

# *Nicolás Maduro: Let's Turn CELAC into a Model of Integration*

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Havana, January 30 (RHC)-- President of Venezuela Nicolas Maduro stressed the need of integration for the region and the respectful acknowledgement of the differences.

The Venezuelan president made a recount of some relevant moments in the history of Latin America in the time of what he called the first independence. He also highlighted Chavez's legacy, whom he called "the greatest Bolivarian of all centuries." And Maduro referred to Fidel, whom he qualified as "the giant of dignity of Latin America, the Caribbean and the peoples of the South."

Maduro also spoke of the founding moments of CELAC, especially the Caracas Summit in which the bloc was officially created in December 2011. "America is proving that it is possible to walk our own path, following the clear, firm ideological postures that each of us upholds," Maduro said while reflecting in the need that the peoples and governments of the region reached integration within respect and acknowledgment of the differences.

In this sense, Maduro recalled one of Chavez's thoughts: "CELAC has to be that solid space for the

materialization of the great politics,” later he added, “we have to learn to live with our differences, accept them and process them.”

Chavez’s successor saluted the declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace and urged to end with the new forms of colonialism that are getting to us, that fill us with anti-values of violence, the new forms of financial colonialism, of cultural colonialism.

Maduro reiterated that Puerto Rico is part of Latin America and Caribbean and that Puerto Rico is an issue of CELAC. Talking about other situations faced by some countries of the region he said: “We have to support Argentina so the United Kingdom finally withdraws from the Malvinas Islands,” and rejected the existence of the U.S. Naval Base of Guantanamo in the 21st century.

Maduro invited the temporary president of CELAC to create a permanent agenda on the great issues affecting the region and called the bloc to become a new model of integration.

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