

Cuban Jewish Leaders Pen Open Letter In Support of U.S.-Cuba Relations



Miami, July 13 (RHC-NBCNews)-- Leaders of the Jewish community in Cuba have sent an open letter to their “brothers and sisters” in the U.S. expressing concern that reversing policy towards the island could have an impact on religious institutions, which have benefited from increased ties between the countries.

“The Jewish Community of Cuba, since its founding, has maintained ties of friendship and brotherhood and sisterhood with the Jewish people of the United States, even in moments when diplomatic relations between both countries did not exist,” states the letter.

It is signed by seven Jewish leaders, including Adela Dworkin, President of the Jewish Community of Cuba, as well as its Vice President, David Prinstein, leaders of Havana’s Sephardic center and Jewish community coordinators in different parts of the country.

The letter states: “Americans played a substantial role in the reestablishment of relations between Cuba and the United States, and some of them have even visited our synagogues in Havana. There is a permanent desire to promote the continual development of this relationship and to strengthen the benefits that are starting to take shape, mainly for our people.”

The pro-engagement lobbying group Engage Cuba is helping the Jewish leaders disseminate the letter in the United States. Michael Maisel, Director of External Affairs for Engage Cuba, said they decided to spread the word and release the letter now because the U.S. government is currently in the phase of the regulatory writing.

According to Marcos Kerbel, past president of the Cuban Hebrew Congregation of Miami, Jewish people from around the world have traveled to Cuba throughout the years including Americans.

He told NBC News that strictly from a humanitarian, religious, and educational point of view, "it's important in order for the community to continue its existence that they continue to have people visit, and that they receive individual help from tourists traveling to the island and from global Jewish institutions."

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