

U.S. built secret 'Cuban Twitter' to stir unrest - AP

Posted by Joan Russow

Thursday, 03 April 2014 14:15 - Last Updated Friday, 04 April 2014 17:53

WASHINGTON Thu Apr 3, 2014 4:56pm BST WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A U.S. agency created a 'Cuban Twitter' to undermine Cuba's communist government and get around its strict Internet prohibitions, using secret shell companies financed through foreign [banks](#)

, The Associated Press reported on Thursday.

The two-year project drew 40,000 users who did not know the communications network was devised by a U.S. agency and designed to push them toward political dissent, according to the AP. They also did not know their personal information was being gathered.

The report identified the U.S. Agency for International Development, which delivers aid to the world's poor, as being behind the project.

by REUTERS

by Reuters

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/04/03/uk-usa-cuba-twitter-idUKBREA321F720140403#comments> WASHINGTON Thu Apr 3, 2014

The communications network was called "ZunZuneo," Cuban slang for a hummingbird's tweet, and the AP said its goal was to build an audience of young users.

The plan for the social network was to draw in a certain number of users with messages on

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sports, music, weather and other noncontroversial topics. Then the operators would introduce political content to try to inspire spontaneous demonstrations, the AP reported. One USAID document cited by the AP said the goal was to "renegotiate the balance of power between the state and society."

It was not clear if the program was illegal. USAID spokesman Matt Herrick told AP that U.S. congressional investigators reviewed their programs last year and found them to be legal.

USAID did not immediately return requests for comment from Reuters.

Interviews and more than 1,000 pages of documents obtained by the AP showed USAID was careful to hide Washington's ties to the project, the report said. It used companies in Spain and the Cayman Islands to conceal the money trail.

"There will be absolutely no mention of United States government involvement," read a 2010 memo from Mobile Accord Inc., one of the project's creators, published by AP. "This is absolutely crucial for the long-term success of the service and to ensure the success of the Mission."

ZunZuneo began shortly after Cuba's arrest of American contractor Alan Gross, 63, in [Cuba](#) in December 2009, the AP said. Gross was sentenced to 15 years in prison for installing Internet networks under a secretive U.S. programme the Cuban government considers subversive.

USAID said ZunZuneo ended in September 2012, the AP reported.

(Writing by [Doina Chiacu](#) ; Editing by [Bill Trott](#) and [David Gregorio](#))

RESPONSE FROM THE CUBAN MISSION AT THE UNITED nATIONS

**PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR
GENERAL FOR THE UNITED STATES OF THE MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

(Thursday, April 4, 2014. □ 22:30 hrs.)

The information contained in the article published by the U.S. news agency AP confirms the repeated denunciations made by the government of Cuba. It is once again demonstrated that the government of the United States has not given up on its subversive plans against Cuba, which seek to create destabilizing situations in the country in order to provoke changes in our political order, to which the government of the United States continues to dedicate budgets of millions of dollars every year.

The government of the United States must respect International Law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and it must, therefore, cease on its illegal and covert actions against Cuba, which are rejected by the Cuban people and the international public opinion.

NOTA DE PRENSA. DECLARACIÓN DE LA DIRECTORA GENERAL DE ESTADOS UNIDOS DEL MINISTERIO DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES.

(Jueves 3.04.2014. □ 22:30 hrs.)

□ La información contenida en el artículo de la agencia norteamericana AP confirma las reiteradas

denuncias del gobierno cubano. Se demuestra una vez más que el Gobierno de Estados Unidos no ha renunciado a sus planes subversivos contra Cuba, que tienen como propósito crear situaciones de desestabilización en el país para provocar cambios en nuestro ordenamiento político y a lo cual continúa dedicando presupuestos multimillonarios cada año.

El Gobierno de Estados Unidos debe respetar el Derecho Internacional y los propósitos y principios de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y, por tanto, cesar sus acciones ilegales y encubiertas contra Cuba, que son rechazadas por el pueblo cubano y la opinión pública internacional.

Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations

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<http://www.cubadiplomatica.cu/onu/ES/CUBAONU.aspx>

COMMENT BY Joan Russow in Reuters Report on the AP story

[http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/04/03/uk-usa-cuba-twitter-Global Compliance Research Project](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/04/03/uk-usa-cuba-twitter-Global%20Compliance%20Research%20Project)

What is needed is the following:

Draft Declaration Countering the Destabilization of Member States of the United Nations
AWARE THAT the foreign state or states call for the reestablishment of democracy, in the targeted state, after years of oppression;

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COGNIZANT of the fact that there has been evidence over the years of powerful states or a powerful Coalition of states engaging in activities which have either led to a coup d`Etat or to "regime change" in a targeted state;

AWARE ALSO that tactics have been used by foreign states to propose that producers, in a target state, increase inventories and export goods in order to create a scarcity of goods;

NOTING THAT foreign governments will seek out foreign-educated opponents of the government and the opposition party leader, in targeted states and work with them to organize rallies and instigate conflict

CONCERNED THAT strategies have been used by foreign states to dismantle infrastructure, particularly energy systems of the targeted state so that the citizens will blame the government for negligence and inefficiency;

CONCERNED ALSO THAT government-funded NGOs will be inserted into the targeted state to declare that the targeted state is denying freedom of speech and of the press and cite the 1994 Declaration of Chapultepec, and to instil fear of the elected or the to be elected government;

DISMAYED THAT States have used Aid organizations to attempt to destabilize, through social media, a target state

We affirm that any state that attempts to destabilize another state will be taken to the International Court of Justice under chapter VI Art. 33 of the Charter of the United Nations

(Inspired by Wikileaks' leaked document about destabilization in Venezuela, by La Prensa Grafica in El Salvador and by the above Article about Cuba.)