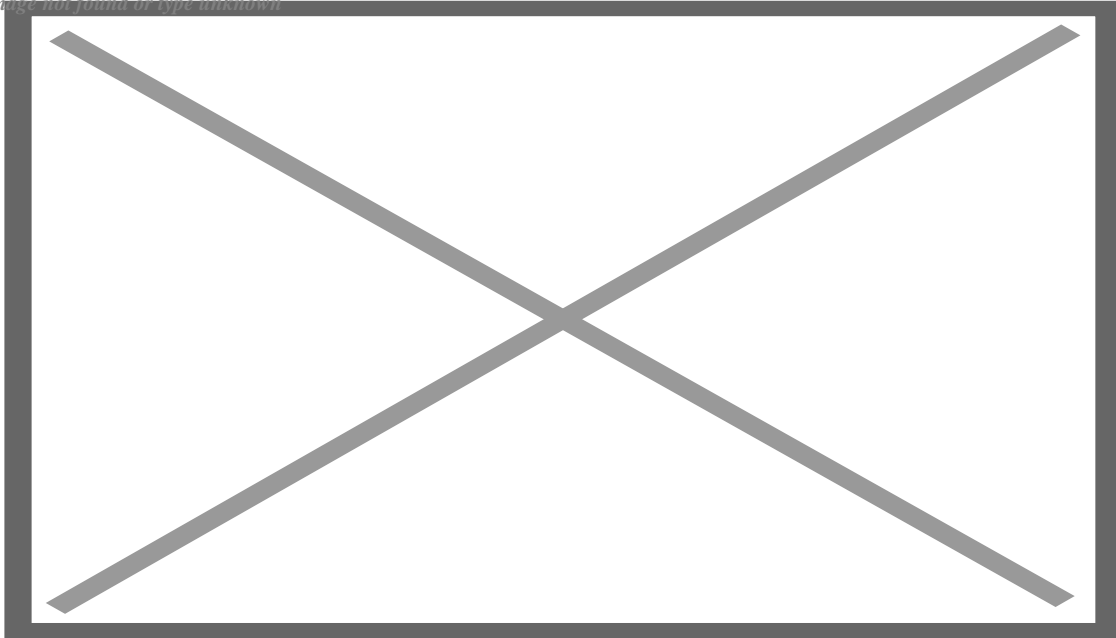


Western Union suspends operations in Cuba due to U.S. government punitive measures against the Cuban people

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Havana, February 10 (RHC)-- Countless Cuban families will be affected by the suspension of remittances sent through Western Union to Cuba as a result of the United States Government's change of course in its irrational hardline policy towards the island.

A statement from the entity, cited in digital media, emphasized that "due to a change in the United States sanctions regulations," the financial services company is forced to indefinitely suspend its money transfer service to Cuba, "with immediate effect."

The decision is not surprising, it was coming, because Orbit SA, in charge of processing remittances, was included in the List of Restricted Entities of Cuba with the return of Republican Donald Trump to the White House.

On January 20, when he took office, Trump overturned the last-minute measures of his predecessor Joe Biden, and reestablished, among others, that list.

This was followed by the statements of the Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, who on January 31 announced that in addition to reincorporating the entities that were “up to the last week of the previous administration, we are adding Orbit, S.A.”, which, according to him, “acts for or on behalf of the Cuban military forces.”

On Wednesday, the State Department published the update of the template and, in effect, Orbit SA was added to the existing ones, according to the text that can be read on the Federal Register page.

The warning is that direct financial transactions in general are prohibited for the entities included in accordance with the Regulations for the Control of Cuban Assets.

Rubio - who during his time as a senator was one of the main architects of the policy against Cuba in the United States Congress - recalled that on his first day, Trump returned Cuba to the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism and reactivated Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, also known as the Liberty Act.

Western Union resumed its money transfer service to Cuba in May of last year, after stopping it in 2020, during the first Trump administration (2017-2021).

At that time, the Fincimex financial institution was sanctioned as part of the arbitrary measures that, as now, intensify the blockade, thus making it impossible for residents on this side of the strait to financially help their relatives on the island.

Two years later, in 2022, the service was restored with limitations and was again cut off due to technical problems.

Cuba's Restricted Entities List was rescinded on January 16, after the issuance of National Security Memorandum 29 (NSM-29) on the 14th of the same month. On the 20th, Trump issued an Executive Order that invalidated NSM-29.

In his first administration, Trump imposed at least 243 restrictive measures that reinforced the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on the Cuban people more than six decades ago.

The Donald returns to his steps of maximum pressure. Four years ago, eight days after leaving the executive mansion, Trump included Cuba in the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, which it had not been part of since 2015, a position that Biden maintained until the very end of his term.

[SOURCE: PRENSA LATINA and NEWS AGENCIES]

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