

New U.S. measure against Cuba: Security or suffocation?

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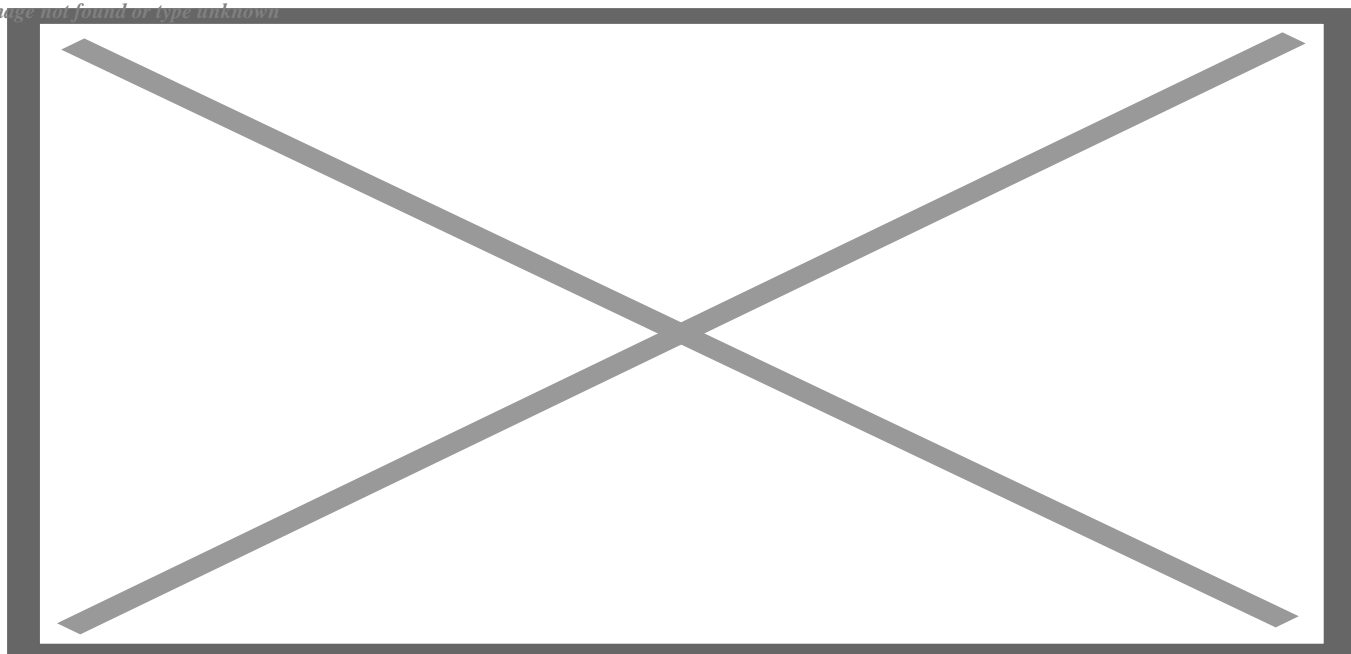


Photo: Ricardo López Hevia

Havana, March 21 (RHC)-- Under the guise of ensuring maritime security and law enforcement, the United States Federal Register announced the imposition of new conditions for the entry of vessels from Cuba, effective April 2nd.

"These derive from a U.S. Congressional law authorizing defense spending in 2024, which included an amendment by anti-Cuban legislators Carlos Giménez Díaz-Balart and María Elvira Salazar, approved without debate and through deceptive methods," Rodney González Maestrey, director of Legal Affairs and Analysis at the Cuban Foreign Ministry's U.S. General Directorate, told Granma.

Under the Maritime Transportation Security Act and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as well as the provisions of Title 46 of the U.S. Code, Section 70108, as amended, and the island's inclusion on the infamous list of state sponsors of terrorism, the Department of Homeland Security, under which the Coast Guard operates, must assume that ports in countries like Cuba do not comply with effective counterterrorism measures.

But the real objective of the new maneuver is to damage official cooperation between Cuba and the U.S. on matters of national security between both countries, and it expands the extraterritorial nature of the blockade by attempting to deter U.S. and foreign maritime vessel operators from engaging with the island, he added.

The already complex interaction is further complicated because, while states have the sovereign right to regulate access to their territorial waters, intensifying these restrictions reveals an insistence on promoting the false idea that Cuba is a threat to US security.

Bilateral cooperation on maritime security was formalized between 2015 and 2016, with the Department of Homeland Security as the key agency implementing the relationship. Since then, the Coast Guard has maintained fluid and effective ties with the Cuban Border Patrol, especially in combating illicit migrant and drug trafficking.

Cuba has also been a partner in U.S. national security, said González Maestrey, who exemplifies areas of joint work such as combating terrorism, human trafficking, port and airport security, and the flow of people and goods between the two nations.

[SOURCE: GRANMA]

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