

EUA e Cuba anunciam que suas relações diplomáticas estão reatadas

Cai uma das últimas trincheiras da Guerra Fria: os presidentes Barack Obama, dos Estados Unidos, e Raúl Castro, de Cuba, anunciaram na tarde desta quarta-feira (17/12) a intenção de seus países de restabelecimento pleno de relações diplomáticas. "Pretendemos criar um novo capítulo nas relações entre os países. Esses 50 anos mostraram que o isolamento não funcionou", disse Obama, em Washington. "Acertamos o restabelecimento das relações diplomáticas. Isso não quer dizer que o principal tenha sido resolvido: o bloqueio econômico", disse Castro, ao mesmo tempo, em Havana.

A nova política, que substitui 50 anos de hostilidades entre os dois vizinhos americanos, já produziu seu primeiro fruto: o governo cubano decretou a libertação de Alan Gross, um empresário americano do setor de telecomunicações preso em Cuba há cinco anos, além de um agente de inteligência americano preso em Cuba há 20 anos, enquanto o governo americano ordenou a libertação de Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino e Antonio Guerrero, três espiões cubanos presos nos Estados Unidos, havia 16 anos. Os ex-prisioneiros, reconhecidos como heróis em seus respectivos países, viajaram para suas casas no mesmo dia de sua libertação.

Reprodução



Segundo Raúl Castro, ele e o presidente americano trocaram telefonemas às vésperas do anúncio, completando 18 meses de negociações secretas que tiveram como intermediários e incentivadores o governo do Canadá e o Vaticano. Em seu discurso, Raúl Castro citou o empenho pessoal do papa Francisco, que no decorrer das negociações enviou cartas aos dois presidentes.

Entre as primeiras medidas a serem postas em prática está a troca de embaixadores, a abertura de representação diplomática nos dois países, a flexibilização das restrições ao trânsito de pessoas e ao comércio de mercadorias, e a remessa de valores que os imigrantes cubanos residentes nos Estados Unidos costumam fazer para os familiares que ficaram em Cuba.

Reprodução

O principal entrave à normalização das relações entre os dois países, porém, sobrevive às boas intenções de Barack Obama (*foto*): o embargo econômico decretado em 1961 pelos Estados Unidos a Cuba continua e só pode ser levantado por decisão do Congresso americano. Em sua fala, Obama exortou os deputados a estabelecerem um debate “sério e honesto” sobre o assunto. Num momento em que a oposição republicano assume a maioria nas duas casas legislativas dos Estados Unidos, é pouco provável que isso venha a ocorrer tão cedo.



Resistência

A resistência a qualquer aproximação com Cuba sempre foi muito forte na Flórida, o maior reduto da comunidade de imigrantes cubanos nos Estados Unidos, onde grassa um agudo sentimento anticastrista. Marco Rubio, representante republicano da Flórida no Senado, já advertiu Obama que não vai ser fácil para ele levar à frente sua política para Cuba com um Congresso controlado pelos republicanos.

“Nós vamos ter um par de anos bem interessante para ver como o presidente vai nomear um embaixador e como vai implantar uma embaixada em Cuba”, disse Rubio. “Nós vamos fazer tudo que estiver ao nosso alcance para impedir essas mudanças. Este Congresso não vai levantar o embargo”. Rubio apenas teve palavras positivas para aplaudir a libertação do funcionário americano preso em Cuba.

Embargo

Logo depois que Fidel Castro tomou o poder, ao fim da revolução que derrubou o ditador Fulgêncio Batista, em 1959, Estados Unidos e Cuba entraram em rota de colisão. O pano de fundo era a Guerra Fria, que dividiu o mundo em duas áreas de influência: uma capitalista no Ocidente, para o Estados Unidos, e outra, socialista e ao Leste, para a União Soviética. Cuba tornou-se então, a pedrinha socialista no sapato dos Estados Unidos. Em 1960 começou a imposição de sanções e em 1961 foi decretado o embargo econômico total.

