

Top Cuban and U.S. Diplomats Meet in Washington



Washington, May 16 (RHC) -- The U.S. Undersecretary of State for Latin America, Roberta Jacobson, has met in Washington with the Director for North America of the Cuban Foreign Ministry, Josefina Vidal.

Neither side has revealed the contents of the meeting, although observers say that the shutting down of consular services at Cuba's diplomatic representation in Washington might have topped the agenda of the meeting.

Since February, Cuba's diplomatic mission in Washington has been forced to stop all consular procedures after M&T Bank of Buffalo, New York, closed the accounts the mission used to deposit the consular fees it collected.

An official statement by Cuban diplomatic representatives said that the island hasn't been able to find a bank based in the U.S. that assumes its accounts "due to restrictions derived from the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba."

M&T Bank has never explained why it closed all the accounts it handled for Cuba, including some for Cuba's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York City, as well as other countries.

United States and Cuba maintain regular contacts at the technical level to discuss specific issues such as migration and postal services, but are not comparable to Vidal's visit to Washington, which is a high-level

diplomatic dialogue.

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