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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4003

September 23, 2015

The Honorable Samantha Power
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations
The United States Mission to the United Nations
799 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Power,


I write to respectfully urge you to uphold and defend the laws of the United States as they relate to the U.S.-Cuba embargo. I have received concerning reports that for the first time in 23 years, the U.S. delegation to the United Nations may abdicate its sovereign responsibility to uphold and defend U.S. interests as enshrined in U.S. law by abstaining, instead of voting against, on a resolution demanding the end of U.S.-Cuba embargo as outlined in the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 (Libertad/Helms-Burton).

As the Co-Chair of the House Sovereignty Caucus, I am deeply disturbed that the U.S. delegation to a multilateral body could consider choosing not to affirm the sovereign laws of the United States. Irrespective of whether one agrees with the U.S.-Cuba embargo, it remains the law of the land in our country. For the U.S. delegation to refrain from exercising its responsibility to defend our country's interests as articulated by our laws in the face of overt, sustained international criticism is to effectively undermine the rule of law in our country, the foundation for our modern political order, and the American principles for which we stand.

Furthermore, should the U.S. delegation to the United Nations refuse to support longstanding U.S. law in a multilateral forum, I am concerned about the ramifications this would have on U.S. foreign policy. After all, if the Administration does not uphold the rule of law to the world in an organization such as the United Nations, what legitimacy will the United States have to urge other countries around the world to respect the rule of law and democracy? What will this do to the pursuit of freedom around the world?

The issue before you is whether to uphold and defend the laws of the United States before the United Nations' General Assembly. Regardless of differing political views on the U.S.-Cuba embargo, our modern political order depends upon a strong rule of law. With this in mind, I respectfully urge you to vote against any resolution that demands a change to U.S. law or that seeks to prevent the application of current U.S. law related to the US.-Cuba embargo.

Sincerely,



Jeff Duncan (SC-03)

Chairman

Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
House Committee on Foreign Affairs