US: Bid To Discard Lawsuit On Cuban Properties Granted In Court

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South Florida District Judge Robert N. Scola dismissed on Thursday a lawsuit against Booking, Hotels, Expedia, and Orbitz supported by Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, activated by Trump administration in May 2019.

Scola definitively dismissed the lawsuit filed by Mario Del Valle, Enrique Falla, and Angelo Pou after accepting requests from hotel and travel booking companies. The plaintiffs accused the companies of unlawfully selling reservations at hotels built in their properties.

"South Florida District Judge Robert N. Scola dismissed a lawsuit against Booking, Hotels, Expedia and Orbitz under Title III of the controversial Helms-Burton Act against Cuba, which is currently in force."

Del Valle, Falla y Pou claimed to have inheritance and property rights over a tract of land of three beachfront properties on Varadero Beach, located in Matanzas province. The properties were nationalized in May of 1959 as a result of the Agrarian Reform Bill.

None of those properties stands still since the Starfish Cuatro Palmas hotel and the Memories Jibacoa resort were build in the same tract of land.

In court, the judge denied the lawsuit alleging that Helms-Burton Act does not allow claims based on properties obtained through inheritance after March 12, 1996, the date on which the Act was passed by, as legal news service Law360 reported.

Helms-Burton Act refuses to grant credits and financial aid to countries and organizations that favor or promote cooperation with Cuba; hinders foreign investment on the island. Its Title III allows Americans to sue individuals and entities to invest in Cuban territories which were nationalized after the revolutionary triumph in 1959.