

# *CELAC countries do not want to break neutrality in summit with the EU*

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**There is an "enormous interest" on the part of the EU Member States "to advance in this process of institutionalization" of relations with Latin America. | Photo: European Union**

Buenos Aires, July 8 (RHC)-- Latin American and Caribbean countries reiterated their position of neutrality and the call for a diplomatic solution to the conflict in Eastern Europe, regarding the upcoming summit that the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the European Union will hold on July 17th and 18th in Brussels.

Therefore, they propose that the declaration to be approved during that summit should refer to the need for "serious and constructive diplomatic solutions to the current conflict in Europe" and not any kind of support to Ukraine or its government, although neither to Russia.

At the same time, the document drawn up by the Latin American and Caribbean countries insists on demanding reparations from the European powers for the damages caused during the colonial

occupation, a particularly important demand of the Caribbean countries.

In the original text that EU representatives forwarded a month ago to those of Celac, Brussels had hoped in particular that the summit would allow further work with Latin America and the Caribbean to bring about what they called "a firm condemnation" of Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, which they consider an invasion.

But, in response, the Latin American countries "erased everything related to Ukraine," according to the European Foreign Service after seeing the Latin American counter-proposal, according to the Euractiv press media.

Earlier, the Argentinean government said that it should be up to CELAC as a whole to decide whether to invite the Ukrainian president, Volodymir Zelenski, to the summit with the EU and not to the proposal of a single country as the president of Uruguay, Luis Lacalle Pou, did at the recently concluded Mercosur summit.

The news came out just when diplomatic representatives of Spain (in the pro tempore presidency of the EU) and the European bloc assured on Thursday that the next summit between the two blocs will be the first step to advance in a process of institutionalization of relations between the two regions.

Latin America "is not only a natural partner, but our closest partner, with which we have the closest ties. This is clear to the societies and peoples of Europe and Latin America, and it must also be clear to the institutions and governments," the Spanish ambassador to La Paz, Francisco Javier Gassó, told the media.

There is an "enormous interest" on the part of the EU Member States "to advance in this process of institutionalization" of relations with Latin America and the summit with CELAC, adding that is "will be the first step towards this."

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