

# *Former U.S. Diplomat Calls for End to Washington's Hostilities Against Cuba*

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Washington, February 28 (RHC-PL) -- Former chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Cuba, Wayne Smith, said Friday that he hopes his country will stick to respectful dialogue with Cuba, and not go back to its past, hostile approach.

"I hope we will not go back to the past. Thank God we are now on the right path," he told Prensa Latina regarding the second round of Cuba-U.S. negotiations.

According to the diplomat, who was the head of the Interests Section from 1979 to 1982, the United States should change its position, which is rejected by the region and the world, and -- in his words -- is "counterproductive and stupid."

In this respect, we are isolated in the hemisphere and the world and no one supports our position, he said referring to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba for over five decades.

Smith also lashed out at sectors opposing the bilateral negotiations, specifically the Republican Party.

Things have changed, all countries in the hemisphere are in favor of the relations, he said in a meeting with Cuban journalists covering the talks aimed at re-establishing relations and open embassies in both capitals.

"I have been waiting for a long time for this moment of openness, now we should go step by step and I would like to be in Havana when the U.S. embassy is inaugurated," he said.

According to Wayne Smith, Washington must immediately remove Cuba from the list of terrorist states, as the first action to improve relations.

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