

Excluding Havana, Washington bans all US flights to Cuba

---

26/10/2019



Washington has barred US flights to all cities in Cuba with the exception of its capital, Havana, in another Trump administration jab at the legacy of former US President Barack Obama, who eased a longstanding embargo on Cuba.

Announcing the decision in a tweet on Friday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the action would “prevent the Castro regime from profiting from U.S. air travel and using the revenues to repress the Cuban people.”

“Today, I asked [Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao] to suspend scheduled air service between the U.S. and all Cuban airports, except Havana’s Jose Martí Airport,” Pompeo added in the tweet.

In addition to ramping up hostilities with Cuba – reversing an Obama era decision to pursue better relations – Washington has taken aim at other major policies of the previous commander in chief, including a landmark nuclear deal signed between Iran and world powers in 2015, which President Trump repeatedly slammed as the “worst deal in history.”

Though Washington re-established diplomatic ties with Cuba in 2015, travel to the country remained somewhat restricted under US law prior to Friday’s decision.

US relations with Havana have rapidly deteriorated since Trump took office. In March, the US permanently scaled back operations at its Cuban embassy after at least two dozen staff and

family members reported unexplained neurological symptoms. Media reports blamed the phenomenon on “sound attacks” launched by the Cuban government, while some even blamed Moscow. However, researchers later attributed the mystery noise to crickets.

Since then, Washington has piled economic pressure on Cuba in an effort to pressure Havana into dropping its alliance with the Venezuelan government under President Nicolas Maduro. The US has spent months trying to force Maduro out of office – efforts which so far have failed to yield tangible results.

---