily the right of peoples to self-determination, is being implemented.

For many years now, the “collective West” has been replicating sanctions as an instrument of pressure on the sovereign foreign and domestic policy of independent states. In broad terms, it is with the help of such a neo-colonial approach that Western countries seek to subordinate other countries to their world order – indisputable, uncontested, rules-based and subject to the standards of the United States and its allies.

Russia today has become the main target of the West’s restrictive campaign. The use of an unprecedented arsenal of anti-Russian restrictions and prohibitions has all the signs of an economic war, the goals and means of which are incompatible with the universal principles of peaceful coexistence, sovereign equality, mutually beneficial cooperation, universal socioeconomic development and prosperity.

Sanctions lead to the disintegration of the world economy, its division into separate blocks. In the future, fragmentation will intensify, accompanied by new restrictions on the cross-border movement of capital, labour and international payments. Current trends, among other things, are already creating obstacles to multilateral cooperation in the provision of global public goods, undermining collective efforts to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

10 The country listing is as submitted by the Russian Federation.
Of particular concern is the trend towards a wider use of economic restrictions of an extraterritorial nature, the so-called secondary sanctions. Such actions amount to some form of blockade and violate the basic norms of international humanitarian law, and create an atmosphere of toxicity and intimidation.

The principle of responsibility of “third” countries, their authorities, citizens and businesses for maintaining and developing mutually beneficial trade and economic relations with those against whom restrictive actions have been applied is introduced into the practice of inter-state relations. In fact, we are talking about interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, the neo-colonial practice of forcing compliance with illegal restrictions through direct pressure on the sociopolitical elites of the focus countries.

Syrian Arabic Republic

[Original: English]
[31 May 2023]

Syria has been subject to layers of unilateral coercive measures, particularly economic and financial measures by the United States, the European Union, and other western countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia.

The European Union has extended its unilateral measures against Syria until 1 June 2023. The United States continues to strengthen its unilateral measures through the so-called “Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019” aiming to impose a complete economic blockade on Syria, to hinder the Government’s rebuilding efforts, as well as to target third parties if they contribute to Syrian national efforts, including efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda, which represented a clear manifestation of economic terrorism. This Act represents the biggest obstacle to improving the humanitarian and living conditions of Syrians, access to basic services and creating conditions for the voluntary, dignified and safe return of refugees.

Syrians have been suffering since the 1970s from unjust and unilateral measures imposed by the United States in violation of international law and based on fabricated pretexts. After the outbreak of the terrorist war on Syria in 2011, successive United States administrations and their allies in the European Union intensified their sanctions and expanded their scope.

The aforementioned coercive measures continue despite international and United Nations appeals to end them, and to help Syria recover from the effects of the devastating earthquake of 6 February 2023, which claimed thousands of lives and caused massive damage to infrastructure, services and property. Those who imposed these illegal measures ignored the request of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to lift measures that impede the COVID-19 pandemic response.

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms, as confirmed by the United Nations, and international and independent human rights experts, that the alleged exceptions promoted recently by the United States and the European Union did not lead to any tangible results. They were rather aimed at alleviating criticism for immoral coercive measures after the earthquake.

Unilateral measures imposed on Syrian banks, including the Central Bank, by the European Union and the United States have led to the freezing or severing of financial relations with foreign banks and prevented essential financial transactions. This includes the purchase of vital supplies by creating difficulties for countries to supply basic commodities, increased prices and transportation costs and cancelled contracts due to overcompliance.
Unilateral measures imposed on public and private hospitals in Syria, including children’s hospitals, and the prevention of selling medicines and necessary medical equipment exacerbated the vulnerability of the health sector, including during the pandemic and the earthquake. Those measures limited access to vital drugs, blood derivatives and medical devices and their replacement parts, such as magnetic resonance imaging, high-precision diagnostic equipment, ambulances and mobile clinics and production lines for pharmaceutical industries. It also caused a shortage of medicine and undermined the capacity to produce and procure vaccines, cancer medicines, blood derivatives and specialized drugs.

Unilateral measures imposed on the import of energy supplies have caused an acute shortage of fuel for heating, transportation, cooking and power generation. Restrictions on the import of power stations and power-related equipment have deprived Syrians of heating and electricity for more than 20 hours per day, on average. The measures that affected the electricity sector have led to extensive damage to other vital sectors and basic services, including education, medical care and the operation of critical health equipment, such as baby incubators. The lack of electricity and restrictions on the import of water supply and treatment equipment have led to the spread of many diseases due to polluted water, including cholera. Depriving the industrial and service sectors of electricity caused economic losses, as international companies refrained from participating in projects for new plants or rehabilitating damaged power plants. In addition, renewable energy projects were affected, as many companies refrained from their financing or implementation.

