

CIA launches Cuba task force amid new sanctions and UN warnings of a “silent Gaza”

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Announcing a new round of sanctions against Cuba on Thursday, Secretary of State Marco Rubio declared that President Donald Trump’s “resolve is ironclad: the United States will not tolerate a rogue state harboring hostile foreign military, intelligence, and terror operations just 90 miles from the American homeland.”

The threat was issued against a country whose electrical grid collapsed twice within 24 hours this week, whose hospitals operate without reliable power and whose population is being deprived of food, medicine and fuel by a deliberate US energy blockade.

On Thursday, United Nations human rights rapporteurs condemned the US measures and warned of a “silent Gaza” unfolding on the island, declaring that food “must never be used as an instrument of political pressure,” and that measures knowingly depriving a population of the means to survive strike at the most basic guarantees of the right to life.

What the Trump administration is carrying out is an undeclared war of extermination against nearly 10 million people, criminal under international law and aimed at driving an entire society back a century in order to turn it into a colony.

The sanctions announced Thursday target five Cuban entities and eight individuals, including subsidiaries of the military conglomerate GAESA, Revolutionary Armed Forces Minister Álvaro López Miera, Chief of the General Staff Roberto Legrá Sotolongo and Cuba’s military attachés to Russia and China.

They came one day after the *New York Times* revealed that the CIA has secretly established a Cuba task force, adding case officers who recruit and manage spies, intelligence analysts, cyber-operations personnel and specialists in covert influence operations. According to the officials speaking anonymously to the *Times*, the task force seeks to create fissures among the Cuban political elite in the hope of replacing “hard-liners” with leaders more amenable to Trump’s demands.

The *Times* also revealed that the Trump administration has revised the National Intelligence Priorities Framework to designate Cuba a “Priority 1” target, alongside China, Iran and Russia. This has led the National Security Agency, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and others to dedicate more intelligence collection assets, including satellites, toward the island.

The *Times* states plainly what this is for: the intelligence “will help the U.S. military update its options for potential military action against Cuba.”

These operations coincide with a sweeping reorganization of the US military across the hemisphere. At midnight on Monday,

Southern Command retired Joint Task Force-Southern Spear—responsible for 63 strikes on fishing boats accused of carrying drugs in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific that have killed 221 people in eleven months—and replaced it with Joint Task Force-Western Hemisphere.

SOUTHCOM commander Gen. Francis Donovan announced that the new command, “the action arm of US Southern Command,” would “apply total systemic friction on these networks,” operating alongside “our 18 other nations” in the Americas Counter Cartel Coalition. Its purpose is to extend joint strikes from international waters onto the sovereign territory of Latin American states. Cuba will figure among its principal targets, together with the coordination of repression against social opposition throughout the region.

With the debacle in the war against Iran and social anger mounting over ICE raids, healthcare cuts and the cost of living, an operation against Cuba is being contemplated as an “October surprise.” Some of Trump’s advisers believe the Cuban government “could be gone by the time of the midterm election in the United States in November,” according to the *Times*.

Such a move would not be aimed at boosting popularity for the Republican Party—only 15 percent of Americans support a war against Cuba. It would provide the pretext to manipulate or even cancel the 2026 elections and criminalize opposition.

The last time the CIA established a Cuba task force was 1960. Its members oversaw the April 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, in which some 1,400 CIA-organized and financed exile mercenaries landed on the island. The operation was crushed by Cuban forces. When it failed, the Joint Chiefs of Staff drafted Operation Northwoods, a since-declassified proposal to stage false-flag terrorist bombings in American cities and hijackings of US aircraft to manufacture a pretext for invasion.

The Venezuelan precedent shows a more recent example. In October 2025, Trump publicly confirmed he had authorized the CIA to conduct covert and potentially lethal operations inside Venezuela. Three months later, on January 3, US Special Forces seized President Nicolás Maduro and his wife without suffering a single casualty—his location known, his defenses mapped, the political ground prepared for Delcy Rodríguez and her brother to preside over a US protectorate that has handed Washington control over Venezuelan oil, finances and foreign policy.

Who infiltrated whom

On July 20 the State Department published a 100-page report, “Cuba: the capital of 21st century communism,” which it has promoted on social media several times a week since. Its thesis is that Havana has spent six decades infiltrating agents into American social movements and the US state itself—that the civil rights movement, the opposition to the Vietnam War, the protests following the police murder of George Floyd and the present movements against ICE and the Gaza genocide were, in substantial measure, directed from Cuba.

Rubio told Fox News last week that Cuba is “a true superpower” of espionage and influence, and that of the recent protest movement, “there’s nothing organic about it.”

This week’s revelations establish the real direction of state penetration. American case officers, cyber-operatives and influence specialists are actively being inserted into Cuba, with satellites re-tasked overhead and military options under preparation.

The historical record admits of no ambiguity. Washington imposed its partial embargo in 1960, made comprehensive in 1962. In March 1960 the CIA bombed the *La Coubre* in Havana harbor, timing the charges in succession so that rescue workers responding to the first blast would be caught by the second; over 100 died. Cuban counterintelligence documented 638 separate schemes to kill Castro. Luis Posada Carriles, trained by the CIA at Fort Benning, organized the 1976 bombing of Cubana Flight 455, killing all 73 aboard, including the national junior fencing team. Researchers place the toll of US-directed and US-linked terrorism against Cuba since 1959 at more than 3,000 killed. Not one perpetrator has been prosecuted.

Since Trump’s declaration of a national emergency over Cuba in January, US aggression has turned genocidal. Washington has imposed an energy embargo threatening punitive tariffs against any country selling the island oil, along with successive sanctions packages freezing the assets of dozens of Cuban entities and officials.

In May, the US Department of Justice indicted the 94-year-old Raúl Castro on charges arising from the 1996 downing of two aircraft operated by CIA-linked provocateurs. Combined with a military buildup in the Caribbean and now covert operations on the ground, the indictment is a patently fabricated pretext to justify a military attack.

Havana's answer: a country for sale

Confronted with this onslaught, the Cuban government has appealed not to the working class but to the American ruling elite.

On May 14, it received CIA Director John Ratcliffe in Havana, where he demanded “fundamental changes” in a meeting with senior Cuban officials, including Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro, the former president’s grandson. Havana has since

announced the most radical economic restructuring since 1959—privatizations, the stripping of labor protections and open-ended invitations to foreign capital.

The character of these appeals is unmistakable. Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío told the *New York Times* that Havana would not oppose a Trump-branded resort on Cayo Santa María: “If he wants to do it peacefully, we see no specific reason to exclude him... If it is the Trump administration, in principle, we have no reason to refuse.”

Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Carlos Luis Jorge Méndez told *The National*: “We want American businesspeople to know and understand that Cuba is a country open to investment... in sectors ranging from mining and tourism to real estate, banking and finance.”

The regime that survived 66 years of CIA terror campaigns and provocations now negotiates the terms of its own submission with the CIA’s director and offers the island back to the US oligarchy that ran it as a casino and brothel under Batista.

This is the dead end of bourgeois nationalism. Neither Havana nor the “left” governments of Mexico, Brazil and Colombia—complicit throughout in the fuel blockade—will defend the Cuban people.

The only force capable of halting this crime is the international working class. Dockworkers, transport, oil and logistics workers in the United States and internationally must refuse to enforce the blockade and demand its immediate end, along with the delivery of the fuel, food and medicine Cuba requires. The threat of war against Cuba, the buildup of dictatorship at home and the persecution of socialists are a single process and must be answered by the industrial and political mobilization of workers everywhere against war and fascism, on the basis of a socialist program.



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