O embargo suspendeu todas as importações e exportações e o estabelecimento de qualquer tipo de atividade econômica de americanos em Cuba. Calcula-se que, com embargo, os prejuízos econômicos sofridos por Cuba possam ter chegado a US\$ 1 trilhão. Se a situação da ilha já era crítica, tornou-se ainda mais cruel a partir de 1991, com o colapso da União Soviética, que até então compensava a fidelidade ideológico de seu parceiro distante com um forte suporte econômico.

Para os Estados Unidos o embargo sempre teve uma conotação mais ideológica, sem nenhuma repercussão significativa em termos econômicos. Para Cuba, "não existe, e não tem havido no mundo, tamanha violação aterrorizante e vil dos direitos humanos de todo um povo do que o bloqueio liderado pelo governo dos EUA contra Cuba", como disse o vice-ministro de Relações Exteriores, Abelardo Moreno, em setembro passado. Mas o embargo é usado também ideologicamente pelo regime cubano, que tem nele a melhor desculpa para suas dificuldades econômicas.



Leia o discurso de Barack Obama, presidente dos Estados Unidos:

Good afternoon. Today, the United States of America is changing its relationship with the people of Cuba.

In the most significant changes in our policy in more than fifty years, we will end an outdated approach that, for decades, has failed to advance our interests, and instead we will begin to normalize relations between our two countries. Through these changes, we intend to create more opportunities for the American and Cuban people, and begin a new chapter among the nations of the Americas.

There's a complicated history between the United States and Cuba. I was born in 1961 — just over two years after Fidel Castro took power in Cuba, and just a few months after the Bay of Pigs invasion, which tried to overthrow his regime. Over the next several decades, the relationship between our countries played out against the backdrop of the Cold War, and America's steadfast opposition to communism. We are separated by just over 90 miles. But year after year, an ideological and economic barrier hardened between our two countries.

Meanwhile, the Cuban exile community in the United States made enormous contributions to our country — in politics and business, culture and sports. Like immigrants before, Cubans helped remake America, even as they felt a painful yearning for the land and families they left behind. All of this bound America and Cuba in a unique relationship, at once family and foe.

Proudly, the United States has supported democracy and human rights in Cuba through these five decades. We have done so primarily through policies that aimed to isolate the island, preventing the most basic travel and commerce that Americans can enjoy anywhere else. And though this policy has been rooted in the best of intentions, no other nation joins us in imposing these sanctions, and it has had little effect beyond providing the Cuban government with a rationale for restrictions on its people. Today, Cuba is still governed by the Castros and the Communist Party that came to power half a century ago.

Neither the American, nor Cuban people are well served by a rigid policy that is rooted in events that took place before most of us were born. Consider that for more than 35 years, we've had relations with China — a far larger country also governed by a Communist Party. Nearly two decades ago, we reestablished relations with Vietnam, where we fought a war that claimed more Americans than any Cold War confrontation.

That's why — when I came into office — I promised to re-examine our Cuba policy. As a start, we lifted restrictions for Cuban Americans to travel and send remittances to their families in Cuba. These changes, once controversial, now seem obvious. Cuban Americans have been reunited with their families, and are the best possible ambassadors for our values. And through these exchanges, a younger generation of Cuban Americans has increasingly questioned an approach that does more to keep Cuba closed off from an interconnected world.

While I have been prepared to take additional steps for some time, a major obstacle stood in our way — the wrongful imprisonment, in Cuba, of a U.S. citizen and USAID sub-contractor Alan Gross for five years. Over many months, my administration has held discussions with the Cuban government about



Alan's case, and other aspects of our relationship. His Holiness Pope Francis issued a personal appeal to me, and to Cuba's President Raul Castro, urging us to resolve Alan's case, and to address Cuba's interest in the release of three Cuban agents who have been jailed in the United States for over 15 years.

