## Condor removes Cuba from its flight schedule



A Boeing 757 from Condor (Source: MiladA380/Commons)

As the industry portal *Reisevor9* reports, the German airline Condor plans to remove Cuba from the upcoming summer schedule in 2025. The step would be a bitter blow for the island's struggling tourism sector, as Cuba would lose its last direct flight connection from Germany.

According to the portal, the step was justified on the grounds of "economic necessity". The last connection to the eastern Cuban province of Holguín is scheduled for April 27. Condor will fly to Varadero and Havana for the last time on April 29 and May 2, 2025, respectively.

The end of the last direct flight connection from Germany comes in the context of a severely diminished European tourism industry. According to the statistics authority <u>ONE</u>, German tourism to Cuba reached an all-time high of 243,172 visitors in 2017; in 2022, the number was 58,715, and has only marginally recovered since then.

The German Foreign Office's recently <u>amended travel advice</u>, which recommends "carefully considering the necessity of the trip" and "carefully preparing" it, may have contributed to the decision. Even though the tourism sector is less affected by the current energy crisis, the tense economic situation remains one of the reasons for the ongoing slump in tourism.

The fuel shortage also affected air traffic recently. <u>According to media reports</u>, there were kerosene shortages in Havana and Varadero a few days ago. These have been resolved following the <u>arrival of a tanker</u> that delivered supplies for the period until January. However, the case shows how precarious the supply is.

A total of 1.72 million international tourists visited Cuba by the end of September -5.2 percent fewer than in the same period last year. The country is thus falling well short of its

self-imposed target of 2.7 million visitors. By way of comparison, the island still had 3.9 million visitors in 2017. (<u>Cubaheute</u>)