of Florida, and Internet service is severely limited across most of the island. Even in Havana, markets often run out of day-to-day necessities like butter and milk.

Embassy Havana plans to increase the size of its officer corps, adding Department of State officers and staff from other agencies, in an environment that Deputy Chief of Mission Scott Hamilton described as "one of the most exciting and rewarding in the Foreign Service today." Potential bidders, he said, "should have initiative, creativity and energy, and understand that it is a privilege to help foster broader, deeper and more productive relationships between Americans and Cubans."

Other complexities—and opportunities—will arise as U.S. diplomats try to build official relationships. The U.S. government continues to call on Cuban officials to improve human rights and allow greater space for civil society. But embassy officers recognize a need to balance support for independent Cuban voices with discussion and, hopefully, cooperation with state-run organizations and Cuban officials. Deputy Public Affairs Officer Barraza noted that the desire to engage with both official Cuban media and independent Cuban journalists, for example, had created tensions. "We want to make sure we build relationships with all sections of Cuban society," she said.

Such challenges may be unavoidable as the United States and Cuba repair their long-frayed relationship. "Whether it's figuring out how we grow, how the changing economic and political situation will affect us, or how to communicate in a much broader way with Cuban officials and civil society and all Cuban citizens, now we have a unique opportunity for Foreign Service officers to help define an important relationship across the board," Ambassador DeLaurentis said.

No one expects the way forward to be easy. Standing beside the newly unfurled Stars and Stripes on Aug. 14, Secretary Kerry told the crowd that the two nations had started down a "better path … without any illusions about how difficult it might be." ◻