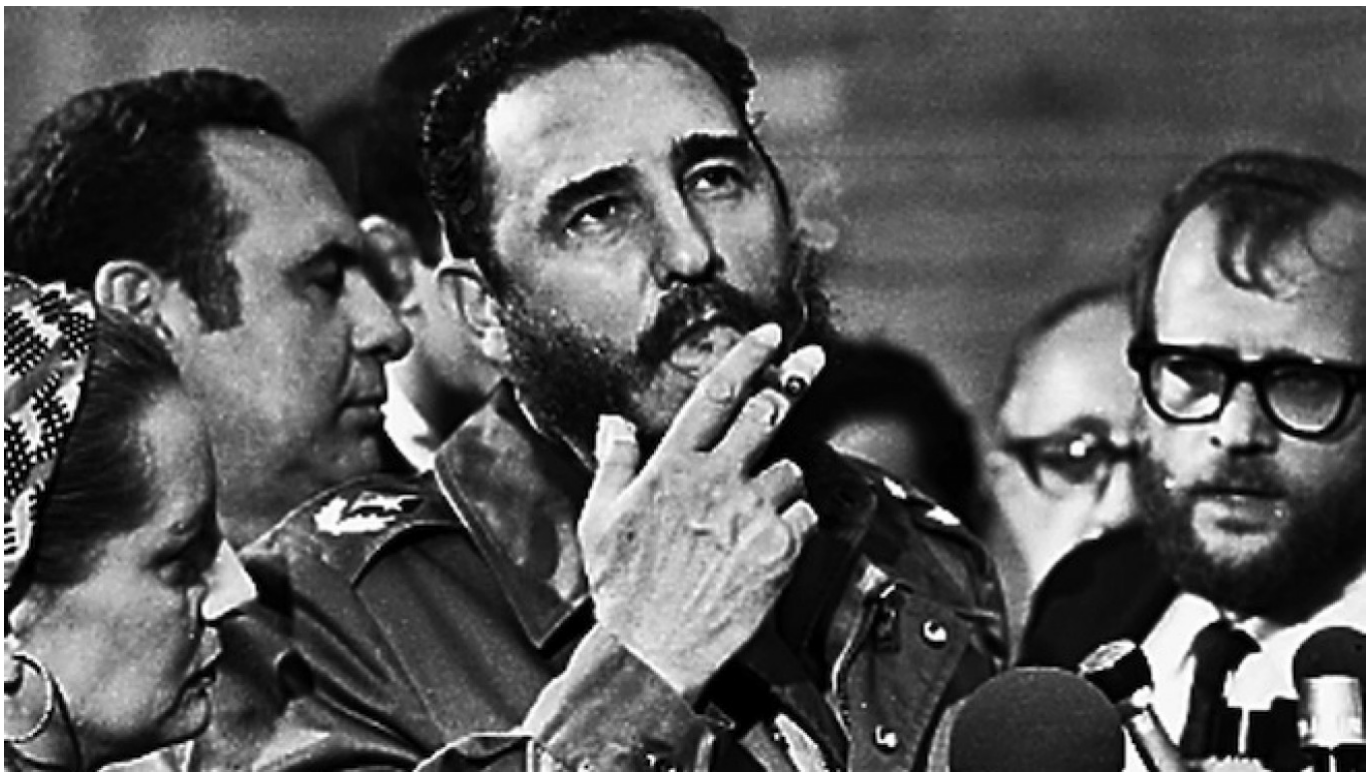
The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Welcomes Steps to Normalize U.S.-Cuba Relations, Minister Says

December 18, 2014



Fidel Castro smokes a cigar during interviews with the press in Havana during a visit of U.S. Senator Charles McGovern in this file photo from May 1975.

Russia welcomes the move by the U.S. to normalize its relations with Cuba, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has said.

The Interfax news agency cited Ryabkov as saying that the move, announced by U.S. President Barack Obama on Wednesday, was a step in the right direction and that Moscow would follow closely the process.

"[The] announcement has been met with a positive response from us," Ryabkov said. "We see this as a step in the right direction. We do not believe that imposing sanctions by the U.S. on whatever country has legitimate basis and legal grounds."

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