

# *Spanish prime minister begins official visit to Cuba*

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Havana, November 22 (RHC)-- Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez arrives in Cuba on Thursday for an official visit to the island.

During his stay, Sánchez will meet with Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel, tour Havana's historic district -- declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1982 -- and visit the José Martí Memorial complex where he will pay tribute to Cuba's National Hero.

Sanchez is traveling with executives from two dozen companies, who will be meeting with local business representatives during a Spanish-Cuban business forum being held at the recently inaugurated Grand Packard Hotel. Spain is Cuba's third largest trading partner, with annual bilateral commerce at around \$1.3 billion according to data.

"Cuba is opening up and we are interested in our companies being well positioned to have access to the most important contracts," a Spanish government official told Reuters news agency. The main aim of the trip will be to strengthen relations, the official said, noting that Spain's policy towards Latin America is "a big priority for the prime minister."

Many world leaders have visited the island in recent years, including former U.S. President Barack Obama and Francois Hollande of France.

Relations between Cuba and the European Union have also been on the rise since 2016, when the bloc dropped its negative, so-called “Common Position” on the island.

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