

Central American Alliance for Prosperity Has 'Business' Focus



Tegucigalpa, March 10 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The governments of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador are in a rush to finalize their preparations for the United States government plan, known as the Alliance for Prosperity which includes a \$1 billion fund.

The countries must clarify the use and distribution of the funds that will be provided through the Interamerican Development Bank. The United States gave a deadline of three months to receive the plans, but so far Central American officials have only had meetings with top businessmen, raising fears that instead of the funds going into social programs, they will instead go into foreign investment.

Originally, the Alliance was presented as a plan to help 40,000 unaccompanied children that crossed into the United States in 2014. The project was introduced by Vice President Joe Biden and it was approved by Congress as part of this year's budget.

However business representatives want to turn the fund into a National Security plan. However these business interests do not take into account the factors that have been identified by child rights organizations as the causes for the humanitarian crisis.

"The funding should be positive for the governments, in particular the Honduran government that is lacking legitimacy, it is a government that is under question because of the way it took power. They

should convene civil society and other different actors," said Rodil Vasquez of the Platform of Organizations for Children rights. "We think it is contradictory when they promise they will use the support for small producers and businessmen but they have never called any of these groups to discussions, they have only done it with the Latin American Business Council."

Other analyst believe that the Alliance will have a very different nature than the one originally presented.

"The Alliance for Prosperity in the north triangle (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador) has a focus on national security by the United States to stop the migratory flow of Central American children that greatly increased last year. But this new Alliance has been defined by the business sectors, and from the government with its back to the people," said Guido Eguigure, consultant for small producers cooperatives.

Poverty and violence are at the root of migration issues and some say that if the Alliance for Prosperity turns into a business investment program rather than investing in addressing the causes of mass migration, it may be more of a problem than a solution.

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