

# *CARICOM Reaffirms Stand Against U.S. Blockade of Cuba*

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Georgetown, March 26 (RHC)-- The Caribbean Community, CARICOM, renewed its call on Tuesday for Washington to lift its over-50-year economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba and reiterated the bloc's willingness to maintain close relations with the Caribbean island.

A report from Georgetown by the Caribbean Media Corporation, posted on [Dominicavibes.com](http://Dominicavibes.com) cited CARICOM secretary general Irwin la Roque as saying that "Caricom knows well the value of unity on the international front given that co-ordination of foreign policy is one of the pillars of our integration movement. We have, as a bloc, joined with like-minded states to both advance and protect our interests and support causes and initiatives of priority concern to us."

"This is why we have consistently supported United Nations resolutions aimed at ending the U.S. embargo on Cuba and will continue to do so," CARICOM Secretary general Irwin la Rocque said as he accepted the credentials of Cuba's fourth Plenipotentiary Representative, Julio Cesar Gonzalez Marchante.

La Rocque told the ceremony that the relationship between Cuba and CARICOM is unique, forged over several decades.

"In fact, since the historic day of 8 December 1972, which saw the establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba by Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the bonds of friendship and solidarity between our countries have grown and deepened significantly," he said, adding that the day is now celebrated annually as Caricom-Cuba Day.

The official said that relations between CARICOM and Cuba are a symbol of South-South cooperation

highlighted by summits held every three years and the meeting of foreign ministers every 18 months. La Rocque said the last summit in 2011 had identified nine areas for technical co-operation, four of which are at the regional level and the others bilaterally between member states and Cuba.

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