



ELDH European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights

WITH LAWYERS
IN 23 COUNTRIES

EJDM Europäische Vereinigung von Juristinnen & Juristen für Demokratie und Menschenrechte in der Welt

EJDH Asociación Europea de los Juristas por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos en el Mundo

EJDH Association Européenne des Juristes pour la Démocratie & les Droits de l'Homme

EGDU Associazione Europea delle Giuriste e dei Giuristi per la Democrazia e i diritti dell'Uomo nel Mondo

Equality Privacy Social Rights
No Racism Peace No Torture No War
Self-Determination of Peoples Democracy
Human Rights Rights of Migrants

Bologna, Donostia, Düsseldorf, Vienna, 07/05/2026

ELDH Statement

Condemning the Intensification of the United States' Unilateral Coercive Measures against Cuba

The European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights (ELDH) expresses its grave concern and unequivocal condemnation of the recent measures adopted by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba, as reflected in the Presidential Executive Order of 1 May 2026.

These measures constitute a significant escalation and consolidation of the longstanding regime of unilateral coercive measures imposed on Cuba. By expanding their scope and reinforcing their extraterritorial application to third States, foreign entities, financial institutions, and individuals engaged in lawful economic relations with Cuba, the United States has further entrenched a system of economic, commercial, and financial restrictions that amount to a comprehensive blockade. The tightening of constraints on international financial transactions, trade, travel, and access to global banking systems exacerbates the already severe limitations imposed on the Cuban economy.

ELDH underscores that such measures are manifestly incompatible with international law. They violate core principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States, the prohibition of intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of States, and the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of economic coercion to influence the sovereign decisions of other States. The extraterritorial enforcement of these measures further contravenes established norms governing jurisdiction and non-interference, as well as the principles of free and lawful international trade.

The cumulative and foreseeable impact of these measures on the Cuban population raises serious concerns under international human rights law. The restrictions imposed directly and indirectly

ELDH European Association of Lawyers for Democracy & World Human Rights

Co-President: Urko Aiartza (lawyer), Donostia, Basque Country

Co-President: Barbara Spinelli (lawyer) Bologna

Co-Secretary General: Thomas Schmidt (lawyer), Düsseldorf | E-Mail: Thomas.schmidt@eldh.eu | Phone +49 (0)172 68 10 888

Co-Secretary General: Serife Ceren Uysal (lawyer), Vienna | E-Mail: serifecerenuysal@gmail.com | Phone +43 664 4853347

Postal address: ELDH | Thomas Schmidt | Platanenstrasse 13 | D – 40233 Düsseldorf (Germany)

Website: www.eldh.eu

affect access to essential goods, including food, medicine, and medical equipment, thereby undermining the enjoyment of fundamental economic, social, and cultural rights. Even where formal humanitarian exemptions exist, over-compliance, banking restrictions, and fear of secondary sanctions often render such exemptions ineffective in practice. In this regard, ELDH recalls that unilateral coercive measures with indiscriminate humanitarian consequences may amount to collective punishment, which is prohibited under international law. ELDH further notes that measures deliberately designed to generate deprivation among the civilian population cannot be reconciled with the most basic requirements of humanity and international legality.

ELDH further notes that the legal and political justifications advanced by the United States for maintaining and intensifying these measures, including unilateral designations and security-based assertions, lack objective foundation under international law and cannot legitimize actions that otherwise violate peremptory norms and general principles governing international relations.

The Association also reiterates that the United Nations General Assembly has, on numerous occasions, overwhelmingly affirmed the illegality of the blockade against Cuba and called for its termination. Most recently, on 29 October 2025, the United Nations General Assembly once again adopted, by an overwhelming majority of 165 votes in favour, the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. Continued disregard for these resolutions undermines the authority of the international legal order and erodes multilateralism.

In light of the above, ELDH:

- Calls for the immediate cessation and repeal of all unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States against Cuba;
- Urges all States not to recognize, comply with, or give effect to the extraterritorial application of such measures, in accordance with their obligations under international law;
- Calls on the European Union and European States to reject the extraterritorial application of U.S. sanctions, to protect persons, companies and financial institutions within their jurisdiction from unlawful secondary sanctions, and to ensure that lawful trade and humanitarian cooperation with Cuba are not obstructed.
- Encourages legal practitioners, bar associations, and civil society actors, particularly within jurisdictions affected by these measures, to pursue all available legal avenues to challenge their legality and application;
- Reaffirms the necessity of accountability for violations of international law and international human rights law resulting from the implementation of such coercive policies.

ELDH expresses its solidarity with the people of Cuba and reiterates its commitment to the defense of their rights to sovereignty, self-determination, and development, free from external coercion. The Association remains ready to contribute, within its mandate, to legal and advocacy efforts aimed at upholding international law and protecting fundamental human rights in this context. ELDH will continue to stand with the Cuban people and with all peoples resisting unlawful coercion, blockade and imperial domination.