

Carter Returns from Cuba, Calls for Ending U.S. Embargo

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has wrapped up his trip to Cuba—and he's calling for the U.S. to lift the decades-old embargo.

"I think we should remove the embargo ... I hope for the future, all Cubans could be completely free (to travel to the United States) and U.S. citizens also will be free to travel to Cuba," Xinhua press reported Carter as saying before leaving Washington. "It was a great pleasure for us to return to Havana, I hope we can help to improve the relations between the two countries."

Carter, 86, and his wife, Rosalynn, arrived in Havana on Monday by invitation of the Cuban government. During the trip, Carter met with Cuba President Raul Castro and other Cuban officials and citizens, including Fidel Castro. During the meetings, Carter learned about new economic policies and the upcoming Party Congress, and discussed ways to improve relations.

Castro, 84, heaped praise on Carter. In a commentary published in the nation's official media, Castro said the former president, "did what he could to reduce international tensions and promote the creation of interests sections in Cuba and the United States." Castro also said Carter's administration was the "only one that took some steps to lessen the criminal blockade imposed on our people."

Is it time to end the U.S. embargo on Cuba?