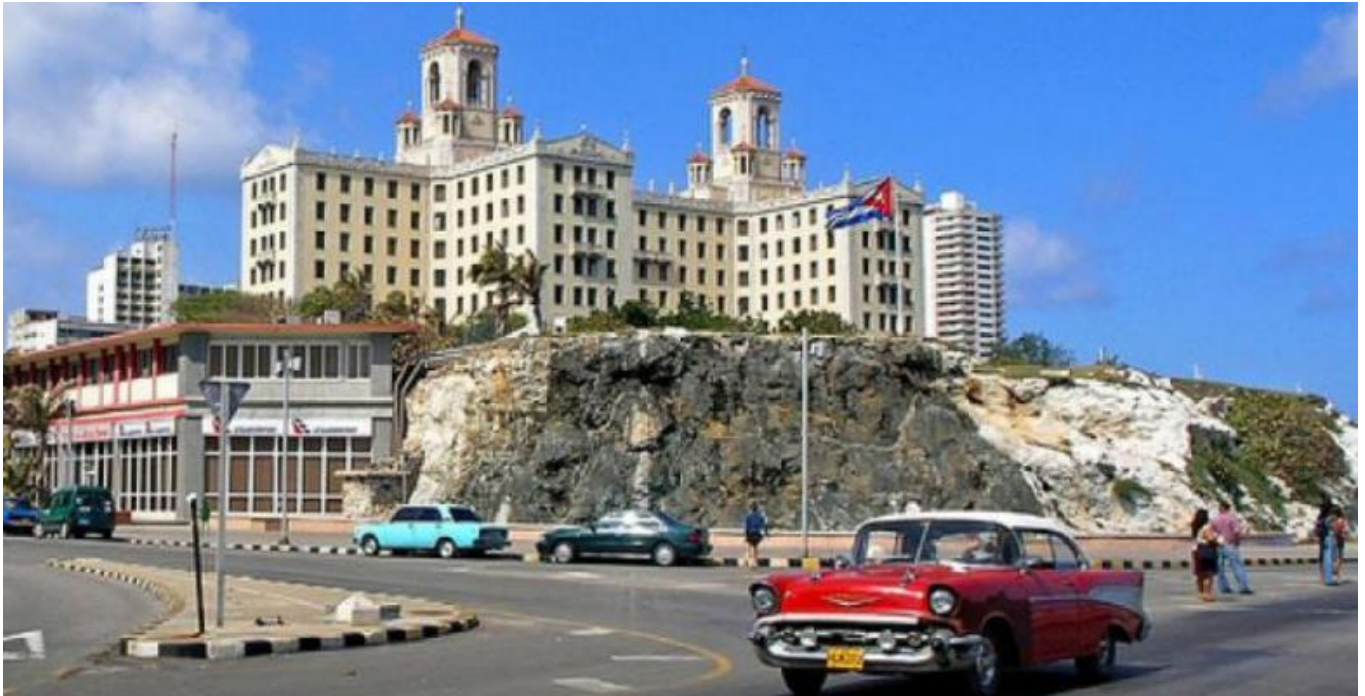

China to Launch Direct Air Route to Caribbean


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The airline Air China will make direct flights between Beijing and Havana, three times a week, beginning on Sept. 28. It will be the first air route between China and the Caribbean, the Chinese news agency Xinhua reported Friday (Jan. 9).

The planes, Boeing 777-300, will make a short stopover in Montreal to refuel and will fly over U.S. territory on their way south to Havana.

According to Chinese sources, more than 22,200 Chinese visitors traveled to Cuba in 2013, an 18-percent increase over the previous year. In 2014, about 100 million Chinese traveled abroad.

The announcement followed the first ministerial meeting of the Forum of China and the 33-member Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), held in Beijing Jan. 8-9. The Cuban delegation was led by Foreign Trade and [INVESTMENT](#) 

Minister Rodrigo

Malmierca and included Deputy Foreign Minister Abelardo Moreno.


This cooperation forum with China was established during the CELAC summit in Havana in January 2014. The summit was set by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his trip to Latin America last July.


In the course of that trip, President Xi visited Cuba and met with his Cuban counterpart, Raúl Castro Ruz. Several bilateral agreements were signed at the time.

A related article in the Xinhua website, titled "China, Latin America Ties Mean a Lot to the

World,” says that “the latest deals between China and Latin America could evolve into a new model of South-South cooperation and help bring about a new world order.”

“China’s ‘new normal’ offers new opportunities for the world,” the article says. “Latin American and Caribbean states have never been in such a strong position to take advantage of those opportunities.

Latin America has “a historic opportunity to make a qualitative and quantitative leap forward in its economic and [TRADE](#)  relations,” according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC]. Infrastructure, innovation, productivity and competitiveness, the commission said, will be the reward for acting in unison to expand ties with China.

“As new opportunities emerge, the international order is undergoing a profound adjustment. In the next ten years, China will seek 500 billion U.S dollars of trade and 250 billion U.S. dollars of direct [INVESTMENT](#)  in the region. It is the right time for China to work with Latin America and the Caribbean and the right time for development through South-South cooperation.

“With closer cooperation between developing countries and China’s commitment to international relations which benefit all, fast development of these developing and emerging economies will invigorate the world and drive the international order in a more just and reasonable direction.”