Today, Alan returned home — reunited with his family at long last. Alan was released by the Cuban government on humanitarian grounds. Separately, in exchange for the three Cuban agents, Cuba today released one of the most important intelligence agents that the United States has ever had in Cuba, and who has been imprisoned for nearly two decades. This man, whose sacrifice has been known to only a few, provided America with the information that allowed us to arrest the network of Cuban agents that included the men transferred to Cuba today, as well as other spies in the United States. This man is now safely on our shores. Having recovered these two men who sacrificed for our country, I'm now taking steps to place the interests of the people of both countries at the heart of our policy.

First, I've instructed Secretary Kerry to immediately begin discussions with Cuba to reestablish diplomatic relations that have been severed since January of 1961. Going forward, the United States will reestablish an embassy in Havana, and high-ranking officials will visit Cuba.

Where we can advance shared interests, we will — on issues like health, migration, counterterrorism, drug trafficking and disaster response. Indeed, we've seen the benefits of cooperation between our countries before. It was a Cuban, Carlos Finlay, who discovered that mosquitoes carry yellow fever; his work helped Walter Reed fight it. Cuba has sent hundreds of health care workers to Africa to fight Ebola, and I believe American and Cuban health care workers should work side by side to stop the spread of this deadly disease.

Now, where we disagree, we will raise those differences directly — as we will continue to do on issues related to democracy and human rights in Cuba. But I believe that we can do more to support the Cuban people and promote our values through engagement. After all, these 50 years have shown that isolation has not worked. It's time for a new approach.

Second, I've instructed Secretary Kerry to review Cuba's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. This review will be guided by the facts and the law. Terrorism has changed in the last several decades. At a time when we are focused on threats from al Qaeda to ISIL, a nation that meets our conditions and renounces the use of terrorism should not face this sanction.

Third, we are taking steps to increase travel, commerce, and the flow of information to and from Cuba. This is fundamentally about freedom and openness, and also expresses my belief in the power of people-to-people engagement. With the changes I'm announcing today, it will be easier for Americans to travel to Cuba, and Americans will be able to use American credit and debit cards on the island. Nobody represents America's values better than the American people, and I believe this contact will ultimately do more to empower the Cuban people.

I also believe that more resources should be able to reach the Cuban people. So we're significantly increasing the amount of money that can be sent to Cuba, and removing limits on remittances that support humanitarian projects, the Cuban people, and the emerging Cuban private sector.



I believe that American businesses should not be put at a disadvantage, and that increased commerce is good for Americans and for Cubans. So we will facilitate authorized transactions between the United States and Cuba. U.S. financial institutions will be allowed to open accounts at Cuban financial institutions. And it will be easier for U.S. exporters to sell goods in Cuba.

I believe in the free flow of information. Unfortunately, our sanctions on Cuba have denied Cubans access to technology that has empowered individuals around the globe. So I've authorized increased telecommunications connections between the United States and Cuba. Businesses will be able to sell goods that enable Cubans to communicate with the United States and other countries.

These are the steps that I can take as President to change this policy. The embargo that's been imposed for decades is now codified in legislation. As these changes unfold, I look forward to engaging Congress in an honest and serious debate about lifting the embargo.

Yesterday, I spoke with Raul Castro to finalize Alan Gross's release and the exchange of prisoners, and to describe how we will move forward. I made clear my strong belief that Cuban society is constrained by restrictions on its citizens. In addition to the return of Alan Gross and the release of our intelligence agent, we welcome Cuba's decision to release a substantial number of prisoners whose cases were directly raised with the Cuban government by my team. We welcome Cuba's decision to provide more access to the Internet for its citizens, and to continue increasing engagement with international institutions like the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross that promote universal values.

But I'm under no illusion about the continued barriers to freedom that remain for ordinary Cubans. The United States believes that no Cubans should face harassment or arrest or beatings simply because they're exercising a universal right to have their voices heard, and we will continue to support civil society there. While Cuba has made reforms to gradually open up its economy, we continue to believe that Cuban workers should be free to form unions, just as their citizens should be free to participate in the political process.

