

# **U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council, Inc.**

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## **Google's Lack Of Transparency Harms US-Cuba Commercial Relationship**

The refusal by Mountain View, California-based **Google** (a subsidiary of Alphabet, Inc.; 2015 revenues exceeded US\$74 billion) to provide the following information about their transaction with the government of the Republic of Cuba harms the United States-Republic of Cuba commercial relationship- and opportunities for its expansion and support by the soon-to-be Trump Administration.

- 1) When will the servers be installed?**
- 2) How many servers will be installed?**
- 3) What is the cost of the servers?**
- 4) Where will the servers be located?**
- 5) Is the government of the Republic of Cuba making any payment(s) for the servers?**

The secrecy creates a narrative for politics to continue its invasion into the commercial process. When United States-based companies engage with the Republic of Cuba it is important for the transaction(s) to be transparent.

This is especially true for announcements during the final 37 days of the Obama Administration when a magnified focus will be upon any commercial, economic and political decision.

The goal should be to inoculate commercial engagement from scrutiny, not create an attention-getting virus.

If not, questions by media and Members of Congress may metastasize to focus upon the negative- that the secrecy relating to seemingly basic transactional data is due to the United States-based company having received a license from the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the United States Department of the Treasury and/or Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) of the United States Department of Commerce to engage in a transaction(s) that if made public would encounter criticism, skepticism, antagonism or hearings.

### **From Google (12/13/16)**

#### **Making Google products work better in Cuba**

“Google and Cuba’s national telecom provider ETECSA have signed an agreement to deploy the Google Global Cache service to help improve the online experience for Cubans who are using Google products. This deal allows ETECSA to use our technology to reduce latency by caching some of our most popular high-bandwidth content like YouTube videos at a local level. This in turn means Cubans who already have access to the internet and want to use our services can expect to see an improvement in terms of quality of service and reduced latency for cached content. Our involvement with Cuba dates back to 2014, when we first launched a number of products that included Google Chrome, Google Play and Google Analytics. Just a couple of months ago we followed that up by making hundreds of thousands of free extensions and themes available on the Chrome Web Store to let Cuban users personalize their experience browsing the web with Chrome. Taken together, all these projects are tied to Google’s core values to make the world’s information useful and accessible to everyone regardless of cost, connectivity, and language barriers. Signed by Marian Croak, VP Access Strategy & Emerging Markets, and Brett Perlmutter, Head of Strategy & Operations, Google Cuba.”