

Beat: Politics

Cuba's Raul Castro demands end to U.S. embargo against Cuba

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USPA News - Cuban President Raul Castro has called on the United States to put an end to the U.S. embargo against Cuba, saying that the communist country is willing to normalize diplomatic relations with the U.S. but that the current embargo would make such an effort difficult. Castro, speaking in Costa Rica at a Latin American summit, praised U.S. President Barack Obama's efforts to renew ties, but emphasized that he would not make any political concessions or give up any of the regime's principles.

"Cuba is willing to normalize relations but the main problem has not been solved: the economic and financial blockade," Castro said, as quoted by TeleSUR TV. "We should not pretend that Cuba will renounce its ideals of independence and freedom of their principles in the process of diplomatic relations with the U.S." Castro added that while the restoration of diplomatic relations is the beginning of a normalization of bilateral ties, it may not be possible until the economic blockade is lifted. He has called the embargo a "violation of international rights," which he believes has caused significant human and economic damage. "It would not be ethical, fair, or acceptable if these problems are not solved," he said, TeleSUR reported. The Obama administration has yet to respond to Castro's remarks.

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