

## In spite of Trump, Cuba and the United States build ICT Bridges

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Even with the current political atmosphere generated by Donald Trump's administration, Cuba has more than a dozen agreements in force signed with North American companies in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sector, which are beneficial for both parties.

Ernesto Rodriguez Hernandez, Vice Minister of Communications, reported today during the closing session of the Business Forum in the field of ICT between Cuba and the United States, which took place today at the National Hotel.

During his speech, he recalled that the restrictions on the use of e-commerce platforms in both directions, which affect bilateral trade, as well as the constant financial persecution resulting from the imposition of the blockade and the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, have greatly damaged business in the sector.

He also pointed out that the Internet Task Force for Cuba created by the current U.S. administration has recommended implementing actions aimed at hindering the process of computerization of society that is being carried out in the country.

In addition, the U.S. government continues to finance projects against the Cuban Revolution, with subversive content transmitted through radio, television and social networks on the Internet.

However, in this context, several U.S. companies participated in the Forum and, in the exchanges held, work projects were identified with opportunities for both parties, in which progress will continue in future meetings, he said.

For this reason, he valued, the Forum demonstrated the willingness of companies from both countries to continue working together and the possibility of having common and advantageous work goals.

Later on, in statements to the press, he said that the country and the Ministry of Communications reaffirm the willingness to support projects that can be implemented in the field of ICT and telecommunications.

The Deputy Minister also said that the Caribbean nation advocates for the use of ICTs to achieve economic and social development on the basis of strict respect for the United Nations Charter and international law.

In this sense, Cuba rejects the violation of the inalienable and sovereign right of every state to regulate the use and benefits of telecommunications in its territory, in accordance with the universal practice and international conventions, he said.

He also stated that the Cuban State promotes the progress of science, technology, and innovation as essential elements for economic and social development, and it supports exchanges based on absolute sovereign equality and mutual respect.

The Business Forum brought together representatives of the Informatics and Communications Business Group (GEIC), the Cuban Telecommunications Company (ETECSA), the Cuban Postal Services Business Group (GECC), and leading North American organizations in the sector such as Transfer To, S3, Liberty Latin America and C&WN, in order to strengthen ties and boost international collaboration projects.

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