

# *President Correa: Time to Build Our Definitive Independence*

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Panama City, April 11 (teleSUR-RHC) Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa said on Friday the Summit of the Americas should serve as an opportunity for regional leaders to prevent foreign interference in the domestic affairs of the countries of the hemisphere.

“At this summit we should take the decisive steps to stop interventionism, unilateralism, any interference from outside the region, and begin to build our second and definitive independence,” said Correa shortly after arriving in Panama.

Correa's statements were similar to those expressed by President Evo Morales of Bolivia, who along with Ecuador is also a member of the leftist *Bolivarian* Alliance for the Peoples of America.

In a keynote address to the People's Summit, Morales accused the United States of conspiring to undermine democracy in Latin America.

President Correa decided to boycott the previous summit, held in Colombia in 2012, as an act of protest against Cuba's exclusion from the event and the United States' domination over the proceedings.

Regional leaders are calling this year's summit historic after pressure forced the U.S. to drop its opposition to Cuba's participation. Correa had threatened to boycott this year's summit as well over U.S.

President Barack Obama's decision to issue an executive order declaring Venezuela a “threat” to its national security but ultimately decided he would attend.

The South American leader is also hoping the summit will also focus on the social issues that countries in the hemisphere are working to address. “Latin America is the region with the greatest inequality in the world, it has been a region highly exploited, it would be better if the slogan (of the summit) was 'equity for prosperity with sovereignty and dignity',” said Correa.

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