

# *Venezuelan president says Caracas returning to Andean Community of Nations*

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Caracas, November 4 (RHC)-- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has announced that the time has come for his country to return to the Andean Community of Nations with all the productive and commercial capacities that the Caribbean nation possesses.

"We are determined to join the Andean Community of Nations with all our productive capacity, with our commercial capacity and a growing economy; it is the moment, it is time, everything has its time and the time has come to return to the Andean Community of Nations to build with our brothers of the Andean South America," said the president during a broadcast on the Venezolana de Televisión channel.

On November 1st, Colombian President Gustavo Petro asked his Venezuelan counterpart to evaluate his country's return to the Andean Community of Nations during his official visit to Caracas. This is the

second time that the Colombian president has asked Maduro to evaluate the return of the Caribbean country to the regional bloc.

Venezuela belonged to the organization since 1973 and it was in 2006, under the presidency of Hugo Chávez (1999-2013), that the country left the block as a direct consequence of the immediate damage that would be caused by the Free Trade Agreements (FTA) signed by Colombia and Peru, according to the Government at that time.

Maduro said that Venezuela is in the process of increasing its production capacities to increase trade with Colombia and stressed that the Neo-Granadian nation has a very "powerful and important" economy, which will allow both countries to promote a special economic zone in South America.

On Tuesday, Maduro met with his Colombian counterpart in Caracas to establish a work agenda between the two countries to give continuity to the reestablishment of bilateral, consular and commercial relations. The topics discussed ranged from trade and economy to "new steps towards a total and assured opening of the border between Colombia and Venezuela."

The meeting between the two presidents took place after six years, two months and 19 days since the last time a Colombian president traveled to Venezuela to meet with his counterpart; the last one had been Juan Manuel Santos with Maduro in 2016.

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