

# *U.S. Secretary of State Says Washington Has an “Enormous Interest” in Building Ties with Cuba*

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Boston, February 2 (RHC-AP)-- The United States has an “enormous interest” in building diplomatic relationships with Cuba, Secretary of State John Kerry said during a weekend meeting with his counterparts from Canada and Mexico, according to a report by the Boston Globe on Monday.

“This is an effort we believe offers the best opportunity for the people of Cuba to improve their lives and to take part in the choices about their lives,” Kerry said at a news conference at Faneuil Hall in the U.S. city of Boston on Saturday.

In December, President Obama revealed plans to restore diplomatic relations with the Caribbean island nation after more than 50 years.

“It’s time to try something new,” Kerry said of the five-decade economic blockade on Cuba. The Obama administration has said that goal is supported by removing barriers to U.S. travel, remittances, and exports to Cuba. In turn, Cuba has said it welcomes those measures but has no intention of changing its system and relations between both countries can be carried out with mutual respect.

Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird and Mexico’s Secretary of Foreign Affairs Jose Antonio Meade joined Kerry in Boston to discuss issues facing the United States, among them climate change, trade, and eliminating global extremism.

Baird applauded the U.S. administration’s willingness to engage Cuba in dialogue.

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