



Written by [David Kelly](#) on November 15, 2023

U.S. and Cuba Meet to Control Migration to America

U.S. and Cuban officials met in Havana on Tuesday to discuss the ongoing implementation of the U.S.-Cuba [Migration Accords](#) as near record levels of Cubans flee to America seeking refuge from the island nation's dire economy.

This was the second bilateral discussion on migration since the U.S. embassy in Havana resumed full immigrant visa processing and consular services earlier this year, the first time since 2017. Under accords with Cuba, the United States has committed to ensuring the legal migration of at least 20,000 Cubans annually, not including immediate relatives of U.S. citizens.



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The embassy added staff to handle the visa requests and fulfill the agreed commitment to the [Cuban Family Reunification Parole](#) program, which allows U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to apply for their family members in Cuba to come to America.

The embassy posted a brief [statement](#) after Tuesday's meeting, sharing that "the U.S. delegation raised issues important to cooperation on migration as well as obstacles to fulfilling the goals of the Accords. The migration talks underscore our commitment to pursuing constructive engagement with the Government of Cuba that advance U.S. interests. These talks are also consistent with our interest in fostering family reunification and promoting greater respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cuba. Ensuring safe, orderly, humane, and regular migration between Cuba and the United States remains a primary objective of the United States."

The ever-failing communist country's economy has been the driving force of the growing numbers of Cubans leaving for America. The Heritage Foundation [rated](#) Cuba's economy as one of the world's least free, blaming tight state control for the country's economic woes.

Reuters [reported](#) that Cuban vice foreign minister Carlos Fernandez de Cossio stated the migration problem won't go away "until the United States eases sanctions on the island, which Cuba blames for devastating its already-ailing state-run economy."

Reuters continued:

"For the United States, the priority of destabilizing Cuba continues to take precedence over its interest in protecting its borders in terms of migration," de Cossio told reporters following the talks.

The U.S. says the sanctions are necessary to promote human rights and fundamental liberties in Cuba and that it makes exceptions for humanitarian purposes.

More than 400,000 Cubans have come to the United States in the past two fiscal years. U.S. Customs



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and Border Protection [reported](#) 200,287 encounters with Cubans at U.S. borders nationwide in fiscal year 2023, which ended in September. In fiscal year 2022, CBP had reported another 224,607 encounters with Cuban nationals.

Outside of the ongoing migration discussions, Cuba has [reportedly](#) turned to “its fast-growing overseas population for fresh investment to lift its sinking economy.”

This week [Reuters](#) interviewed Ernesto Soberon, director of Consular Affairs for the Cuban Foreign Ministry, on the migration issue affecting his country, stating that it “represents a loss but also an opportunity as the government seeks to revive the ailing economy.”

That opportunity comes from Cuban expats who “have already invested in bed-and-breakfasts, eateries and other activities on the island, but Cuba would like to see more capital flow,” Soberon shared with Reuters:

“Today Cubans abroad have no limits on how they can participate in the economic life of their country,” he said, referring to restrictions once placed upon them by the government.

Over 400 Cuban citizens living in more than 40 countries arrive on the island this week to discuss Cuba’s evolving economy and other issues with the government — the first such conversations between Cuba and its ballooning diaspora in nearly two decades.

If there is any good news for the Cuban people and their dismal economic condition, it is that their government is slowly accepting the fact that having a free-market economy in place of the current state-run system is the answer to bringing back a vibrant and successful nation for their people. Hopefully, encouraging expats to invest in their mother country will assist in turning the Cuban economy around and end Marxist control of the island moving forward.



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