

US classifies Cuba as an “exceptional threat”



Gasoline and electricity are becoming increasingly scarce: The US is attempting to cut off all energy supplies to the island. (Source: [Utcursch/Commons/CC-BY-SA 2.0](#))

On Thursday, US President Donald Trump declared a national emergency by [executive order](#) and declared the Cuban government an “extraordinary threat” to the security of the United States. The decree authorizes Washington to impose punitive tariffs on goods from countries that directly or indirectly supply oil to Cuba.

Cuba as an alleged base for “hostile actors”

The order follows the abduction of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro by US forces in early January, after which the US effectively took control of the Venezuelan oil sector. A few days later, Trump announced that he would stop all oil deliveries to Cuba. In the executive order, Trump accuses the Cuban government of allying itself with “numerous hostile countries, transnational terrorist groups, and malicious actors.” Specifically, the decree names Russia, China, Iran, and the organizations Hamas and Hezbollah. No evidence has been presented to support these claims.

Trump had already put Cuba back on the [list of countries](#) that allegedly support terrorism in January 2025. The Cuban government has rejected these accusations and pointed out that both the [Obama](#) and [Biden administrations](#) had come to opposite conclusions.

Mechanism of punitive tariffs

The US Department of Commerce is now tasked with determining whether a country is supplying oil to Cuba directly or indirectly. The State Department, in consultation with the

Departments of the Treasury, Homeland Security, Commerce, and the US Trade Representative, will then decide whether and to what extent punitive tariffs will be imposed.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio has been tasked with monitoring the situation and reporting to Congress. The order provides that Trump can adjust the decree if affected countries take retaliatory measures or if Cuba takes “significant steps” to reduce “the threat.”

“Brutal act of aggression”

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla described the US action as a “brutal act of aggression” based on “a long list of lies.” “Every day there is new evidence that the only threat to peace, security, and stability in the region is the malicious influence that the US government exerts on the nations and peoples of the Americas,” Rodríguez [said](#) on social media.

The minister denounced the US for resorting to “blackmail and coercion” to persuade other countries to participate in the “globally condemned blockade policy” against Cuba. If they refused, they threatened them with “arbitrary and abusive tariffs that violate all rules of free trade.” Rodríguez received support from China. On Friday, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry condemned the “inhumane practices” of the US, “which could deprive the Cuban people of their rights to livelihood and development.”

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez [commented](#): “Didn't the Secretary of State and his harlequins claim that there was no blockade? Where are those who bore us with their false stories that this is merely a ‘bilateral trade embargo’?”

Regime change as a goal

In 1961, the US imposed an economic blockade on the socialist-ruled island. According to a [declassified government document](#) from the Eisenhower administration, the aim of the sanctions is to create “hardship” and ‘disappointment’ among the Cuban population and to “bring about hunger, desperation, and the overthrow of the government.”

The latest tariff threat came just days after [reports emerged](#) that oil supplies from Mexico were being halted. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum spoke of a “sovereign decision” by the Pemex company and reaffirmed her support for Cuba. At the same time, there were reports of US military drones being sighted off the coast of Yucatán.

Cuba has to [import](#) around two-thirds of its oil requirements, including all gasoline, diesel, and kerosene. According to the *Financial Times*, Mexico recently covered 44 percent of Cuban oil imports, Venezuela 34 percent. About 10 percent comes from Russia, with smaller quantities from Algeria. Venezuela had suspended deliveries after Maduro's kidnapping.

The economic analysis service Kpler estimates that Cuba's oil reserves will last for another 15 to 20 days. If no further deliveries arrive, there is a threat of massive rationing measures and a humanitarian catastrophe as a result of economic paralysis. ([Cubaheute](#))