

# *Panamanian President on Official Visit to Cuba*

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Havana, September 9 (RHC)-- Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela arrives in Havana Wednesday to begin an official visit which includes talks with President Raul Castro.

Varela is heading a business delegation to boost and strengthen commercial relations with Havana, according to this morning's edition of Granma newspaper. The delegation includes Panamanian Commerce and Industry Minister Meliton Arrocha.

The Panamanian head of state told reporters that among other issues bilateral talks will consider the exchange between Cuba and the Colon Free Zone, in Panama.

Varela is scheduled to visit the Havana-based Latin American School of Medicine and meet with local political authorities, such as Parliament President Esteban Lazo.

Raul Castro and Juan Carlos Varela previously met in Panama during the 7th Summit of the Americas. They reportedly talked about the development of the Mariel Special Development Zone in western Cuba, the advancement of talks between Cuba and the United States and business projects between Panama and the Caribbean nation.

The Panamanian President is an industrial engineer and graduate of Georgia Tech University in the United States. He was elected head of state in the elections held in May 2014, for a term that concludes

in 2019.

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