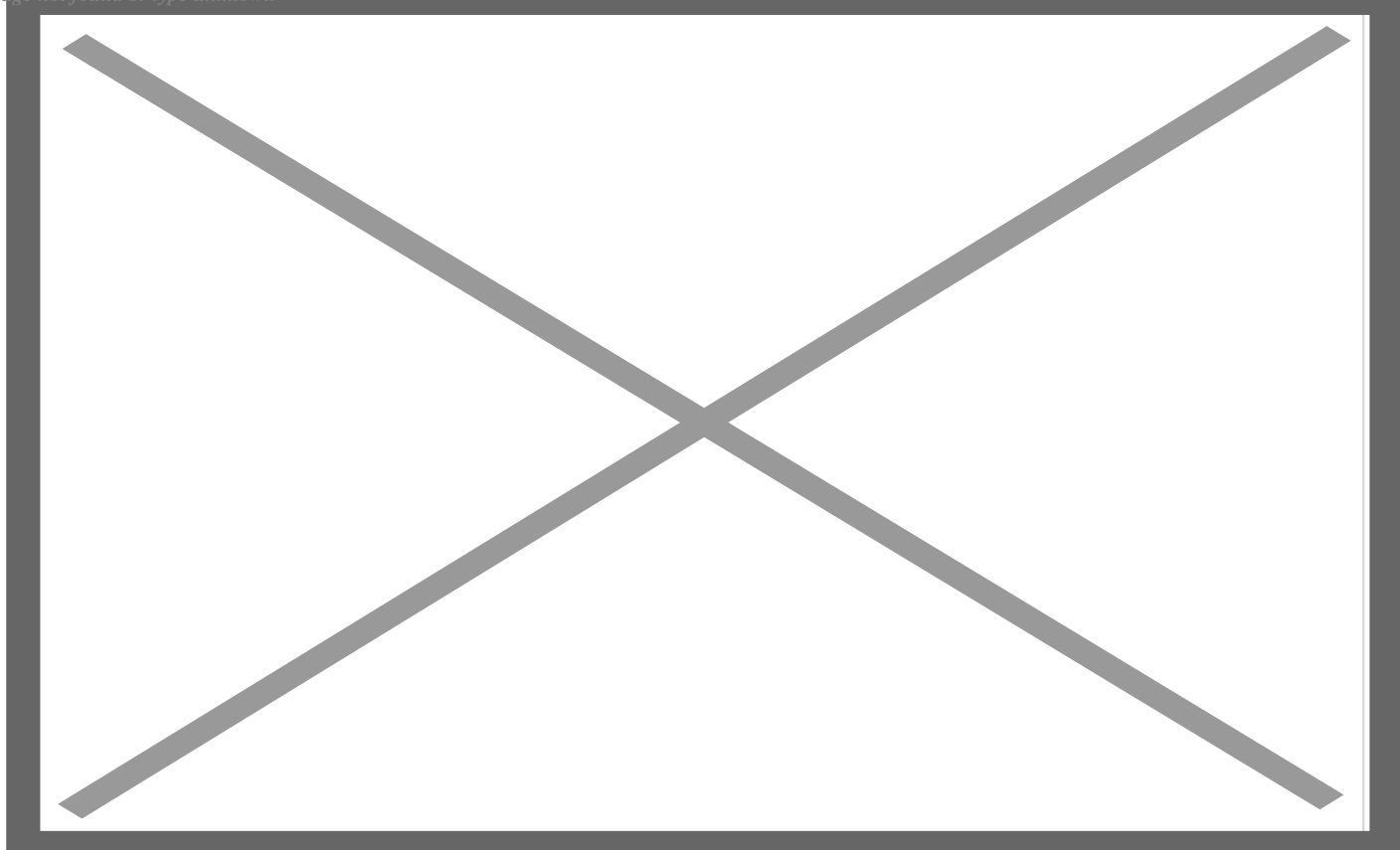


Cuba strongly rejects U.S. justification at the U.N. not to lift the blockade

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Cuba's Permanent Representative to the UN, Pedro Luis Pedrosa, uses the right to reply to the U.S. delegation this June 23, 2021, at the UN General Assembly.

New York, June 23 (RHC)—Cuba strongly rejected the reasons used by the U.S. representative at the United Nations General Assembly to justify its vote against the resolution demanding the lifting of the blockade that Washington has exerted on the island for six decades.

For the 29th occasion, the resolution was overwhelmingly approved by 184 votes in favor, two against the United States and Israel, and three abstentions: Colombia, Brazil, and Ukraine.

Speaking before the vote, U.S. diplomat Rodney Hunter said that sanctions were "one set of tools in Washington's broader effort toward Cuba to advance democracy, promote respect for human rights and help the Cuban people exercise fundamental freedoms."

"We recognize the challenges the Cuban people face. That is why the United States is a significant supplier of humanitarian goods to the Cuban people and one of Cuba's principal trading partners," Hunter said.

Using the right to reply, Cuba's Permanent Representative to the UN, Pedro Luis Pedroso, noted that "the U.S. delegation has been lying and twisting the events in this context. The blockade does not have any justification. It is contrary to the principles and practices of the United Nations Charter."

Pedroso added that the U.S. government could not present itself as a trade partner of Cuba because the blockade impedes economic trade and financial relations on a normal basis between both countries.

The Cuban diplomat stressed that the US is not a provider of medicine to Cuba since it has hampered the official avenues for sending this type of assistance.

Concerning human rights, Ambassador Pedroso said that a country that has been unable to address its systemic racism against people of Africa descent, where in the first six months of the year, 164 of such people have died at the hands of the police, and a country where the apology of hate is allowed, it has no moral authority to judge others.

Cuba, stressed its Permanent Representative to the U.N., has sufficient reasons to be proud of its record in human rights, and recalled that it has made much progress in their protection and enjoyment, despite its condition as a small island developing State, and the great impacts of the blockade that its people face with the utmost dignity.

"Cuba will not ask for permission to continue to build, as it's our sovereign right, an increasingly fair, prosperous, sustainable, democratic, and socialist society," concluded Pedro Luis Pedroso.

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