

Oh Obama! Go to Havana

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One month ago, while having lunch in a Havana's private restaurant full of American tourists, a musical trio playing Cuban traditional music extemporized a sticky verse: "Oh, Obama! Go nuts and come to Havana".

I don't know where they learned Spanish, but those tourists sang together in perfect Spanish such phrase.

From Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) to Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961); from John F. Kennedy (1961-1963) to Barack Obama (2009-), 19 U.S. presidents have been in the Oval Office and none has paid a formal visit to Cuba as an independent country. Will Obama do it? Everybody is asking the same question because there are many people wanting so. It would be one of those cases where the press could use correctly the adjective "historical".

Few days ago, when Cristina Escobar, journalist of the Cuban TV, asked at the White House press center about the possibility of president Obama visiting Cuba, press secretary Josh Earnest answered: "I know he would be extremely pleased to visit Cuba, especially Havana". On May 11st, Josh Earnest highlighted Obama's visit to Cuba was not something imminent, but the travel would take place before Obama's time in office ends.

Since president Obama and Castro started breaking down walls, the so-called visit is a constant possibility in the media. Raul Castro and Obama symbolically shook hands in the funeral of South African leader Nelson Mandela. Later, both talked extensively by phone to seal the

agreements announced on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and they met publicly and privately during the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Americas held in Panama.

So what's next? The U.S. president's visit to the place where most of changes have been taking place, Cuba. Of course, President Raul Castro could also visit the U.S. as part of an invitation or a bilateral meeting, or as an item in the agenda of any international meeting as Commander in Chief Fidel Castro did several times as Head of State.

A Barack Obama's travel to Cuba would be paramount for U.S. institutions. It would be a visit made by the most influential man in the politics and government of the whole federation. It would be the visit of the supreme leader of the army of the United States. First, this would mean the end of all speculations regarding the "danger" and military "threats" of Cuba and confirm the foolish staging of Cuba as center point of weapons' illegal business and biochemical threat to attack the U.S. from Bejucal or Jaruco.

A U.S. president would not make a friendly visit to an enemy country that could threaten his own country. Obama's presence in Cuba will make lawmakers to take note of the message; especially in a future context where Cuba may be out of the terrorist list, embassies will be opened in both countries and other major political actors may have already visited the island; namely, U.S. vice-president Joe Biden or Secretary of State John Kerry. On the other hand, we should consider the fact that President Obama would not travel alone. Who would accompany him? Perhaps the first lady, his closest advisers, businessmen, some state governors, and probably several art and sports representatives.

Nobody, not even his bitterest critics, would reject the invitation to be part of the presidential delegation to a first official visit to Cuba.

Certainly, it would stir up some extremist circles in Miami. However, it is logical that mediocre and evil media, reduced to rancor after December 17<sup>th</sup>, will behave properly before the strong presidential will. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen herself, who spends time blaspheming against the normalization of relations between Cuba and the U.S., will have little choice but to moderate her words and give her dirty work to Carlos Curbelo.

Once Obama travels to Cuba, several fears will suddenly vanish. Many good people, influenced by the evil extremists in Miami, could free themselves and express freely their respect for Cuba.

**Cubasi Translation Staff**

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