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## U.S. and Cuba to Re-establish Diplomatic Relations

Further to President Obama's initial announcement in December 2014 of planned restoration of diplomatic ties on July 1, 2015, President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States will restore formal diplomatic relations with Cuba and specifically that embassies will be re-established in Washington and Havana after more than 50 years. Uncertainty remains about the Congressional authorizations that will likely be required to fund refurbishing and reopening the embassy in Havana, as well as any appointment of a U.S. ambassador to Cuba.

The move reflects a significant change in U.S.-Cuba relations, but is unlikely to result in any immediate, significant easing of the U.S. sanctions and exports controls now imposed on Cuba. Most of the U.S. sanctions and export controls against Cuba are mandated by a statutory embargo and various related statutes that Congress has so far declined to lift or amend. As a result, most Cuba-related transactions remain prohibited under U.S. law at this time.

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This *GT Alert* was prepared by **Kara M. Bombach**, **Renee A. Latour**<sup>†</sup>, and **Sandra K. Jorgensen**. Questions about this information can be directed to:

> [Kara M. Bombach](#) | +1 202.533.2334 | [bombachk@gtlaw.com](mailto:bombachk@gtlaw.com)

- > [Michael X. Marinelli](#) | +1 512.320.7236 | [marinellimx@gtlaw.com](mailto:marinellimx@gtlaw.com)
- > [Renee A. Latour<sup>‡</sup>](#) | +1 202.533.2358 | [latourr@gtlaw.com](mailto:latourr@gtlaw.com)
- > [Patricia Menéndez-Cambó](#) | +1 305.579.0766 | [pmc@gtlaw.com](mailto:pmc@gtlaw.com)
- > [Carl A. Fornaris](#) | +1 305.579.0626 | [fornarisc@gtlaw.com](mailto:fornarisc@gtlaw.com)
- > [Yosbel A. Ibarra](#) | +1 305.579.0706 | [ibarray@gtlaw.com](mailto:ibarray@gtlaw.com)
- > [Julia P. Sorrentino](#) | +1 202.533.2376 | [sorrentinoj@gtlaw.com](mailto:sorrentinoj@gtlaw.com)
- > [Cyril T. Brennan](#) | +1 202.533.2342 | [brennanct@gtlaw.com](mailto:brennanct@gtlaw.com)
- > [Sandra D. Gonzalez](#) | +1 512.320.7234 | [gonzalezsd@gtlaw.com](mailto:gonzalezsd@gtlaw.com)
- > [Sandra K. Jorgensen](#) | +1 202.530.8569 | [jorgensens@gtlaw.com](mailto:jorgensens@gtlaw.com)

*‡Admitted to practice only in Virginia. Practice in the District of Columbia limited to matters and proceedings before federal courts and agencies.*

<b>Albany</b> +1 518.689.1400	<b>Denver</b> +1 303.572.6500	<b>New York</b> +1 212.801.9200	<b>Shanghai</b> +86 (21) 6391 6633
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