

"Completely false": Cuba denies media reports on Chinese wiretapping facility



The former Soviet reconnaissance station in Lourdes (Source: [UCI](#))

Cuba's Foreign Ministry on Thursday denied reports that it had set up a wiretapping facility with China. Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío called corresponding allegations "completely false and unfounded" in a Wall Street Journal report.

The newspaper had previously reported, citing U.S. government officials, that the People's Republic of China plans to build a telecommunications and electrical intelligence (Sigint) listening station on the socialist island to monitor communications in the Florida Straits and southeastern United States. China would pay several billion U.S. dollars to the Cuban government to build the facility, the report said.

"Cuba rejects the presence of foreign military in Latin America and the Caribbean region," de Cossío said. He pointed out that Cuba signed an agreement to that effect in January 2014, declaring Latin America and the Caribbean a peace zone.

"We reject any foreign military presence in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the numerous U.S. military bases and forces, especially the military base that illegally occupies part of our territory in Guantánamo Province," de Cossío said.

U.S. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby also denied the allegation. "I have seen this press report. It is not accurate," Kirby said on the MSNBC news network. Pentagon press secretary Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said, "We know, of course, that China and Cuba have some kind of relationship, but as far as the specific activities that are described in the press report, that is not correct, according to our information," Ryder said. "We are not aware of China and Cuba developing any kind of spy station," Ryder said.

During the Cold War, Cuba maintained an electrical listening station operated by the Soviet Union in the small town of Lourdes, near Havana, beginning in 1962. The facility was closed in 2002. ([Cubaheute](#))