

U.S. Rules Out Returning Guantanamo Bay to Improve Ties with Cuba



Washington, February 5 (RHC) -- The U.S. State Department official leading negotiations with the Cuban government says that the United States is not considering returning the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay to Havana as it discusses improved ties.

"The issue of Guantanamo is not on the table in these conversations," Roberta Jacobson, the assistant secretary of State for the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, testified during a House of Representatives hearing.

The remarks came after Cuban President Raul Castro last week said it was difficult to talk about normalizing relations while Washington continued its military occupation of Guantanamo Bay and illegal TV and radio broadcasts with subversive content.

Jacobson also said the U.S. would continue transmitting radio and television broadcasts into Cuba.

The State Department official who testified Tuesday before a Senate panel, traveled last month to Havana for two days of talks. It was the highest-level trip to the island by a U.S. official in 35 years. She plans to resume talks with Cuban authorities in Washington this month and hopes to clinch an agreement with

Havana on embassies by April.

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