

Bolivian president says maritime claim is inalienable

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In the so-called War of the Pacific, Chile, with British support, deprived the Andean-Amazonian nation of its sovereign access to the sea.

La Paz, February 15 (RHC)-- President Luis Arce assured that the maritime claim is inalienable, by paying tribute to those who resisted the Chilean invasion to the coasts of Antofagasta (then Bolivian territory) 143 years ago.

"By remembering the invasion of Antofagasta, on February 14, 1879, we pay tribute to the heroes who defended our coasts. Their example is the beacon that guides the struggle for a dignified and sovereign Bolivia. Our maritime claim (for an outlet to the sea) is inalienable," said the president on his Twitter account.

For his part, the leader of the Movement Towards Socialism, Evo Morales, also evoked the anniversary on social networks in which he said that he continues "proclaiming the sea for Bolivia."

"We remember, today, with pain an unjust fact. In 1879 Chile snatched from us more than 400 kilometers of coastline on the Pacific Ocean. Now, 143 years after that fact driven by business interests, we continue proclaiming #MarParaBolivia," he reaffirmed in a tweet.

After independence from Spain, the Andean-Amazonian country was constituted in 1825 with an outlet of hundreds of kilometers of extension on the Pacific. However, without a prior declaration of war, Chilean forces invaded the Bolivian port of Antofagasta, ignoring the existing treaty of limits between the two countries, according to historians.

Thus began the so-called War of the Pacific that lasted until 1884 and in which the Chilean side, with the support of the British, occupied an area of about 120,000 square kilometers and deprived the Andean-Amazonian nation of its sovereign access to the sea.

The Bolivian side points out that the two contenders signed a truce pact in 1884 under the logic of analyzing later on a sovereign access to the Pacific for Bolivia, an issue that is still pending.

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