
Panamanian President Condemns U.S. Sanctions against Cuba

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Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela today repeated his country's condemnation of the sanctions imposed by the United States against Cuba, when commenting Washington's policy of restrictions against the Caribbean island and Russia.

Varela favored a solution to disputes through dialogue when answering a question from Prensa Latina on the obstacles created by the administration of President Donald Trump to world trade and its sanctions against Cuba and Russia.

More than half a century of the U.S. political, economic and commercial blockade on Cuba and the White House's sanctions against Russia do not help at all to eliminate the trade barriers and borders that Varela defended in his speech.

'The matter is not to exert more pressure, but, on the contrary, to seek consensus and dialogue' in international relations, noted the head of State.

In that regard, he mentioned the recent meeting in Singapore between U.S. President Donald Trump and the maximum leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Kim Jong-un.

The Panamanian president showed at the Russian Chamber of Commerce the advantages of his country, which had a population of four million, a gross domestic product (GDP) of some 50 billion dollars and a growth of more than 6 percent in 2017.

In response to Prensa Latina, Varela noted that he was faithful to his conviction that dialogue is the way to iron out differences. He highlighted the positive relations between Cuba and Panama, which is a member of the Pacific Alliance, along with other Latin American countries.

We try to take advantage from dialogue, said the president of Panama, a country that, along with the members of the Pacific Alliance, demands internal changes in Venezuela, which considers that stance a clear case of interference in its internal affairs.

Varela recalled that Panama invited Cuba to the Summit of the Americas and welcomed the changes that have been made in the island's economy over the past few years.

In his speech at the Chamber of Commerce, Varela defended his country's stance as an international platform to reach Latin America, specifically for Russia.

We have connections with more than 70 destinations in some 35 countries, 5 percent of the world's port activity and a comfortable and advantageous system to register big companies in our territory, said Varela, who met with President Vladimir Putin on Thursday.

The Panamanian statesman noted the signing of an agreement on security to train police officers at the academy of the Russian Ministry of the Interior.

We have problems with drug trafficking and not precisely with conflicts, because Latin America is a zone of peace, he commented.

Varela will meet with executives of the airline Aeroflot today and he will travel to Sochi tomorrow for the game between Panama and Belgium, as part of the 2018 FIFA World Cup being held in 12 stadiums in 11 Russian cities until July 15.
