

# *Dutch Chancellor Calls for Improvement of E.U.-Cuba Relations*

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Havana, January 6 (RHC) Dutch foreign minister Frans Timmermans stressed in Havana the pertinence of an update of the European Union's relations with Cuba.

During a meeting with Cuban government vice-president Ricardo Cabrisas, Timmermans, who is paying an official visit to Cuba, said that his country is particularly interested in strengthening bilateral links with the Caribbean nation and he backed his statement the economic transformations underway in Cuba and the business opportunities such changes actually offer.

He also referred to the affection of the Dutch people towards Cuba, which have been encouraged by tourist visits, the acknowledgement of Cuban culture and baseball in particular, which promote people-to-people contacts and commercial relations as well.

Vice-president Cabrisas, on his part, announced his government's willingness to favor common interests for the development of bilateral relations, with the antecedent of the progress experienced in 2003.

During his stay in Cuba, Timmermans is scheduled to sign a memorandum on the establishment of political consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries and visit the Havana-based Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology Center.

In 2012, Cuba and The Netherlands signed important protocols, such as a general declaration for the reactivation of bilateral cooperation and an accord on the transfer of prisoners. The two countries have maintained permanent diplomatic relations since 1902.

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