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US Removes Cuba From Terror List

By Jason Ditz

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In a move that marks a major step forward in US-Cuba relations, the Obama Administration today removed Cuba from its list of state sponsors of terrorism. Cuba had been added to the list in 1982, during the Cold War.

Getting removed from the list is no easy task, and the decision underscores an ongoing administration effort to patch up relations with Cuba which have been acrimonious, to say the

least, for over 50 years. The move will ease the ending of the long-standing US embargo against the nearby island nation.

President Obama has been in talks with Cuban President Raul Castro recently on such improvements in ties, and the State Department indicated earlier this week that they are “narrowing differences” with Cuba on reopening their long-closed mutual embassies. They also suggested covert efforts to impose regime change in Cuba may be coming to an end.

Historically, the United States was one of Cuba’s most important trading partners, and that is likely to be true again in fairly short order once the various limitations on doing business in Cuba are eased for American companies.

President Obama conceded that the long-standing US efforts to impose regime change on Cuba through isolation and economic embargo have failed, and that it was time for the US to try something else. Experts believe the new openness will oblige Cuba to make considerable reforms in the near future.

Removal from the list of state sponsors of terror was a key demand of the Cuban government for this rapprochement, and their inclusion on the list never made particular sense in the first place, beyond various administrations’ desires to include Cuba on every negative list possible.