NEWS RELEASE

Hello, Havana. Employees celebrate as we launch new service to Cuba's capital

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After flight 17 landed in Havana on Nov. 28, American Airlines Captain Kevin Mase and First Officer David Leonardo proudly waved U.S. and Cuba flags out the windows of the cockpit.

The arrival of the Beoing 737 aircraft marked the first scheduled flight from Miami (MIA) to Havana (HAV) in more than 50 years. And employees celebrated the inaugural flight.

Festive events at the gates marked take-off from MIA, and a water canon salute greeted the aircraft's landing. Cuban airport officials and other entities welcomed the customers and held a ribbon cutting ceremony. "It's a monumental day of great historic relevance with Miami being the epicenter of the Cuban American community and American's hub for the region," said American's Ralph Lopez, vice president – MIA. "We're excited to live in these exciting times and serve Havana."

American now operates five flights a day to Cuba's capital — four from MIA and one from Charlotte, North Carolina (CLT).

American employees and customers celebrated similar fanfare before American's inaugural flight from CLT on Nov. 30.

Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts and CLT Aviation Director Brent Cagle joined American's Terri Pope, vice president – CLT, to cut the ribbon at the gate. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all of us today, and I hope you remember it for the rest of your life," Pope said. "I've been with the airline for nearly 40 years, and I never thought I would see this day. We've added a lot of destinations throughout the years, but I have to say this one feels really special. Our employees are excited, our community is excited and our customers are excited."

To ensure that American was ready for service at HAV, many American employees from across the system traveled to Cuba to help set up operations. Employees from IT, Training, Operations, Security, Maintenance and Corporate Real Estate, among other departments, have been working in the city for more than a month to get ready. Many calling it a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

"I have no words to express how thankful I am to have been a part of this experience. I'm Cuban and I'm American, and this finally links our two nations," said Sandy Ramos Escamilla, a Customer Service agent who worked on the CLT to HAV departure. "There I was on the tarmac, working for the largest airline in the world, looking up at our two flags flying together. It was quite amazing, and I am honored to have represented American on this day."