

# *Cuba Denounces at World Trade Organization Damage Caused by Ongoing U.S. Blockade*

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Geneva, December 20 (RHC)-- Cuba has insisted at the World Trade Organization (WTO) that the U.S. blockade remains practically unchanged, calling it the main obstacle to the country's development.

Alina Revilla, Cuba's Trade Representative to the UN in Geneva and other international organizations based in Switzerland, participated on Monday in the 13th U.S. Trade Policy Review at the WTO.

The Cuban diplomat stressed that two years after Havana and Washington decided to re-establish diplomatic ties and began moving toward the normalization of their trade and financial relations, no substantial changes have taken place regarding the implementation of the U.S. blockade policy.

Revilla acknowledged what she described as some "advances in the diplomatic sphere and in terms of cooperation relations between the two countries," despite which, she stressed, the economic, commercial and financial blockade remains fully in place.

The Cuban representative reported that in March 2016 new measures were announced allowing Cuban citizens and financial institutions to use the U.S. dollar in certain transactions for the first time since the

blockade was imposed. “Nonetheless, she insisted, the measure has not materialized, as Cuba continues to suffer harassment and persecution in its international financial transactions.”

Revilla insisted that “the U.S. blockade continues to be the main obstacle to the economic development of the country, hindering the functioning of all sectors of the national economy, and leading to a substantial increase in financial costs and obstructing access to foreign capital,”.

She noted that the Cuban government’s efforts to insert the island into the global commercial system are being undertaken under particularly difficult conditions, as a result of a U.S. policy, which contradicts the principle of free trade.

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