Unilateral measures imposed on the import of heavy construction machinery and other construction equipment to Syria weakened its ability to deal with the repercussions of the earthquake, including operations to remove the debris and rubble of destroyed and damaged buildings and to build housing units for hundreds of thousands of earthquake victims.

Unilateral measures imposed on the import of fertilizers have caused irreparable damage to Syria’s agricultural production, contributed to food price increases, undermined food security, and caused acute malnutrition. The production of the wheat crop declined from 3.1 million tons in 2019 to 1.95 million tons in 2021, and to less than 1.7 million tons in 2022. The United States and the European Union continue, to date, to obstruct the supply of Russian grain and fertilizers withheld in Europe to Syria and other countries.

Unilateral measures imposed on Syrian air transport and civil aviation equipment affected the safety of civilian passengers and caused difficulties for international relief flights, before and after the disaster. Many international airlines were forced to use Beirut Airport for fear of the sanctions, which caused additional costs and delays for aid to reach the earthquake victims.

The unilateral measures led to an increase in inflation, a decline in the purchasing power of the Syrian pound, a decrease in the supply of goods and services, and an increase in production and transportation costs.

Some countries imposed unilateral coercive measures that hindered Syrian diplomatic missions from providing services to Syrians, including assistance with personal documents, documenting births, deaths, marriages and other essential matters.

Unilateral coercive measures have deeply affected the Government’s ability to provide basic citizen services and to address social, economic and health impacts of crises, especially the recent earthquake. Despite this, the Syrian Government is striving, within available capabilities, to secure basic supplies for its citizens and to provide health care, almost free of charge.
The allegations of the United States and the European Union that unilateral coercive measures do not target citizens, their living conditions and basic needs are misleading and aimed at avoiding humanitarian and moral consequences. In defending their positions, they make unethical allegations of the existence of exceptions that allow the provision of medical, nutritional and humanitarian needs of citizens of targeted countries to continue.

The United Nations should have a stronger position against unilateral economic measures, which contradict its Charter, and must exercise its power to call upon the countries that impose such measures to lift them without preconditions.

The Syrian Arab Republic stresses the need for the immediate, full and unconditional lifting of these measures, establishment of more effective United Nations and international mechanisms to support the targeted countries; as well as the need to hold the countries and entities that impose such measures accountable and to ensure their obligation to compensate the targeted countries for the lost development opportunities.

Türkiye

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[31 May 2023]

Regardless of the targeted country in question, Türkiye in principle enforces sanctions only imposed by the Security Council and does not automatically participate in unilateral restrictive measures and sanctions. Türkiye is of the opinion that unilateral sanctions hardly serve their purpose. To the contrary, most unilateral sanctions regimes prove to be counterproductive as they often harm the people rather than the regime of the targeted country.

While adopting this principled stance on unilateral sanctions, Türkiye takes the necessary measures to prevent attempts to bypass, evade or circumvent unilateral sanctions through Türkiye’s economic and commercial relations with the third parties.

Given the interconnected nature of the international economy and trade, unilateral sanctions have implications beyond the targeted country’s economy. The Turkish economy sustains the adverse impact of unilateral sanctions imposed on Russia by the United States, the European Union and other countries. While Türkiye is asked to join unilateral sanctions, no compensation mechanism is offered in return.

Moreover, Turkish banks and companies, particularly those which are foreign owned or have foreign partnerships, could be subject to risks, in particular with regard to secondary sanctions. In this regard, Türkiye gives due consideration to the potential exposure of the various sectors of its economy to third-party sanctions. The Turkish private sector could display overcompliance due to the chilling effect of the sanctions.

Sanctioning Iran unilaterally does not serve to the intended cause, but usually inflicts hardship on Iranian people and regional cooperation. As a neighbouring country, Türkiye’s bilateral trade volume with Iran has drastically decreased nearly by half, from almost $11 billion in 2017 to around $6.4 billion in 2022. As part of its protectionist economic policy to counter sanctions, Iran has considerably restricted imports from Türkiye. This has a negative impact on the implementation of the preferential trade agreement between the two countries.
The only accepted and legal measures are the ones taken by the Security Council.

Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela rejects the imposition of unilateral coercive measures as an instrument of political and economic coercion on developing countries or against any sovereign State, because such measures severely affect the standards of living and human rights of impacted countries.

The widespread use of unilateral sanctions and other punitive or restrictive measures constitute a serious violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and infringe upon the sovereignty of States. The General Assembly has described these measures as being illegal and violative in various resolutions.

