

# *Session of the XXI ALBA-TCP Political Council moves forward*



**The meeting aims to assess the current regional political situation and its prospects for the first half of the year. | Photo: @GermaniaffV**

Caracas, March 1 (RHC)-- The XXI Meeting of the Political Council of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP) was in virtual session this Monday, with the participation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the member countries and other representatives.

The meeting was opened by the Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza, who was accompanied by the organization's Executive Secretary, Sacha Llorenti. He welcomed his counterparts from the rest of

the member countries and introduced the meeting.

Arreaza referred to the stage of confronting the pandemic in which the region finds itself, emphasizing the efforts being made to create the organization's vaccine bank, with the objective of guaranteeing vaccination in all member states.

Venezuela's top diplomat referred to the economic difficulties being experienced by the countries of the bloc as a result of the health emergency, mainly due to restrictions on tourism. Jorge Arreaza also spoke about the need for ALBA-TCP to gain sovereignty by rescuing foundational ideas such as the economic area, Petrocaribe and the creation of its own digital tools, including social networks specially designed for the countries of the bloc.

Chet Greene, Chancellor of Antigua and Barbuda, noted that it is imperative to continue to respond to the multiple crises generated by the pandemic. "Resilience, inclusion and sustainability are key elements of the Development Goals and are fundamental to our future," he said.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Keisal Melissa Peters, acknowledged in her speech that "we are living in a time of great challenges." She also expressed her gratitude for Bolivia's return to the ALBA-TCP Political Council meeting.

Melissa Peters pointed out that the response of ALBA and its institutions, especially Cuba and Venezuela, has been a lesson in solidarity, which is on a par with the devastation caused by Covid-19. The Caribbean Foreign Minister also condemned the economic sanctions imposed on Venezuela and Cuba. "Respect for the rights of each nation is fundamental for St. Vincent and the Grenadines," Peters stressed.

For his part, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Paul Herbert Oquist Kelley pointed out that in Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of poor increased to 231 million and 96 million people in extreme poverty. Regarding the imperial policy of the United States Government, he pointed to the wars that have led to coups and coup attempts in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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