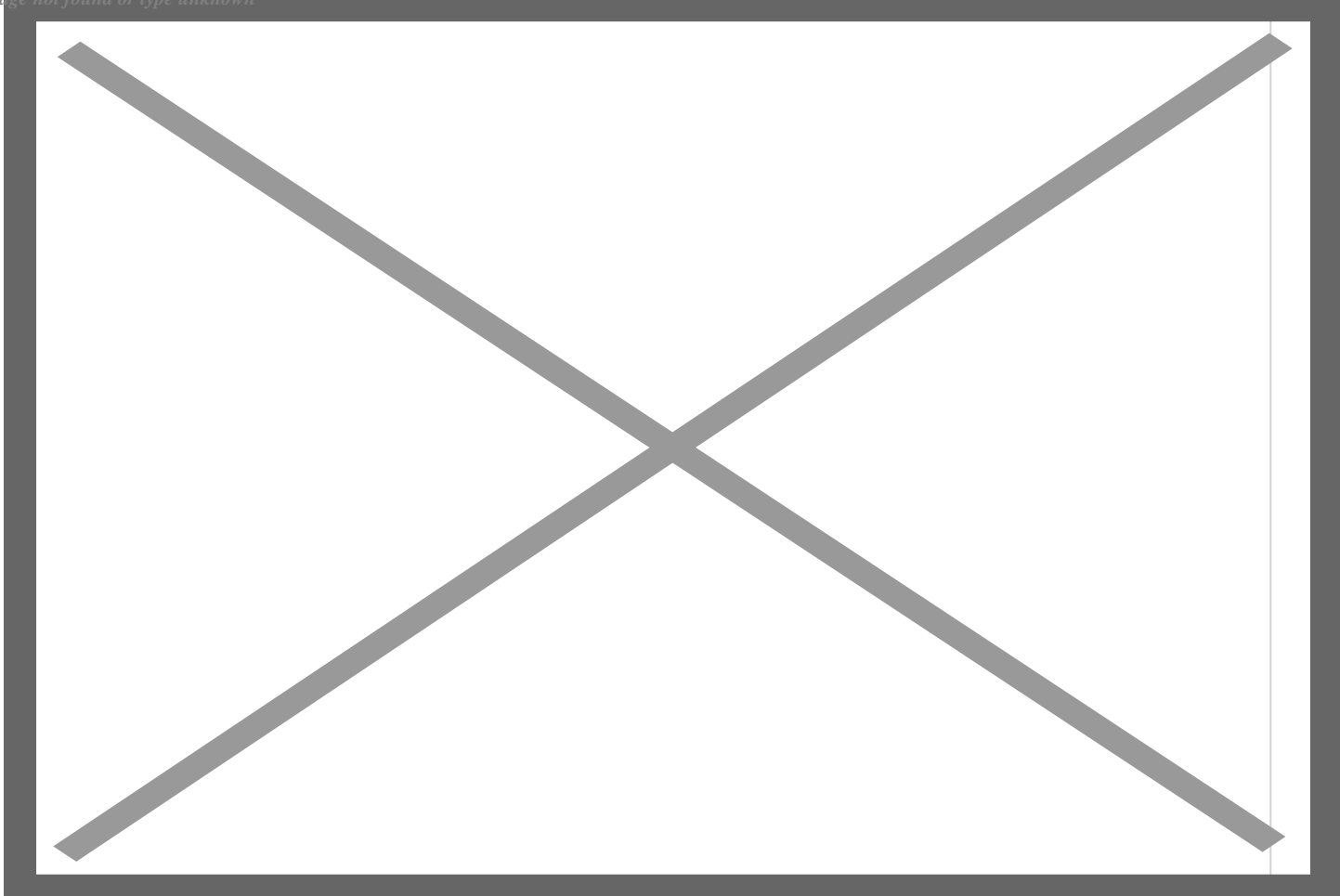


Cuba: Non-state sector becomes more involved in foreign trade

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Foreign Trade and Investment Minister, Rodrigo Malmierca.

Havana, January 20 RHC)-- Foreign Trade and Investment Minister, Rodrigo Malmierca, pondered on Tuesday the decision to incorporate the non-state forms of management operating in Cuba into foreign trade, to add productive forces to the efforts to capture foreign exchange.

Since the middle of last year to date, he told the Round Table TV program on Tuesday, these organizations have signed 863 export and import contracts, transactions being executed through 41 specialized companies authorized to facilitate purchases and sales of goods and services abroad.

The Minister clarified that not only cooperatives and self-employed workers could take advantage of this possibility, but also users of state land, small farmers, creators, artisans, and anyone who meets the legal norms for these operations.

The 863 export and import contracts achieved to date by the non-state forms of management amount to 22 million dollars, which shows that it is possible to insert this sector into Cuban foreign trade.

Of that amount, some 475 come from the agri-food sector, and to a lesser extent, from professional services, crafts, and furniture manufacturing.

Malmierca emphasized that the United States' blockade is intended to stifle the country economically, not to export, access foreign credit, or attract foreign capital, and the safest sources of resources are precisely exports.

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