

# *Cuban ambassador protests closing of Canadian consular services in Havana*

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Ottawa, June 6 (RHC)—Cuba’s ambassador to Canada, Josefina Vidal, says the Cuban government presented an official protest before Canadian authorities because of the closing of its consular services in Havana.

In an interview with Radio Canada, the diplomat stated that her government does not understand the reasons behind the closing and the substantial reduction of staff of the Canadian embassy.

She added that the reason given was a mysterious illness suffered by some of its diplomatic staff stationed in Cuba in 2017, and that were originally attributed to so-called acoustic attacks.

When evaluating the consequences of these closings, ??the diplomat pointed out that Cubans have to travel twice, at a high cost, to a Canadian embassy in a third country, Mexico, for example, to obtain a Canadian visa. This measure affects hundreds of people, including Canadians whose family have a Cuban member.

She added that Canada reproduced the same measure adopted by the Trump Administration, that forces Cubans who want a US visa to visit a US embassy abroad.

According to Vidal, the closing of the Consular office also impacts bilateral relations which she described as excellent before the measure. It also affects bilateral trade, development aid, and investments.

In another part of her statements, the Cuban representative addressed relations with the United States. "We have seen with frustration that we have moved on to a policy of progressive deterioration of relations between the United States and Cuba, and now we are once again in a confrontational situation," she said.

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