
OFAC removes sanctions on Cuba's commercial intermediaries

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The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) removed the sanctions on 28 enterprises and persons that acted as commercial intermediaries of the Cuban government.

The measure allows these entities and individuals to again do business on U.S. territory.

The present beneficiaries devote themselves to the commerce of products for a great variety of sectors, from agriculture and livestock to tourism, industry or services. The majority resides in diverse Latin American countries like Mexico, Argentina or Panama, although some of them are also from Japan, Holland and the United Kingdom.

Some of the companies liberated from the OFAC sanctions include the London-based Caribsugar; the Tokyo-based Nippon-Caribbean; the Buenos Aires-based Corporación Argentina de Ingeniería y Arquitectura; Rotterdam's Curef Metal; Exportadora del Caribe in Mexico City; and Mariscos de Farallón in Panama.

Meanwhile, Panamanians Alejandro Abood Angelini and Carlos Alfonso González, as well as Mexicans Carlos Domínguez, of Viñales Tours; Wilfred

Eggleton and Guadalupe Ortiz, of Cubanatur; and Daniel García, of Proarte, were again authorized to do business in the United States.

The Treasury Department's announcement forms part of the process for the normalization of relations between Washington and Havana begun in December 2014, and is part of the latest weeks' efforts to reinforce the advances in this direction before the arrival of Donald Trump's presidency.

Trump has openly criticized the Obama administration's policy of rapprochement to the island and has announced possible backward steps and conditionings to what has been agreed upon until now.

However, U.S. companies like Google and Norwegian Cruises recently signed agreements with the Cuban government and others are in the process of negotiations.

Precisely on Thursday the export to the United States of charcoal produced in Cuba was announced and the first flight of Alaska Airlines to the island arrived in Havana, a show of the U.S. business community's will to increase its businesses deals with Cuba.
