

Chile officially begins process to leave UNASUR



Santiago de Chile, April 22 (RHC)-- Chile's right-wing government has denounced the Constitutive Treaty of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), officially initiating its departure from the organization.

The country's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Roberto Ampuero, told Chilean news outlet *la Tercera* that "it is completely unviable to revive the group" due to what he called its stagnation and lack of leadership, adding that now "the space that does have a clear agenda and active participation is ProSur, successfully promoted by Chile."

The regional bloc activities have been paralyzed since 2017 as there wasn't a consensus to choose a new General Secretary to succeed the Colombian Ernesto Samper. The situation aggravated as the right-wing U.S. backed "Group of Lima", created a competing diplomatic group called ProSur on March 22, 2019, to counteract UNASUR in accordance with U.S.'s interventionist agenda against Venezuela and neo-liberal policies in the region.

Guyanese President David Arthur Granger as well as right-wing presidents Mauricio Macri (Argentina), Jair Bolsonaro (Brasil), Sebastian Piñera (Chile), Ivan Duque (Colombia), Lenin Moreno (Ecuador), Martin Vizcarra (Peru), and Mario Abdo Benitez (Paraguay) signed their allegiance to the new accord, in Santiago de Chile. Delegates from Uruguay, Bolivia and Suriname strengthened their resolve and support for Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's legitimate claim to the presidency, refusing to condone the initiative.

In a statement tweeted on Sunday, Piñera announced his decision to expedite the process to both chambers of the Chilean congress in order to officially defect from the regional bloc. This comes as

Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Ecuador and Colombia all have also begun the request to leave UNASUR.

All countries, due to the group's Charter, must now wait for the standby period, which is six months since the denouncement date. Uruguay, Venezuela, Suriname, Guayana, Bolivia, and Peru are still part of the group, even though the latter nation suspended its participation in April 2018.

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