Moreover, given Cuba's history, I expect it will continue to pursue foreign policies that will at times be sharply at odds with American interests. I do not expect the changes I am announcing today to bring about a transformation of Cuban society overnight. But I am convinced that through a policy of engagement, we can more effectively stand up for our values and help the Cuban people help themselves as they move into the 21st century.

To those who oppose the steps I'm announcing today, let me say that I respect your passion and share your commitment to liberty and democracy. The question is how we uphold that commitment. I do not believe we can keep doing the same thing for over five decades and expect a different result. Moreover, it does not serve America's interests, or the Cuban people, to try to push Cuba toward collapse. Even if that worked — and it hasn't for 50 years — we know from hard-earned experience that countries are more likely to enjoy lasting transformation if their people are not subjected to chaos. We are calling on Cuba to unleash the potential of 11 million Cubans by ending unnecessary restrictions on their political, social, and economic activities. In that spirit, we should not allow U.S. sanctions to add to the burden of



Cuban citizens that we seek to help.

To the Cuban people, America extends a hand of friendship. Some of you have looked to us as a source of hope, and we will continue to shine a light of freedom. Others have seen us as a former colonizer intent on controlling your future. José Martí once said, “Liberty is the right of every man to be honest.” Today, I am being honest with you. We can never erase the history between us, but we believe that you should be empowered to live with dignity and self-determination. Cubans have a saying about daily life: “No es fácil” — it’s not easy. Today, the United States wants to be a partner in making the lives of ordinary Cubans a little bit easier, more free, more prosperous.

To those who have supported these measures, I thank you for being partners in our efforts. In particular, I want to thank His Holiness Pope Francis, whose moral example shows us the importance of pursuing the world as it should be, rather than simply settling for the world as it is; the government of Canada, which hosted our discussions with the Cuban government; and a bipartisan group of congressmen who have worked tirelessly for Alan Gross’s release, and for a new approach to advancing our interests and values in Cuba.

Finally, our shift in policy towards Cuba comes at a moment of renewed leadership in the Americas. This April, we are prepared to have Cuba join the other nations of the hemisphere at the Summit of the Americas. But we will insist that civil society join us so that citizens, not just leaders, are shaping our future. And I call on all of my fellow leaders to give meaning to the commitment to democracy and human rights at the heart of the Inter-American Charter. Let us leave behind the legacy of both colonization and communism, the tyranny of drug cartels, dictators and sham elections. A future of greater peace, security and democratic development is possible if we work together — not to maintain power, not to secure vested interest, but instead to advance the dreams of our citizens.

My fellow Americans, the city of Miami is only 200 miles or so from Havana. Countless thousands of Cubans have come to Miami — on planes and makeshift rafts; some with little but the shirt on their back and hope in their hearts. Today, Miami is often referred to as the capital of Latin America. But it is also a profoundly American city — a place that reminds us that ideals matter more than the color of our skin, or the circumstances of our birth; a demonstration of what the Cuban people can achieve, and the openness of the United States to our family to the South. Todos somos Americanos.

Change is hard — in our own lives, and in the lives of nations. And change is even harder when we carry the heavy weight of history on our shoulders. But today we are making these changes because it is the right thing to do. Today, America chooses to cut loose the shackles of the past so as to reach for a better future — for the Cuban people, for the American people, for our entire hemisphere, and for the world.

Thank you. God bless you and God bless the United States of America.

Leia o discurso de Raúl Castro, presidente de Cuba:

Compatriotas:

Desde mi elección como Presidente de los Consejos de Estado y de Ministros, he reiterado en múltiples ocasiones, nuestra disposición a sostener con el gobierno de los Estados Unidos un diálogo respetuoso,



basado en la igualdad soberana, para tratar los más diversos temas de forma recíproca, sin menoscabo a la independencia nacional y la autodeterminación de nuestro pueblo.

