The European Union and Cuba held Dialogue on Unilateral Coercive Measures

Havana, 30/11/2019

Source; website EEAS

Statements by the Spokesperson

On 29 November, the European Union and Cuba held their second formal dialogue on unilateral coercive measures in Havana. The dialogue provides a structured framework to exchange views on coercive measures of unilateral character with extraterritorial application that are contrary to international law and commonly accepted rules of international trade.

Discussions included a general exchange of views regarding unilateral coercive measures and on the positions of Cuba and the European Union in international fora on this matter, with a view to strengthening common approaches. In this context, they discussed the reinforcement of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba since the last dialogue session and the US activation of Title III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act in April 2019. The EU re-called the unanimous support of EU Member States for Resolution no. A/RES/74/7 that calls for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba at the 6/7 November session of the United Nations General Assembly. For its part, the European Union provided an update of the application of the Blocking Statute (Regulation 2271/96), which is designed to counteract the extraterritorial application of listed third country legislation. The parties also discussed other possible actions to prevent or mitigate the effects of the extraterritorial application of the embargo such as the continuation of the modernisation process in Cuba and the implementation of economic and social reforms.

The European Union delegation was led by Katja Afheldt, Head of the Mexico, Central America and Caribbean Division of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and included representatives of that Division, of the EEAS Sanctions Policy Division, as well as of the European Commission’s Service for Foreign Policy Instruments. Rodolfo Reyes Rodríguez, Director General for Multilateral Issues and International Law of the Cuban Ministry for Foreign Affairs led the Cuban side, and was accompanied by Cuban Ambassador to the European Union Norma Goicochea Estenoz, as well as other officials of the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Representatives of the European Union Member States also participated in the dialogue as observers.
The dialogue on unilateral coercive measures was preceded by a civil society seminar on 28 November, organised in the premises of the National Institute for Oncology and Radiobiology. Representatives of Cuban and European NGOs exchanged views on the extraterritorial dimension of the effects of the US coercive measures. The participants in the civil society seminar were informed on how the operations of the Institute are affected by the embargo.

**Background**

The Dialogue on Unilateral Coercive Measures is one of five political dialogues held under the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA), which is being provisionally applied since 1 November 2017. All five political dialogues are preceded by events with civil society.

The other dialogues concern the areas of:

- Human Rights
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Control of Conventional Arms