

Costa Rica Closes Its Embassy in Cuba



Costa Rica's right-wing conservative President Rodrigo Chaves (Source: [Presidencia de la República de Costa Rica/Commons/CC-BY-SA 4.0](#))

Costa Rican President Rodrigo Chaves has ordered the closure of his country's embassy in Cuba and stated that his government does not recognize the legitimacy of the Cuban government. Cuba rejects the measure as arbitrary and views it as another step in the U.S. campaign to isolate the island.

Chaves announced the decision on March 18 at an event marking the inauguration of a drug-scanning station donated by the U.S., which was also attended by the U.S. ambassador. "Costa Rica does not recognize the legitimacy of Cuba's communist regime, given the mistreatment, oppression, and undignified conditions endured by the inhabitants of this beautiful island," [said](#) Chaves, according to the news agency Reuters. He added: "We must rid the hemisphere of communists."

Costa Rica's Foreign Minister Arnoldo Andre stated that Cuba could continue to maintain consular services in the country.

Cuba's Foreign Ministry announced that it had already been informed of the unilateral decision on March 17 via a diplomatic note "without any justification." Starting April 1, relations are to be maintained only at the consular level, and diplomatic personnel have been ordered to withdraw.

In a [statement](#) dated March 18, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs firmly rejected President Chaves' remarks. He had "grossly manipulated the history and reality of Cuba" and "scandalously ignored" the direct responsibility of the U.S. blockade policy for the deterioration of living conditions on the island—a fact that Costa Rica itself had acknowledged for years.

“The Costa Rican state, which has a history of subservience to U.S. policy against Cuba, is once again joining the U.S. government’s offensive in its renewed attempts to [isolate](#) our country,” the statement continued. The decision was “obviously made under pressure and without regard for national interests.”

Costa Rica’s move is part of a series of similar measures in the region. Ecuador closed its Cuban embassy in early March and declared the Cuban ambassador persona non grata. Both presidents had previously attended a summit of right-wing Latin American heads of state organized by U.S. President Donald Trump in Florida under the name “Shield of the Americas.”

Pressure is also mounting on Cuba’s medical missions, a key source of foreign exchange for Havana. Honduras and Jamaica ended their programs with Cuban medical personnel in March, as the U.S. news portal *Politico* [reports](#), citing internal documents from the U.S. State Department.

The backdrop to these regional shifts is a comprehensive isolation strategy by the Trump administration, spearheaded by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, himself the son of Cuban immigrants. This strategy ranges from reinstating Cuba on the list of state sponsors of terrorism to a military-enforced oil embargo and targeted diplomatic pressure on Havana’s partner countries in the Western Hemisphere. ([Cubaheute](#))