

CUBAN FEES IRK U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT

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Body

The **State Department** may ask **Cuban** authorities to reduce the \$ 750 in **fees** collected from Cubans leaving the country.

Before leaving, each **Cuban** must pay \$ 400 for a medical examination, \$ 100 for a passport and \$ 250 for an exit permit.

The head of Cuba's diplomatic mission here, Fernando Remirez, said in an interview that the services provided are expensive but added that the \$ 750 in **fees** was 15 percent less than what **Cuban** citizens previously paid.

U.S. officials will raise the issue when the two countries open another in a series of migration talks today in New York.

Also on the table during two days of talks will be the fate of about 1, 200 Cubans who arrived in the United **States** during the 1980 Mariel boat lift and who remain in federal detention centers.

Successive administrations have maintained that these Cubans are not entitled to settle in the United **States** because of criminal records, but Cuba has refused to take them back.

Under an agreement reached last year, the United **States** promised to grant immigrant visas annually to at least 20,000 Cubans. The flow of **Cuban** immigrants has been orderly since then, but **U.S.** officials are irritated by what they consider exorbitant service charges imposed by the **Cuban** government.

Remirez also chided the United **States** for limiting opportunities for **Cuban**-Americans to travel to Cuba. He said a more flexible **Cuban** policy has permitted more than 100,000 **Cuban**-Americans to visit the island since 1985.

Since May, the United **States** has deterred Cubans from fleeing by forcibly returning all boat people picked up by the **U.S.** Coast Guard. As of last week, 131 Cubans had been returned, officials said. About a dozen have been detained in Cuba.

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