

Venezuelan president sends letter to King of Spain demanding respect for Indigenous peoples

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The President said that a Truth Commission is needed to investigate "the European occupation of America from the 16th to the 19th century". |

Caracas, October 15 (RHC)-- The president of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, has released a letter sent to the King Felipe VI of Spain, in order to protest the celebration of the conquest of the Americas, and demand respect for the memory of the native peoples who suffered during that process.

Through his account on the social network Twitter, the Venezuelan president said: "It is unacceptable that in the XXI century, a nation that prides itself on being civilized worships the worst of its past: the theft, plunder, racism and hate crimes committed during more than three centuries of occupation of the Spanish empire in the territory of Abya Yala."

Nicolas Maduro told King Felipe VI of Bourbon that the celebration of "Columbus Day" on October 12th "can only be understood by the countries that resisted the invasion as an apology and reaffirmation of the most atavistic racism."

"Our intention with this letter is to make at the same time a warning call to the Spanish people, an appeal to their historical conscience and political reason, in the face of the resurgence of supremacism and fascism that takes us back to the darkest of imperial Europe," the Venezuelan president added.

Likewise, he criticized the fact that people continue talking about the "Hispanic Civilization" project, taking for granted that, at that time, other languages, cultures and civilizations did not exist, "assuming as true the already overcome prejudices of medieval ethnocentrism."

"Spokesmen of the neo-falangist currents refer to the events as the "Day of the Race"; and other more moderate ones raise the insolent euphemism of the "Encounter of two Worlds." Modern cynicism or absolute ignorance? Whatever the answer is, it is unacceptable both for the original peoples still in resistance, as well as for the European people that pride themselves on being respectful of human dignity and rights," he said.

"The conquest in today's terms constitutes the greatest genocide and ethnocide, because it depopulated a continent inhabited by between 70 and 90 million souls, with their cultures, their political systems, their languages, their science, their religions, their institutions, which the conqueror was never in a position to respect."

The Venezuelan president pointed out that during the colonization process there were massacres, displacements, wars, new diseases and forced labor that "put an end to the lives of more than 90 million indigenous people. The slave trade kidnapped, expatriated and enslaved close to 50 million Africans. These are figures that exceed the holocausts and wars caused and suffered by Europe in the 20th century."

"More than apologies, we want a rectification of the ideas and opinions that five centuries later seem more foolish and vile. What worries us is the oblivion and minimization of these atrocious facts that lie at the origin of our current nations."

Likewise, he expressed his willingness to join the proposal of Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who also sent a letter to the King of Spain, to propose the reconstruction of a "shared story" that would unite both peoples.

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