

enough to fill the gap. The situation lasted until the 1970s, when Albania fell out with Beijing. In the meantime, Albania had withdrawn from Comecon in 1962. Albania hardly changed its relatively independent foreign policy, due in part to the totalitarian rule practised by its government, which was able to control communications with the rest of the world. Albania remained the poorest country in Europe; it achieved little industrialization, much less the transition to the post-industrial era.

g) Nicaragua

Concerned about seeing Nicaragua align itself with the Soviet Union and support guerrilla movements in Central America, the US supported the Contras fighting against the Sandinista government in Managua (which itself had taken power through a guerrilla struggle). This position found little support in the OAS and in the UN, whose members maintained their trading relations with and aid to Nicaragua. The US also applied a series of measures between 1981 and 1990 including notably the suspension of bilateral aid, opposition to financial assistance to Nicaragua by international development agencies, the closing of Nicaraguan consulates in the US and the expulsion of some of their officers, and the cancellation of Nicaragua's sugar export quota, doing considerable damage to Nicaragua's sugar trade, which had traditionally been dependent on the US market. The US also authorized covert military operations by the CIA. Already sapped by the long civil war against the Somoza regime, Nicaragua was now undermined by this assault on its economy and by the fact that it had to wage a new guerrilla war on its territory. The USSR dared intervene only discreetly, preferring to avoid another battle with the US, especially in view of the already high cost of supporting Cuba. It was therefore not surprising that the governing Sandinistas finally decided to hold free elections, which they lost. The sanctions, which had been only one of the means used, were then lifted by the US, which felt it had achieved its objectives.

h) Haiti

The coup d'état which overthrew the democratically-elected president in the fall of 1991 provoked an international outcry, especially in the Western Hemisphere. The OAS recommended a trade embargo,<sup>18</sup> which some member states, including the US and Canada, are applying. The US believes it is important not to worsen Haiti's endemic unemployment and has allowed the import of goods produced by some US-owned assembly plants (consumer goods, electronic

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<sup>18</sup> This embargo was therefore not binding upon member states, and of course still less so for non-members.