

Cuba's Foreign Minister Invites Wadephul to Learn About the U.S. Blockade



German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul (Source: [Olaf Kosinsky/kosinsky.eu/CC-BY-SA 3.0](https://www.kosinsky.eu/CC-BY-SA))

Cuba's top diplomat, Bruno Rodríguez, has criticized his German counterpart, Johann Wadephul of the CDU, over his remarks about Cuba. Rodríguez was responding to Wadephul's statement that the U.S. blockade against Cuba does not exist.

During the German Foreign Ministry's open house last Sunday, a member of the public asked Wadephul why the German government did not more clearly condemn the U.S. blockade against Cuba as illegal and contrary to international law. Wadephul replied, "I do not see a blockade of the kind you have described."

According to the conservative minister, Cuba is ruled by an "unjust regime," and the key prerequisite for improving the lives of the Cuban people is that the country be "better governed." He added that Cuba had benefited "very greatly" in the past from economic ties and oil exports from Venezuela. "That's no longer the case," said Wadephul, describing the consequences of the Venezuelan president's abduction through a U.S. military operation on January 3.

Cuba's Foreign Minister Rodríguez [responded](#) on social media on Thursday with sharp criticism. He invited Wadephul to read the European Union's latest report to the UN Secretary-General as well as the EU's corresponding statement on the matter in the UN General Assembly.

Furthermore, Wadephul should inform himself about the sanctions, which have also been imposed on German companies and citizens. These sanctions are based on the U.S. [Helms-](#)

[Burton Act](#), which was passed in 1996 under President Bill Clinton and activated under Trump. It allows U.S. citizens to sue companies from third countries that trade in property nationalized following the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

Rodríguez accused Wadehul of violating European and German law with his stance, specifically [EU Council Regulation No. 2,271/96](#) of November 22, 1996, which protects against the extraterritorial effects of laws from third countries.

“How can one fail to recognize the imposition of an energy blockade, which constitutes a serious violation of international law, amounts to collective punishment, causes humanitarian harm, and hinders free trade and freedom of navigation?” Rodríguez wrote. He also asked whether Wadehul was aware of the German chancellor’s statement in which the chancellor [rejected](#) the U.S. military threat against Cuba.

Cuba has been mired in a deep economic and energy crisis for years, which has been massively exacerbated since January by a U.S. energy blockade. U.S. President Donald Trump had [threatened](#) punitive tariffs against any country that continues to supply oil to Cuba. Ships that Cuba had chartered on the world market were intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard. As a result, only a single oil tanker has arrived in Cuba since the beginning of the year. On May 1, Trump finally [threatened](#), via executive order, to impose sanctions on foreign companies operating in key sectors of the Cuban economy.

The consequences of the fuel shortage have severely hampered the island’s already ailing economy and exacerbated the humanitarian situation: there are daily, prolonged power outages; reduced work and school hours; disruptions to passenger and freight transport; water shortages; canceled surgeries; spoiled food, and piles of garbage; and rising inflation.

In this context, the United Nations has repeatedly warned of a humanitarian crisis that is hitting the most vulnerable segments of society the hardest. “The fuel restrictions imposed since early 2026 and the recent tightening of extraterritorial sanctions are directly harming Cubans, especially the most vulnerable,” [said](#) Volker Türk, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

As political scientist and former diplomat Sandra Weiss [explained](#) in the *IPG-Journal*, the EU has “maneuvered itself into a corner” when it comes to Cuba. Initially, Trump’s sanctions forced most European companies to withdraw from Cuba, “without Brussels doing anything to counter it.” Shortly thereafter, the European Parliament—with a majority of right-wing and conservative members—called for sanctions against Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel and an end to cooperation with Cuba, “thus acting entirely in the spirit of Trump, without even a hint of independent ideas to defend European interests,” according to Weiss. She views this as “another small step toward the EU’s geopolitical and geoeconomic irrelevance.” ([Cubaheute](#))