

Bolivia assumes pro tempore presidency of UNASUR



La Paz, April 19 (RHC)-- Bolivia has assumed the pro tempore presidency of the Union of South American Nations, UNASUR -- a 12-member political and economic community. After Bolivia's appointed as the head of the organization, President Evo Morales reaffirmed the country's commitment to the principles of its creation: democracy, respect for sovereignty and self-determination of peoples. Bolivia will prioritize dialogue, democracy, peace, and full integration.

Evo Morales tweeted: “On UNASUR Day, we extend a warm greeting to the twelve member states. As bearers of the pro tempore presidency, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles of its creation: democracy, respect for sovereignty and self-determination of peoples.”

During the VIII Summit of the Americas, Argentinean Foreign Minister Jorge Faurie made the official transfer of the presidency to Bolivian Foreign Minister Fernando Huanacuni. “From this Tuesday, Bolivia assumed the presidency of this regional integration body and will have as its main objective to strengthen regional citizenship, as expressed by Foreign Minister Fernando Huanacuni,” said the project coordinator of the new UNASUR headquarters, Marco Antonio Saavedra.

UNASUR is made up of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.

“Like Bolivia, we will raise the South American citizenship with free entry of the citizens of this great homeland,” Saavedra told Xinhua. The project coordinator detailed that the headquarters of the body, where the parliament will be housed, will be in San Benito, Cochabamba in Bolivia. He added that a new secretary-general, along with the parliament, needed to be established. The building costs some \$72 million and spread across 460 hectares. It took four years to complete and will be delivered next week.

On April 17, 2007, during the South American Energy Summit, held in Isla Margarita, Venezuela, the heads of state and government changed the name of the South American Community of Nations to the Union of South American Nations. President of the Andean Parliament, Deputy Edith Mendoza, told Xinhua that Bolivia will host the XII Summit of Parliamentary Presidents on April 25.

"We will use the headquarters of UNASUR with the XII International Summit of Parliamentary Presidents, where 43 countries of the world will participate," said Mendoza. During the summit, legislators from more than 43 countries will discuss gender issues such as femicide, participation, inclusion and decision-making in the political sphere.

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