

Joe Biden maintains Trump's failed sanction policies



President Joe Biden keeps unchanged Trump's failed sanction policies

Washington, Jun 22 (RHC) Joe Biden campaigned in 2020 on the promise of new ideas, more competence, and a “return to normality.” But when it comes to economic sanctions, President Biden has chosen instead to maintain the path that his predecessor set. From Venezuela to Cuba to Iran, the Biden administration’s approach to sanctions has remained remarkably similar to Trump’s.

In the 2020 election campaign, Biden vowed to rejoin the Iran deal and to “promptly reverse Trump’s failed policies that have inflicted harm on the Cuban people”. Yet two and a half years after taking office, the Joe Biden administration has made little progress towards fulfilling these promises.

While economic sanctions may not seem important to the average American, they have strong implications for the global economy and America’s national interests.

President Biden initially showed promise by requesting that the Treasury Department conduct a swift review of U.S. sanctions policies. However, the review's publication in October 2021 was underwhelming.

The failure to reenter the Iran deal is the most egregious error of Biden's sanctions policies.

As Javad Zarif, Iran's foreign minister, told CNN in early 2021, "It was the United States that left the deal. It was the United States that violated the deal."

Biden has shown similar hesitancy on Cuba. Although the administration has taken certain steps to undo Trump's hardline stance, there remains much room for progress.

Six decades of maximum pressure on Cuba have failed, serving primarily to harm Cuban civilians and exacerbate tensions with allies who wish to do business with Cuba. The U.S. blockade against Cuba is incredibly unpopular worldwide.

Steps such as reopening the American embassy in Havana and removing restrictions on remittances are positive developments, yet the Biden administration could do much more.

Primary among these is removing Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list and ending the embargo once and for all. This would not only improve daily life for Cuban civilians but increase business opportunities for Cubans and Americans alike.

Venezuela is another country where the Biden administration has taken mere half-measures. Easing some sanctions in late 2022 is a positive sign, but there is no serious justification for keeping any of the Trump-era sanctions in place.

All of these actions have had major consequences, not only for the citizens of the sanctioned countries but also for Americans.

Despite these measures, none of these countries are considered serious threats to the U.S.

In a March 2023 Quinnipiac poll, Americans rightly ignored Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba when asked which country "poses the biggest threat to the United States." Just two percent chose Iran as the biggest threat, with zero choosing Cuba or Venezuela.

These sanctions are unpopular, ineffective, and quite often counterproductive to American interests. While changing the course of U.S. foreign policy can take quite some time, the dangers of hesitancy are quite clear.

Rather than maintaining the Trump status quo on sanctions, which saw record increases, President Biden should fulfill his campaign promises and end the ineffective and costly sanctions on countries such as Iran, Cuba, and Venezuela, and return to the use of diplomacy to further American national interests. (Source: Prensa Latina)

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