

Cuba, U.S. Landmark Talks Continue in Havana



Havana, January 22 (RHC) -- Cuban and U.S. government delegations continue bilateral talks on Thursday -- this time on re-establishing diplomatic relations, a process announced last December 17th by Cuban and US presidents, Raul Castro and Barack Obama, respectively.

At the talks, Cuban officials said the island nation will pursue its removal from the Department of States' list of countries sponsors of terrorism. Another main point is the US economic blockade on Cuba, which Havana places as the main obstacle to the normalization of relations between the two neighboring nations.

Meanwhile, US officials have said Washington wanted to discuss restrictions on the free movement of diplomatic personnel, currently in place in both countries.

Today's meeting is presided over by Josefina Vidal, Cuban Foreign Ministry's US Department's chief and Roberta Jacobson, US Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs.

On Wednesday, discussions were held on the area of migration, where Cuba criticized U.S. policies that promote illegal emigration and brain drain.

However, it also acknowledged the mutual willingness to reach higher cooperation levels and U.S. fulfilment of visa commitments.

After meeting with the Cuban delegation for more than three hours, the State Department's Alex Lee said Wednesday's "discussions prove that despite clear differences that remain between our countries, the United States and Cuba can find opportunities to advance our mutual, shared interests as well as engage in respectful and thoughtful dialogue."

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