Venezuela has established a special legal framework that allows it to cope with these coercive instruments. The National Development and Human Rights Guarantee Anti-Blockade Constitutional Act establishes, in its article 4, that, “The application of unilateral coercive measures is the use of economic, trade or other measures by a State, a group of States or international organizations acting unilaterally to compel a change of policy by another State or to put pressure on individuals, groups or entities of selected States in order to influence a course of action, without the authorization of the United Nations Security Council.”

In accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, Venezuela declares: “Any unilateral coercive measure and any other punitive or restrictive measure imposed on or implemented against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its population by another State or group of States, or by acts or omissions deriving therefrom, by international organizations or other foreign public or private entities, shall be invalid and unlawful.”

Unilateral sanctions affect targeted States as well as any State or transnational company that wishes to trade or establish economic relations with sanctioned countries in many ways. In Venezuela’s case, the measures have aggravated social problems and have affected State revenues, which have declined by 90 per cent.

The blocking of assets and impediments to bank transfers have caused a breakdown in the diplomacy of peace and cooperation, which has affected the disposition of the Government of Venezuela to maintain relations of sovereign equality between States.

Since 2015, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has been the subject of 930 unilateral coercive measures and other restrictive or punitive measures adopted by the United States, the European Union, Canada, and other States and international organizations, which have seriously impaired its development. Of the total number of

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12 Ibid. art. 6, p. 3.
measures against the country, 766 are direct sanctions and the rest (164) are restrictive measures.

The Office of Foreign Assets Control alone had adopted 441 measures as of May 2023. Sixty per cent of the sanctions imposed on Venezuela have targeted the national Government, public finances and the oil sector.

Sanctions have been imposed on 144 Venezuelan nationals and 14 foreign nationals, including representatives of commercial enterprises, oil companies and ship captains that conducted transactions or maintained some type of relationship with the Government.

United States’ sanctions against public bodies and private enterprises cover 156 entities. The penalized companies are concentrated in the oil and energy, commercial, transportation and technology sectors. Of the entities on the United States sanctions list, 143 are private, while 13 are public, thereby undermining the right to international trade.

The financial and economic blockade closed foreign trade, including access to food and medicines, and also cut off access to sources of financing, leading to a serious deterioration in the country’s external revenue and national production.

The blockade against Venezuela is a violation of fundamental human rights, which makes social development impossible. The indicators of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals showed that Venezuela was among the countries that made the most progress with respect to social rights in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Unilateral coercive measures have made commercial transactions using international payment platforms difficult. Between 2016 and 2023, Venezuela has had a total of $30 billion in resources withheld and confiscated in international banks and multilateral organizations.

The financial transaction monitoring system imposed by the United States on Venezuela has led to a paralysis in payments for the purchase of food and medicine. For example, payments have been blocked for essential medical equipment including for dialysis supplies and COVID-19 vaccines. Other impacts on the health sector include: deterioration of the public health infrastructure; reduction of the public budget allocated to the acquisition of medicines, supplies and equipment; difficulty in acquiring hemodynamic equipment for children with congenital heart disease, as well as anti-tuberculosis drugs, antimalarial medication, insulin, antiretrovirals, cancer medicines, chronic and transmissible diseases, haemodialysis equipment and spare parts for radiotherapy equipment; and paralysis of specific treatment programmes for cancer, HIV and other diseases that used to be offered free of charge to the population.

One of the negative impacts of the blockade on food is reflected in the nutrition index. In 2017, Venezuela had a nutritional deficit of 35.6 per cent, which represents the proportion of people not having minimum calorie intake per day, the highest level reached in the last four years. That affected the country’s most vulnerable population.

Despite this, the Government of Venezuela has implemented measures to mitigate the negative effects on children’s nutrition by boosting nutritional assessment and social recovery services.

Between 2017 and 2023, the State Department issued four executive orders (13808, 13835, 13850 and 13884) to block all operations and assets of PDVSA, the state-owned oil and natural gas company. Through those sanctions, American and foreign companies were forced to shut down their operations in Venezuela. Those actions resulted in, among other things, blocked payments, the prohibition of dividend
repatriation, sanctions against oil executives, lawsuits and the freezing of payments, accounts and assets.

“Overcompliance”, a form of excessive risk avoidance, has been applied to Venezuela. Since 2015, international banks have been blocking the national Government and closing its operations and contracts. This has led to the paralysis of transfers for food and medicine, with the food supply entities known as local supply and production committees being targeted. In 2016, half of the pharmaceutical transnationals, including Bayer, Sanofi, Novartis, Astra Zeneca and Merck, withdrew at the same time.

Recently, digital financial firm have pulled out of Venezuela, claiming that United States sanctions are risky for their business, as their activities are related to public financial entities in Venezuela. Previously, telecommunications companies stopped providing services to Venezuelan public satellites owing to the risk of sanctions. This hindered activities in public information, defence and health.