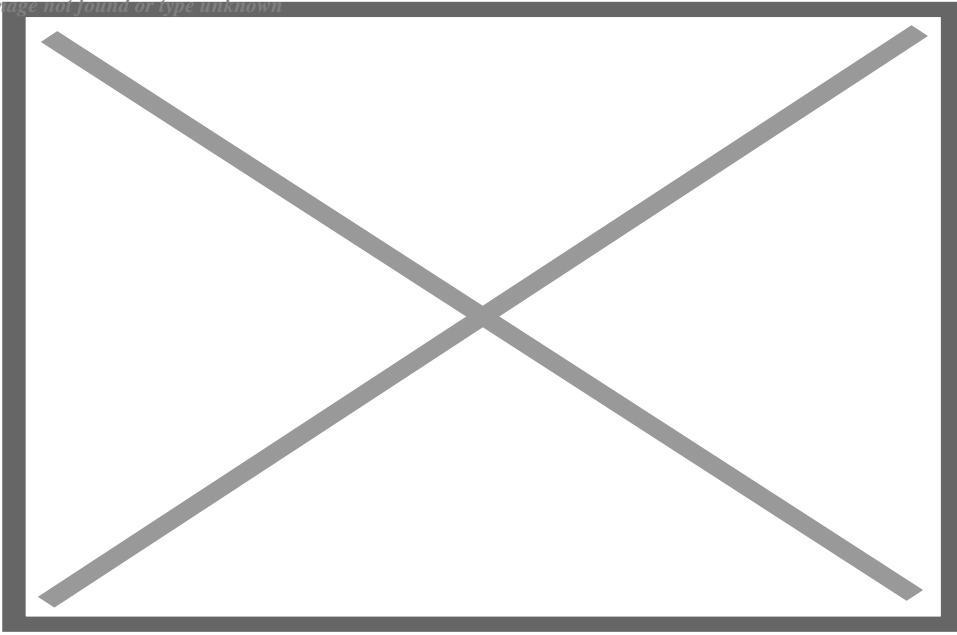


It's time to take Cuba off the terror list

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Washington, Feb 9 (RHC) Removing Cuba from the list of sponsors of terrorism, where it was unfairly included, will open up opportunities for better relations that will benefit both the island and the United States, an article published in the U.S. capital on Wednesday stated.

The text, entitled 'It's time to take Cuba off the terror list' and published on the website of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, asserted that US President Joe Biden should fulfill the promise made last year by Secretary of State Anthony Blinken to Colombian President Gustavo Petro to order a review of that list.

"The Biden administration has been promising for two years to reconsider the designation made by President Trump just a few days before leaving office — a parting shot designed to reward his Cuban American supporters and complicate President Biden's relations with Havana. That review has yet to happen," academic William LeoGrande wrote in the article.

“The main rationale Trump’s Secretary of State Mike Pompeo offered for putting Cuba back on the list was Cuba’s refusal to hand over to the Colombian government guerrilla leaders of the National Liberation Army. The rebels were in Havana for peace talks with the Colombian government, co-sponsored by Cuba and Norway,” he explained.

He then remarked, “President Petro has now restarted the talks, asking Cuba and Norway to once again act as guarantors, negating Pompeo’s rationale.”

At first glance, the harm to Cuba of being on the list appears limited since almost all the economic sanctions against listed countries have been in force against Cuba since 1962 under the comprehensive embargo imposed by President Kennedy (1961-1963), the article added.

However, he explained, the impact on risk managers at global financial institutions is devastating.

“When doing business with customers suspected of terrorism, financial institutions are required by law to undertake ‘enhanced due diligence’ to assure that they are not unwittingly financing terrorist activity.”

Therefore, he noted, the increased costs and risk of doing business with a listed country like Cuba outweigh the profit potential.

Within weeks of Cuba being put back on the terrorism list, 45 international banks and financial institutions stopped doing business with the island, the author pointed out.

Besides the financial harm, the designation of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism adds insult to the injury suffered by Cuba for several decades, LeoGrande stated.

“Since 1959, he noted that Cuba has been the victim of hundreds of paramilitary attacks by exiles, many trained and sponsored by the United States during the CIA’s “Secret War” in the 1960s and 1970s.

A fair review of the list will conclude that Cuba does not sponsor terrorism, and removing it from there will open up opportunities for better relations on a wide range of issues that benefit both countries, LeoGrande stressed. (Prensa Latina)



Radio Habana Cuba