

Aruba, February 20, 2015 - Cuba has temporarily reduced the hourly charge for using state-run Internet cafes in the country's first small but substantive public move to increase online access since the declaration of detente with the U.S.

President Barack Obama said late last year that Cuba had promised to increase Internet access, although U.S. and Cuban officials have since provided few specifics.

Virtually all home connections remain illegal in Cuba and getting online at government centers remains prohibitively expensive. Post-discount, an hour costs roughly 10 percent of the average monthly salary of \$20.

Users nonetheless hailed the decision to cut the rate by 50 percent until April 10. State centers previously charged \$4.50 an hour. The promotion gives Cubans two hours and 16 minutes for \$5.

"The cut is something that's really positive," said Dimas Bencomo, an artist who goes nearly every day to one of the 155 cyber-cafes opened in 2013. "They should be charging even less and it would be much better to have a connection in my house."

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www.nbcnews.com/news/world/cuba-cuts-price-internet-access-n308591