
Trump Bans Govt. Funding of Cuban Cultural, Education Exchange Programs

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US President Donald Trump has banned his government from funding educational and cultural exchange programs with Cuba, Russia, Syria and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), as published in the Federal Register.

The United States will not provide non-humanitarian or nontrade-related assistance to these countries, nor provide funding for officials or employees of the governments of Cuba, the DPRK, Russia and Syria to participate in educational and cultural exchange programs for the 2020 fiscal year, according to the document released on Monday.

The Memorandum was sent by Trump to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and claimed that the measures came in response to alleged human trafficking practices by these countries.

Trump also instructed the United States Executive Director of each multilateral development bank and before the International Monetary Fund to deny any loan or other use of his funds for the aforementioned countries.

The latter restriction also covers countries such as Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Burundi, China, Gambia, Iran, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia and South Sudan.

The new measure adopted by the Republican president comes after the United States included Cuba in June on a list of countries that according to Washington breach the minimum standards to eliminate human trafficking, despite the island's zero tolerance of that phenomenon.

In the particular case of Cuba, the US executive pointed to alleged poor working conditions for doctors on state missions abroad, as part of the growing attacks against a solidarity program of great international recognition.

The recent measure also comes after the government of Miami, Florida, passed a resolution also in June asking Congress and the Federal Executive to ban the contracting of Cuban artists, in order to impact cultural exchanges with the island.
