

Group of Prominent Americans Urges Easing Cuba Blockade



Washington, May 20 (RHC) – A group of 44 former high-ranking U.S. officials, business executives and academics is asking President Barack Obama to loosen the five-decade economic and political blockade on Cuba.

In an open letter released Monday, the signatories ask Obama to take several actions, including legalizing travel to Cuba by experts who can train Cuban entrepreneurs in law, real estate and financial services, and easing currency sanctions to support the development of Cuba's economic reforms, particularly its nascent private sector.

The letter is signed by representatives of U.S. politics, including several Republicans, members of the Cuban-American community residing in Miami, Florida, as well as former government officials and former senior officers of the armed forces.

Among the signatories are three former Undersecretaries of State for the Western Hemisphere: Jeffrey Davidow, Alec Wastson and Arturo Valenzuela, as well as two former heads of the U.S. Interest Section in Havana: Michael Palmry and Vickie Huddleston.

The former commander of the Allied Supreme Command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO), the retired U.S. General James Stavridis, is also signatory of the letter.

The renowned personalities also demand Obama hold serious discussions with Cuban authorities in areas of mutual interest, such as national security, migration, drug trafficking and environment.

The letter follows a February public opinion poll in which 60% of Americans said they favor loosening the five-decade old sanctions on Cuba.

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