

Beat: Politics

HISTORIC DAY FOR US FLAG RAISE ABOVE US EMBASSY CUBA AFTER 54 YEARS OF DISCORD

KERRY CELEBRATES THIS SYMBOL IN HAVANE

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USPA NEWS - It is a historical day, today, August 14th, as Cuba and US had a rendezvous with history; US Secretary of State, John Kerry, travelled to Havana, to celebrate this strong symbolic moment. It means dedicate the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two former Cold War foes, since 1945.

JOHN KERRY AT THE OFFICIAL CEREMONY FOR RAISE THE AMERICAN FLAG ABOVE THE US EMBASSY IN CUBA

US Secretary John Kerry, led an official delegation to this new stage of the normalisation of relations between the two former enemies. He met his counterpart Bruno Rodriguez Cuban Foreign Minister of Affairs-----After fifty-four years of contention between the US and Cuba, the American flag with the stars, flew again in Havana, the Cuban capital.-----

The American flag was raised Friday, August 14 at the Embassy of the United States in Havana, during a symbolic ceremony of gradual rapprochement between the US and Cuba. This reconciliation comes after 54 years, successive governments have maintained shared discord relations and the other since 1961.

US Secretary of State, John Kerry, attended this ceremony which marks a new stage in the restoration of relations between the two countries, started on the initiative of Barack Obama and his Cuban counterpart, Raul Castro.

KERRY MADE REMARKS IN SPANISH ON IMPORTANT TOPICS TO TACKLE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

US SECRETARY JOHN KERRY MADE HIS REMARKS IN SPANISH ON HIS OCCASION IN HAVANA-----

On the photo above: Secretary Kerry checks out one of the many vintage cars still driving the streets of Havana. Can anyone tell us what make and model this is?

John Kerry recalled the importance moment both in the history and symbolic reconciliation of the two countries, the US and Cuba.-----He added that they are more enemies but henceforth neighbours. "Please be seated, everybody. Thank you very, very much. Muchas gracias. Buenos dias. I'm so sorry that we are a little bit late today, but what a beautiful ride in and how wonderful to be here. And I thank you for leaving my future transportation out here in back of me. I love it. (Laughter.)

Distinguished members of the Cuban delegation "" Josefina, thank you for your leadership and for all your work of your delegation; excellencies from the diplomatic corps; my colleagues from Washington, past and present; Ambassador DeLaurentis and all of the embassy staff; and friends watching around the world, thank you for joining us at this truly historic moment as we prepare to raise the United States flag here at our embassy in Havana, symbolising the re-establishment of diplomatic relations after 54 years. This is also the first time that a United States Secretary of State has been to Cuba since 1945.

JOHN KERRY IS THE FIRST US SECRETARY OF STATE TO VISIT CUBA SINCE 1945 -----

"This morning I feel very much at home here, and I'm grateful to those who have come to share in this ceremony who are standing around outside of our facilities, and I feel at home here because this is truly a memorable occasion "" a day for pushing aside old barriers and exploring new possibilities." Said John Kerry.

"And it is in that spirit that I say on behalf of my country, Los Estados Unidos acogen con beneplacito este nuevo comienzo de su relacion con el pueblo y el Gobierno de Cuba. Sabemos que el camino hacia unas relaciones plenamente normales es largo, pero es

precisamente por ello que tenemos que empezar en este mismo instante. No hay nada que temer, ya que serán muchos los beneficios de los que gozaremos cuando permitamos a nuestros ciudadanos conocerse mejor, visitarse con más frecuencia, realizar negocios de forma habitual, intercambiar ideas y aprender los unos de los otros.”^[2] Continued US Secretary in Spanish.-----Secretary Kerry waves to the crowd upon his arrival in Havana, Cuba this morning.

JOHN KERRY RECALLS THE BEGINNING OF RECONCILIATION AT THE MEETING OF OBAMA AND CASTRO---

“My friends, we are gathered here today because our leaders ““ President Obama and President Castro ““ made a courageous decision to stop being the prisoners of history and to focus on the opportunities of today and tomorrow. This doesn’t mean that we should or will forget the past; how could we, after all? At least for my generation, the images are indelible.

In 1959, Fidel Castro came to the United States and was greeted by enthusiastic crowds. Returning the next year for the UN General Assembly, he was embraced by then-Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. In 1961, the Bay of Pigs tragedy unfolded with President Kennedy accepting responsibility. And in October 1962, the missile crisis arose ““ 13 days that pushed us to the very threshold of nuclear war. I was a student then, and I can still remember the taut faces of our leaders, the grim map showing the movement of opposing ships, the approaching deadline, and that peculiar word ““ quarantine. We were unsettled and uncertain about the future because we didn’t know when closing our eyes at night what we would find when we woke up.”^[2] Said John Kerry.

Three retired Marines - Mike East, Jim Tracy and Larry Morris - speak to Secretary Kerry after his remarks. These Marines lowered the flag outside of Embassy #Havana in January of 1961. Today, they presented the flag to be raised by the current military detachment. -----In that frozen environment, diplomatic ties between Washington and this capital city were strained, then stretched thin, then severed. In late 1960, the U.S. ambassador left Havana. Early the following January, Cuba demanded a big cut in the size of our diplomatic mission, and President Eisenhower then decided he had no choice but to shut the embassy down.

Most of the U.S. staff departed quickly, but a few stayed behind to hand the keys over to our Swiss colleagues, who would serve diligently and honourably as our protecting power for more than 50 years. I just met with the Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter, and we’re grateful to Switzerland always for their service and their help. (Applause.)

John Kerry gives a tribute to the three Marine guards Larry Morris, Mike East and Jim Tracy who remained at the embassy, and accomplished their mission :“^[2] Among those remaining at the embassy were three Marine guards: Larry Morris, Mike East, and Jim Tracy. As they stepped outside, they were confronted by a large crowd standing between them and the flagpole. Tensions were high. No one felt safe. But the Marines had a mission to accomplish. And slowly, the crowd just parted in front of them as they made their way to the flagpole, lowered Old Glory, folded it, and returned to the building.”^[2] congratulates the three Marine guards.

“Larry, Mike, and Jim had done their jobs, but they also made a bold promise that one day they would return to Havana and raise the flag again. (Applause.)

At the time, no one could have imagined how distant that day would be.

For more than half a century, U.S.-Cuban relations have been suspended in the amber of Cold War politics. In the interim, a whole generation of Americans and Cubans have grown up and grown old. The United States has had ten new presidents. In a united Germany, the Berlin Wall is a fading memory. Freed from Soviet shackles, Central Europe is again home to thriving democracies.”^[2] Said US Secretary John Kerry. US Department of State

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UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

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