

# *Ecuadorian President Calls for Regional Support for Normalization of Cuba-U.S. ties*

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Galapagos Islands, December 23 (RHC-PL) -- The president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, says it's necessary that the regional integration organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean support the process of normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States.

During a press conference in the Galapagos Islands, the Ecuadorian president said that entities such as the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) should give full support to this rapprochement between Washington and Havana, which "should be cause for joy for all America."

"It's good that the political will exists in both countries to normalize relations," said the head of state, and stressed that this process should conclude with the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade that the U.S. government maintains against Cuba.

Correa reiterated his condemnation of the "criminal siege that has lasted 53 years and has cost lives, wealth and prosperity to Cuba." He added that it constitutes a violation of international law, the United Nations Charter and the Charter of the Organization of American States.

He also emphasized that despite the economic problems caused by that hostile policy, Cuba has managed to resist and achieve high levels of human development.

"What other country in Latin America could resist the blockade for three months?" he asked, adding that the Caribbean island "has done so for 50 years, and when the blockade is lifted, no one will be able to stop Cuba."

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