

More than 7,000 containers of food and medicine blocked



Due to U.S. sanctions, thousands of containers destined for Cuba are currently stranded
(Source: [Pavel Iovik/Commons/CC-BY-SA 4.0](#))

More than 7,000 containers of food, medicine, and supplies for energy and water services are unable to reach Cuba and are stranded in various Caribbean ports. Cuba's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Trade, Óscar Pérez-Oliva Fraga, [stated](#) this before the Cuban National Assembly on July 29. The minister said the goods had been legally acquired in accordance with international trade rules.

Pérez-Oliva Fraga blamed U.S. sanctions for the blockade. Among the detained shipments are also goods for the island's drinking water program. Every day, more than three million Cubans lack regular access to drinking water.

"I wanted to take this opportunity to hold accountable those who seek to prevent the arrival of these goods, those who stand idly by and allow this genocide to occur, and those who bow to U.S. interests—they are all responsible for the loss of innocent lives," the minister told parliament.

The Cuban state-owned company Medicuba had previously [reported](#) that the German shipping company Hapag-Lloyd had detained two containers carrying an epilepsy medication at the Colombian port of Cartagena de Indias. The company cited compliance with U.S. sanctions laws as the reason. Shortly before that, the French shipping company CMA CGM had detained dozens of containers bound for Cuba in Jamaica, including one containing medical supplies.

Both cases are related to Executive Order 14404, which U.S. President Donald Trump [signed](#) on May 1. The order threatens to freeze the assets in the U.S. of individuals and

companies that work for the Cuban government or provide it with financial, material, or technological support. Shortly after the order took effect, both European shipping companies stopped accepting new orders bound for Cuba. The Port of Mariel, the country's most important and efficient container port, has since been directly sanctioned by the U.S. The Spanish hotel chains Meliá and Iberostar also recently withdrew from Cuba due to secondary sanctions.

Upon his return to the White House, one of Trump's first official acts in January 2025 was to re-designate Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism on the U.S. list. This was followed in January 2026 by another executive order threatening countries that supply fuel to Cuba with punitive tariffs. As a result of this oil embargo, only a single tanker has reached a Cuban port since March.

The consequences for the Cuban population are severe: power outages, fuel shortages, and restrictions in healthcare, transportation, education, and water supply. Cuba has been in the midst of a severe economic crisis for several years now, a crisis that has worsened dramatically since the beginning of the year due to the intensified U.S. measures.

([Cubaheute](#))