

## Press Release

# Historic Changes to U.S.-Cuba Policy

December 17, 2014

The United States government has launched historic steps to re-establish full diplomatic relations with Cuba following more than 50 years of political isolation. While acknowledging that the U.S. isolation of Cuba failed to achieve the goal of a democratic, prosperous, and stable Cuba, President Obama announced measures to end the U.S.'s policy approach and to promote change in Cuba that is consistent with U.S. support for the Cuban people and in line with U.S. national security interests.

“This is a real watershed moment and a new chapter in U.S.-Cuba relations,” said Pedro A. Freyre, chair of Akerman LLP’s International Practice. “The move away from a policy of isolation will create new channels of economic opportunity and humanitarian assistance for the Cuban people.”

Key components of the updated policy approach include establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba, adjusting regulations to more effectively empower the Cuban people, facilitating an expansion of travel under general licenses for the 12 existing categories of travel to Cuba authorized by law, authorizing expanded commercial sales/exports from the United States of certain goods and services, authorizing American citizens to import additional goods from Cuba, facilitating authorized transactions between the United States and Cuba, and initiating new efforts to increase Cubans’ access to communications and their ability to communicate freely, among other changes.

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Pedro A. Freyre

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