

Cuban Flag to Fly over New Embassy in Washington, DC on Monday



Washington, July 18 (PL-RHC)-- In less than 48 hours, the flag of the Republic of Cuba will fly over its new embassy in Washington, DC and hang at the U.S. State Department -- seven months and three days after the historic announcement by Presidents Raul Castro and Barack Obama.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry says that the re-opening of the Cuban Embassy in the U.S. will be a significant event, after 54 years of rupture in diplomatic relations.

According to diplomatic sources, some 500 guests, including officials, Congressional members, businesspeople, experts of the so-called think tanks, and executives of non-governmental organizations have been invited to the opening ceremony.

From Cuba, a delegation of at least 30 persons, headed by Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez, along a wide representation of Cuban society will also attend the ceremony.

Although U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will not attend the formal ceremony of reopening the Cuban embassy in Washington, he plans to later receive Bruno Rodriguez at the State Department and both will

offer a press conference, spokesman John Kirby explained on Friday during the daily briefing to reporters. He noted that this will be the first time in over half a century that a foreign minister of Cuba is received in Washington.

The Cuban flag will also be hoisted in the vestibule of the State Department, just prior to the ceremony at the former Cuban Section of Interests in Washington, between those of Croatia and Cyprus in alphabetical order, joining the rest of the flags of over 150 countries with which the United States has diplomatic relations.

The U.S. embassy in Havana will start operations also on Monday, although its opening will have a lower level than that of the Cuban mission, leaving the main ceremonies for Kerry's visit to the Cuban capital on a later date.

According to the U.S. State Department spokesperson, Kerry and Rodriguez will have "a substantial conversation" on the new era of opening for both nations.

This will be the second time they meet since resumption of talks on December 17th. The first dialogue took place in Panama City on April 19th before the start of the 7th Summit of the Americas, that became the most important diplomatic event between both countries in over half a century, since breaking diplomatic ties by the U.S. in January 1961.

Although President Barack Obama's administration announced some measures to increase travel and trade with Cuba, steps taken have been limited so far, while the blockade against the island remains the same in its legal basis supported by Congress.

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