

Cuba Warns Obama: Do Not Interfere in Our Internal Affairs

By [Telesur](#)

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Cuba will not “negotiate matters that are inherent to its internal system in exchange for an improvement of relations with the United States,” Josefina Vidal, director of U.S. affairs in the Cuban foreign ministry, said Wednesday.

U.S. President Barack Obama was welcomed to visit Cuba Wednesday evening, so long as he does not interfere in the internal affairs of the country.

“The day that the president of the United States decides to visit Cuba, he will be welcome,” Reuters reported Josefina Vidal, director of U.S. affairs in the Cuban foreign ministry, as telling reporters.

“Regarding what I just said, I’d like to recall that Cuba has always said ... it is not going to negotiate matters that are inherent to its internal system in exchange for an improvement in or the normalization of relations with the United States,” Vidal added.

On Monday, Obama suggested he would visit the Caribbean nation in 2016 providing the “conditions” are “right.” For the U.S. leader, these conditions include being able to “talk to anybody,” including U.S. funded “pro-democracy” groups and political dissidents, as well as being able to “nudge” the Cuban government in a “new direction.”

Obama made the comments days before the Dec. 17, 2014 anniversary of Cuban President Raul Castro and U.S. President Barack Obama announcing the beginning of the normalization of relations between the two countries.

While both sides say significant progress has been made over the past year, the Cuban government says normal ties will be impossible unless the United States meets four conditions: leave the Guantanamo Bay detention camp; end the blockade; end the “wet-foot-dry-foot” policy encouraging Cubans to pursue residency in the U.S.; and end anti-government radio and television transmissions on the island.

The lifting of the half-century blockade would represent a historic moment for Cubans, 77 percent of whom were born under the harsh economic conditions resulting from it.

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