

# *Latin American Pressure Boosts Cuba-U.S. Relations*

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Havana, August 13 (RHC-PL), -- Latin America and the Caribbean have played a valuable role in the way that led to the historic restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States that were broken-off more than 50 years ago.

The Latin American and Caribbean position that led Washington to accept the need to achieve that objective was publicly recognized by U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, and Cuban Foreign Minister, Bruno Rodriguez.

Both officials put emphasis on the thrust provided by regional countries in favor of the renewal of bilateral ties, broken off by the United States in 1961.

The head of U.S. diplomacy underlined the persistence of that region on the White House for the restoration of ties with the Caribbean nation.

'I want to thank our friends from the continent who urged us many times over decades so we normalize (relations with Cuba) and now they have welcomed our decision to do it,' Kerry noted.

On the other hand, Rodriguez stressed the solidarity of Latin America and the Caribbean, of the vast majority of countries around the world and many American and Cuban residents who are living in the

U.S., who persisted for years in their efforts that Cuba and the United States had a better relationship.

The demand was evident in 2005 within the mechanism of the Summit of the Americas that held its first six meetings without Cuba's participation.

All those regional efforts were crowned when Cuba was invited to attend the latest continental conference held in Panama, on April 2015, with a delegation led by President Raul Castro, 'without conditions and on a basis of sovereign equality.'

Thus, Latin American and Caribbean pressures reached their first objective and now move forward in search of the ultimate objective: lifting the economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba for over half a century.

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