

Voices Around the United States Strongly Oppose Trump's New Cuba Policy



Havana, June 16 (RHC)-- And aware that engagement with Cuba better serves the interests of both the United States and Cuba, reactions continue to emerge in the U.S. that oppose Donald Trump's giving in to the narrow interests of ultra-right wing Cuban-Americans.

The respected magazine *The Atlantic* carried an article written by Ben Rhodes, in which the former Deputy National Security Advisor under Obama describes President Trump's rollback as a pointless mistake.

Rhodes, who was the architect behind the opening to Cuba under Obama, notes that Trump is making good on campaign promises to Senator Marco Rubio and Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart that will hurt ordinary Cubans and harm the image of the United States.

Rhodes argues that by rewarding a small and dwindling political constituency in Florida and reimposing restrictions regarding Cuba, Trump is turning back the clock to a tragically failed Cold War mindset and calls President Trump's actions a step backwards that will still prove unable to reverse the course of US-Cuba events.

Trump's announcement should be seen for what it is: not as a step forward for democracy, but the last illogical gasp of a strain of American politics with a 50-year track record of failure that wrongly presumes the U.S. can control what happens in Cuba. The future of Cuba, he notes, will be determined by the Cuban people, and could be assisted by Americans want to help, not hurt, concludes Ben Rhodes.

And in the U.S. capital, the Washington Post, meanwhile, argues that with his shift on Cuba, Donald Trump could be undercutting his company's hotel-industry rivals like Starwood Hotels and Resorts and Sheraton.

The Post notes that as the owner of a real estate company with a big stake in hotels and resorts, Trump brings an added element to an issue that is unique to his presidency — the ability, through his official actions, to undermine a growth area for his industry rivals who have raced in recent years to establish a foothold in Cuba's lucrative new market.

The Washington Post writes that the Cuba policy issue offers a reminder of Trump's dual roles, public and private, as a result of his decision to retain his sizable ownership stake in his company.

Starwood Hotels and Resorts, which merged with Marriott International to form the world's largest hotel chain, last year debuted the first Cuban hotel managed by a U.S. company in nearly 60 years.

Arne Sorenson, president and chief executive of Marriott International, issued a statement Thursday saying it would be "exceedingly disappointing" to see the progress made in the last two years reversed by the Donald Trump administration.

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