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Cuban, Kenyan presidents vow to strengthen bilateral ties

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Cuban President Raul Castro on Thursday met with his visiting Kenyan counterpart Uhuru Kenyatta, with the two sides agreeing to strengthen political and economic relations.

The two sides expressed satisfaction with the official inauguration of the Kenyan embassy in Havana, which is scheduled to take place on Friday.

Castro also thanked the Kenyan government for its support and donation last year after Hurricane Irma hit Cuba's north coast, costing more than 13 billion U.S. dollars in economic losses.

Earlier in the day, Kenyatta unveiled a statue of his late father and Kenya's founding President Jomo Kenyatta at a park in Havana.

In a speech made after paying tribute to other African independence heroes at the park, the president stressed the need to strengthen ties among developing nations, including their bilateral relations.

"I thank the people of Cuba for their constant solidarity with the African nations. Africa will always keep its relations with Cuba high and together we will continue

developing our beneficial links for the prosperity of our peoples and nations," he said.

In 2016, Kenya opened its embassy in Havana to boost future cooperation in sectors such as commerce, education, culture and health.

Kenyatta will return to Nairobi on Saturday after a three-day official visit to the Caribbean nation.

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