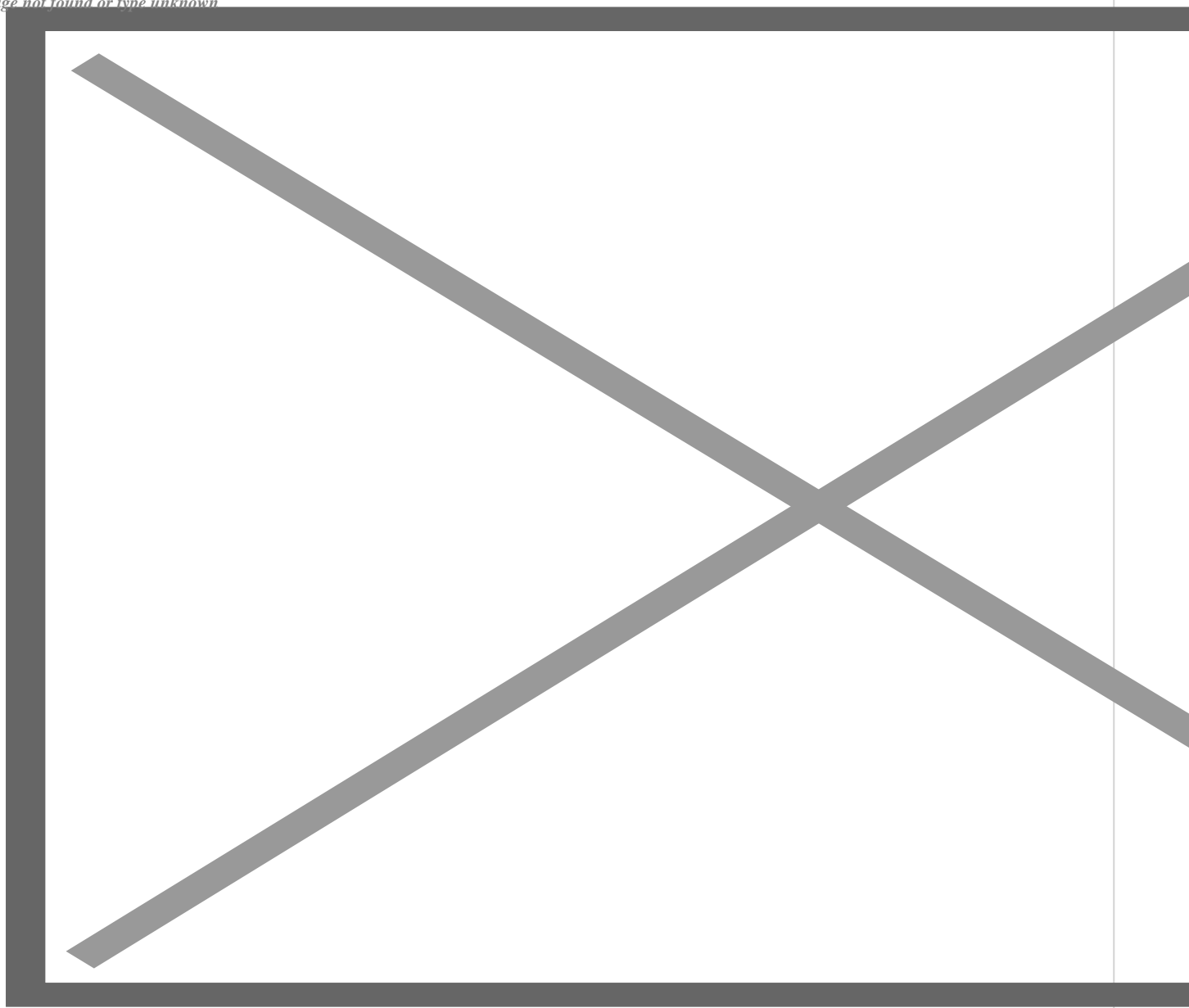


Díaz-Canel: Cuba will take an active and constructive stance at CELAC-EU Summit

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Lisbon, July 14 (RHC)-- "Cuba will participate in an active and very constructive way in the relations between the EU and Latin America," President Miguel Díaz Canel stressed in a statement to the press at the end of a meeting with his Portuguese counterpart, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, in Lisbon.

On the first day of the Cuban president's state visit to Portugal, he took the opportunity to thank the Community bloc for its stance against the U.S. blockade, on the occasion of 35 years of relations with the EU.

"I have thanked the president for the clear position of the EU and in particular of Portugal against the U.S. economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba, which constitutes the main obstacle to the development of our country," he stressed.

Díaz Canel also valued Lisbon's role in facilitating the development of Cuba's political dialogue and cooperation agreement with the EU, which "has constituted an important mechanism for maintaining and expanding ties between both parties".

Together with Rebelo de Souza, the leader of the Caribbean island remarked his wish that the EU continue to reject the blockade and at the same time express its repudiation of Cuba's inclusion on the U.S. list 'of alleged terrorist-supporting states'.

In turn, the Portuguese dignitary highlighted the intention to strengthen ties between the two peoples and cooperation in areas such as energy, digital economy or health.

A week ago, it was announced that Portugal wants to hire 300 Cuban doctors for its National Health Service.

During the date, Diaz Canel was received by the president of the Portuguese Assembly, Augusto Santos Silva, in a meeting attended by leaders of political parties and members of the Parliamentary Group of Friendship with Cuba.

Today, after the reception at the National Palace of Belen, residence of the head of state, Rebelo de Sousa imposed on Díaz Canel the Grand Collar of the Order of Infante Don Henrique, the highest distinction awarded in this country to visiting dignitaries.

"This is your home and the home of all Cubans," Rebelo de Sousa said, addressing his counterpart at the beginning of his remarks to the press after their meeting.

"We are confident that this visit will contribute to the expansion of bilateral relations, uninterrupted for 104 years and which today show not only the maturity that affection and time have given them, but also the indispensable solidity for their continuity in the future," Díaz Canel emphasized.

The Cuban president, accompanied by Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez and First Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, Ana Teresita Gonzalez, will participate in the EU-Celac Summit in Brussels, Belgium, on July 17 and 18.

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