Esta es una posición que fue expresada al Gobierno de Estados Unidos, de forma pública y privada, por el compañero Fidel en diferentes momentos de nuestra larga lucha, con el planteamiento de discutir y resolver las diferencias mediante negociaciones, sin renunciar a uno solo de nuestros principios.

El heroico pueblo cubano ha demostrado, frente a grandes peligros, agresiones, adversidades y sacrificios, que es y será fiel a nuestros ideales de independencia y justicia social. Estrechamente unidos en estos 56 años de Revolución, hemos guardado profunda lealtad a los que cayeron defendiendo esos principios desde el inicio de nuestras guerras de independencia en 1868.

Ahora, llevamos adelante, pese a las dificultades, la actualización de nuestro modelo económico para construir un socialismo próspero e sostenible.

Resultado de un diálogo al más alto nivel, que incluyó una conversación telefónica que sostuve ayer con el Presidente Barack Obama, se ha podido avanzar en la solución de algunos temas de interés para ambas naciones.

Como prometió Fidel, en junio del 2001, cuando dijo: ¡Volverán!, arribaron hoy a nuestra Patria, Gerardo, Ramón y Antonio.

La enorme alegría de sus familiares y de todo nuestro pueblo, que se movilizó infatigablemente con ese objetivo, se extiende entre los cientos de comités y grupos de solidaridad; los gobiernos, parlamentos, organizaciones, instituciones y personalidades que durante estos 16 años reclamaron e hicieron denodados esfuerzos por su liberación. A todos ellos expresamos la más profunda gratitud y compromiso.

Esta decisión del Presidente Obama, merece el respeto y reconocimiento de nuestro pueblo.

Quiero agradecer y reconocer el apoyo del Vaticano, y especialmente, del Papa Francisco, al mejoramiento de las relaciones entre Cuba y Estados Unidos. Igualmente, al Gobierno de Canadá por las facilidades creadas para la realización del diálogo de alto nivel entre los dos países.

A su vez, decidimos excarcelar y enviar a Estados Unidos a un espía de origen cubano que estuvo al servicio de esa nación.

Por otra parte, basados en razones humanitarias, hoy también fue devuelto a su país el ciudadano norteamericano Alan Gross.

De manera unilateral, como es nuestra práctica y en estricto apego a nuestro ordenamiento legal, han recibido beneficios penales los reclusos correspondientes, incluida la excarcelación de personas sobre las que el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos había mostrado interés.

Igualmente, hemos acordado el restablecimiento de las relaciones diplomáticas.

Esto no quiere decir que lo principal se haya resuelto. El bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero que



provoca enormes daños humanos y económicos a nuestro país debe cesar.

Aunque las medidas del bloqueo han sido convertidas en Ley, el Presidente de los Estados Unidos puede modificar su aplicación en uso de sus facultades ejecutivas.

Proponemos al Gobierno de los Estados Unidos adoptar medidas mutuas para mejorar el clima bilateral y avanzar hacia la normalización de los vínculos entre nuestros países, basados en los principios del Derecho Internacional y la Carta de las Naciones Unidas.

Cuba reitera su disposición a sostener cooperación en los organismos multilaterales, como la Organización de Naciones Unidas.

Al reconocer que tenemos profundas diferencias, fundamentalmente en materia de soberanía nacional, democracia, derechos humanos y política exterior, reafirmo nuestra voluntad de dialogar sobre todos esos temas.

Exhorto al Gobierno de los Estados Unidos a remover los obstáculos que impiden o restringen los vínculos entre nuestros pueblos, las familias y los ciudadanos de ambos países, en particular los relativos a los viajes, el correo postal directo y las telecomunicaciones.

Los progresos alcanzados en los intercambios sostenidos demuestran que es posible encontrar solución a muchos problemas.

Como hemos repetido, debemos aprender el arte de convivir, de forma civilizada, con nuestras diferencias.

Sobre estos importantes temas volveremos a hablar más adelante.

Muchas gracias.

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