

Visiting U.S. congressional delegation meets with Cuban Foreign Ministry officials



Havana, Feb 20 (RHC)-- A U.S. bicameral delegation kicked off a three-day visit to Cuba on Monday, meeting with Cuban Foreign Ministry officials.

Led by Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy, the U.S. legislators met with Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, the newly appointed director for United States in the Cuban Foreign Ministry.

The lawmakers are reportedly on a "fact-finding trip" concerning changes in the Cuba policy introduced by the Trump administration following alleged health incidents involving US diplomats in Havana.

"A pleasure to welcome U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy and the congressional delegation (...) Enjoyed a constructive and candid dialogue," Fernandez de Cossio posted on his Twitter account. The Cuban diplomat is said to have told the visitors during the meeting that no evidence has been found by either Cuba or the US regarding the cause of those incidents.

Leahy, a supporter of better relations between the US and Cuba, is accompanied by senators Ron Wyden and Gary Peters, and representatives Jim McGovern, Kathy Castor and Susan Davis.

The bicameral delegation will also meet with government officials and Cuban business leaders.

The recent unexplained physical afflictions suffered by US embassy staff in Havana are said to be on the agenda. The US government used those incidents, which they termed as “attacks,” to scale back its embassy personnel and suspend the issuing of visas.

The US State Department issued a travel warning last year cautioning Americans against visiting Cuba.

Senator Patrick Leahy's office said subjects to be discussed during the visit include also bilateral cooperation in maritime security, search-and-rescue, narcotics, human trafficking and immigration.

The Congressional delegation will hold a press conference on Wednesday morning, before returning to Washington.

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