

I. Introduction

- A. Arshita and I affirm, “**Resolved: The United States should lift its embargo against Cuba.**”

II. Framework

- A. Our framework for this round is Wilsonianism; whoever can best align with its tenets should win this debate. Judges, this framework is the most appropriate for today’s debate because Wilsonian Idealism requires that morality, democracy and peace are the aims and implications of American foreign policy. In today’s tumultuous world, this framework is increasingly applicable.
- B. **Definitions**
1. The term **embargo** refers to the economic sanctions imposed by the United States on Cuba, namely the legislation passed by the Kennedy administration and all subsequent amendments and laws made by later administrations to the present day, as listed by the US State Department as of 2017:

Trade Sanctions and Export Enhancement Act of 2000

Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996

Cuban Democracy Act of 1992

Sections 5 and 16 of the Trading With the Enemy Act [of 1917]

Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2370(a)(1)-(a)(2))

E.O. 12854 Implementation of the Cuban Democracy Act

III. Arguments

A. *Contention I: Better Information Technology*

- a) The Embargo’s Policy requires that American web services restrict Cuban Internet access.
 - (1) According to a study by the Open Net Initiative, “Access probably is restricted even further by the U.S. government’s sponsorship of reverse filtering, which encourages Web sites to prevent access from Cuba and other countries” ([ONI](#))
 - (2) “In a memo of April 15, 1994, the (NSF) included Cuba on a list of countries to block from using [its] servers [...] it set a precedent for U.S. governmental interest in using route-filtering to prevent Cuban access”
- b) The Embargo’s economic impacts allow for the total economic and social regulation of hardware, and Internet, same study finds:
 - (1) “Cuba does not have the resources to provide Internet access for all of its citizens, particularly considering the higher prices caused by the U.S. trade embargo”
 - (2) “The computer [...] costs just under \$800. [...] By comparison, [according to the Associated Press](#), ‘For about \$80 less, [...] in the U.S. [...] [you can] get a desktop with more than twice the memory, an 80GB SATA hard drive

and 22-inch LCD flat screen monitor' [...] The average Cuban earns \$20 per month (TechCrunch 2008).

2. Lifting the embargo is a clear path to solvency. First, by lifting the Embargo, the US government's reverse filtering policy is eliminated. Next, commercial ties to Silicon Valley are key to utilizing Moore's Law. Moore's Law will lower computer prices and improve infrastructure in Cuba.
 - a) "Reduced cost is one of the big attractions of integrated electronics, and the cost advantage continues to increase as the technology evolves. ... There is a minimum cost at any given time in the evolution of the technology" (Moore 1965).
 - b) The only way for Moore's Law to actually work in Cuba is if the embargo is lifted so that Silicon Valley R&D impacts can reach it. This has been seen in the increased cheapness and availability of computers here and abroad.
 - c) Finally, IT is key to democratic development: Georgia Tech Study finds:
 - (1) "Overall, we find that Internet penetration explains more variation in level of democratic development within a country than does literacy rates and some of the geographic regions. We suggest that the influx of government transparency [...] is behind much of the Internet's statistical success.

IMPACT: The Internet is critical to democratic development in Cuba. Lifting the Embargo will allow Cuban citizens to hold their governments accountable and take action. This will in turn, prevent extinction because peace and international stability is supported by the internet.

B. Contention 2: Scientific Cooperation

1. The Embargo hinders scientific cooperation. Brian M. Boom writes:

"[...] the realities of carrying out [...] collaborative projects between Cuban and U.S. researchers are nonetheless daunting for everyone concerned. [...] Even U.S.-based NGOs licensed by OFAC to conduct environmental projects in Cuba with years of experience doing so are thwarted by [...] rules[...] that limit the breadth and depth of collaborative initiatives working to address urgent [...] shared environmental problems."
2. By lifting the embargo, we eliminate OFAC's Cuba Jurisdictions. Hence, both countries can collaborate on both environmental and disaster research. There are numerous benefits to this:
 - a) Namely, Disaster Mitigation. We can learn a lot from Cuba about this:
 - (1) [...] it is imperative to share strategies and successes in risk reduction among nations whose populations are most affected by these hazards. Cuba's experience is an extremely valuable case from which to extract lessons [...] (and have already) reduced the loss of life, even in a world that faces [...] violent, and often unpredictable natural disasters.
 - b) Next, environmental research. Brian M. Boom writes:

- (1) “The ecological stakes are too high for Cuba and the United States to rely on anything short of a government-to-government [...] cooperation on environmental problems of mutual concern. Various models for such an agreement exist: the United States has joint statements on environmental cooperation with Spain and Italy, an agreement on air quality with Canada, and a memorandum of understanding on environmental protection with India, among others”
- c) Finally, scientific cooperation fosters better diplomacy:
 - (1) “Science by its nature facilitates diplomacy because it strengthens political relationships, embodies powerful ideals, and creates opportunities for all. [...] Science is inherently democratic, respecting evidence and truth above all. Science is also a common global language, able to bridge deep political [...] divides. [...] Members of ideologically divergent societies can use the common language of science to cooperatively address [...] trans-national and global problems confronting humanity in the 21st century”

IMPACTS: Scientific cooperation saves lives on both sides from tropical disasters and preserves the sanctity of the Cuban environment. Furthermore, it is a method of democratic coercion. Scientific diplomacy will work much better than economic sanctions.

IV. CLOSING STATEMENT

- A. The reality is that the Cuba Embargo is a relic of the Cold War and simply not feasible today. Cuba is not a democracy right now, nor have things gotten better, so it clearly hasn't worked. It's been half a century; our foreign policy needs an update and the US needs to lift the embargo.
- B. For those reasons, my partner and I affirm.