



## **USA\*Engage Statement on U.S. Sanctions on Venezuela**

**Washington DC - May 8, 2014:** Undoubtedly, the ongoing violence and socio-political division in Venezuela, as well as the difficult bilateral relations between the U.S. and Venezuela cause great concern, not least for long standing commercial activities in Venezuela by U.S. companies.

Given the history of U.S. involvement in Latin America, imposing unilateral economic sanctions on individuals in the current Venezuelan government will inevitably prove counterproductive. U.S. government policy of some years has been not to provide any pretext to raise the specter of violations of sovereignty. Targeting individuals in the current Venezuelan government with sanctions will only elicit such a response and result in no improvement of the status quo in country.

The policy of the previous and present Administrations has been to pursue opportunities for constructive conversation with the Venezuelan government and to articulate American principles of democracy and respect for human rights. Continued deliberate effort to engage other regional actors to provide third party facilitation of dialogue between the Venezuelan government and the Venezuelans who oppose it is preferable to unilateral sanctions that will carry real costs with no benefits.

### **About USA\*Engage**

USA\*Engage ([www.usaengage.org](http://www.usaengage.org)) is a coalition of small and large businesses, agriculture groups and trade associations working to seek alternatives to the proliferation of unilateral U.S. foreign policy sanctions and to promote the benefits of U.S. engagement abroad. Established in 1997 and organized under the National Foreign Trade Council ([www.nftc.org](http://www.nftc.org)), USA\*Engage leads a campaign to inform policymakers, opinion leaders, and the public about the counterproductive nature of unilateral sanctions, the importance of exports and overseas investment for American competitiveness and jobs, and the role of American companies in promoting human rights and democracy worldwide.

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