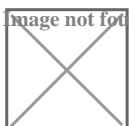


Washington to Punish French Bank for Alleged Breaching of Blockade of Cuba



Havana, May 30 (RHC) – The U.S. government intends to fine the National Bank of Paris, BNP Paribas, 10 billion dollars for having allegedly breached the laws establishing the extraterritorial, economic, commercial and financial U.S. blockade of Cuba.

If Washington gets its way, it would be one of the heaviest fines ever imposed on an entity based in the U.S., according to The Wall Street Journal, which reported that the conclusion of the BNP Paribas case, on the bank's activities from 2002 to 2009 with Cuba, Iran and Sudan, could take place in few weeks.

According to the Journal, attorneys with the U.S. Department of Justice are leaning on the bank so that it pleads guilty, which could lead the bank to lose its license to operate in the United States.

In mid-February, the BNP Paribas, the largest bank in France and the fourth largest in the world, canceled its operations in Havana during an investigation by U.S. authorities on alleged transactions that violated the prohibition to do business with Cuba, Iran and Sudan.

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