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**USA, Forum to Facilitate Normalization of Relations with Cuba**

18/02/2016



Created last year by the bipartisan entity The Howard Baker Forum, this consortium brings together companies, nonprofit organizations, investors, academics and entrepreneurs, who will discuss the policies for normalization of relations and the barriers for this process, announced by Presidents Raúl Castro and Barack Obama in December 2014.

The event coincides with the presence here of a delegation from the island, led by Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment, Rodrigo Malmierca, which held meetings at the United States Chamber of Commerce and participated in a dialogue with host authorities to promote ties in the context of the validity of the blockade.

According to the program of the conference, welcoming words will be pronounced by the president of The Howard Baker Forum, Scott Campbell, and the co-leaders of Consorcio Cuba, former senators Nancy Kassebaum and Tom Daschle.

Meanwhile, Malmierca and the US Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, will give the opening speeches.

Yesterday, both officials reiterated the will of Havana and Washington for relations to progress, despite obstacles such as the full implementation of the blockade.

Consorcio Cuba has among its objectives to inform and advise Americans interested in the normalization process, to follow the economy of the island, to link to institutions and small entrepreneurs on the island and to promote travels to the Caribbean country to assess business opportunities.

This is one of the organizations founded in recent months to accompany the bilateral approach, which is already showing progress with the restoration of diplomatic relations and high-level contacts among experts in areas of mutual interest.

