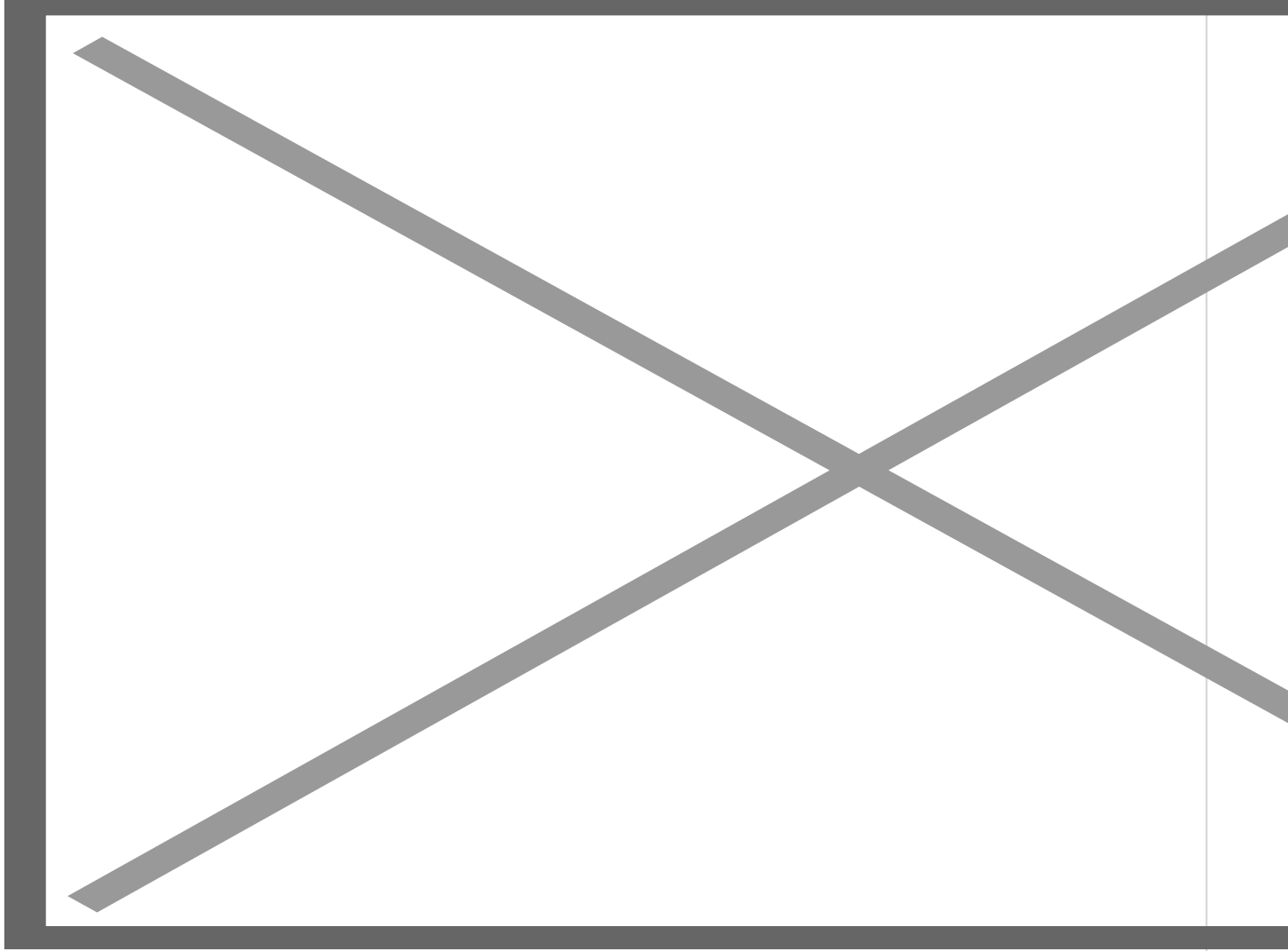


Venezuelan president calls for struggle against colonialism and imperialism

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Tehran, June 22 (RHC)-- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro says the phrase 'Axis of Resistance' is not just confined to certain countries across the world, but it refers to all those fighting colonialism and hegemonic powers.

"The Axis of Resistance exists throughout the world; it exists in Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, in Latin America and in the Caribbean. The Resistance also belongs to the people who are fighting against neoliberalism, racism and various forms of colonization, political, economic, cultural colonization and cyber colonization," Maduro said in an exclusive interview with the official website of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei on Monday.

"All of us who fight against colonialism, all of us who fight to decolonize our minds and our people, are part of the Axis of Resistance that stands against the methods of the imperialists for imposing hegemony on the world," he added.

Lauding the deeds of the Axis of Resistance throughout the years, Maduro said, "The 21st century is our century. It is the century of the unity of the people. It is the century in which people will be liberated. It is the century of justice and truth. Empires are in decline, and people's projects for well-being, development and greatness have just begun. This century is our century."

Pointing to a recent meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei and the Leader's statement about the very close relationship between Iran and Venezuela, Maduro said: "Since Commander Hugo Chavez's first visit in 2001, Iran and Venezuela have established exemplary political, diplomatic, moral, and spiritual ties."

"During this current trip, I've witnessed how there is an exemplary relationship between us in terms of our increasing cooperation. We've had many successes. So Imam Khamenei is right when he states that the relationship between the two countries is quite unique and extraordinary," he noted.

Asked about his latest assertion regarding Israel's conspiracies against Venezuela through Mossad, Maduro said, "Imperialism and Zionism are conspiring against the progressive, revolutionary processes taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially the Bolivarian Revolution."

The Venezuelan president stressed, "This is because we are a true alternative, an alternative of truth and justice, an alternative of freedom, an alternative of democracy, and an alternative for realizing projects that are fully humane in the Latin American region and the Caribbean Sea. In addition to this, Mossad's conspiracies are due to our strong position of solidarity with the Palestinian people and our support of them for their regaining their historical rights and for the Palestinian Resistance. Our support of them is strong and unique, and we will continue supporting them in this manner."

Asked about the role of Iran's anti-terror commander General Qassem Soleimani and the Quds Force over the last 20 years in strengthening the relationship between Tehran and Caracas, Maduro said he met General Soleimani in March and April of 2019 when he came to Venezuela during the time of US' cyberattacks against the country's power plants.

"I really didn't know. I didn't know him. I didn't know how amazing he was, but the discussion I had with him was very pleasant. We reviewed everything during our meeting and he immediately suggested we get help from Iranian experts. Two or three days later, Iranian experts came to repair electrical services in Venezuela," he added.

Asked about a saying by Ayatollah Khamenei that, "If Jesus Christ (Peace upon Him) were among us today, he wouldn't miss a moment to fight the leaders of global oppression and arrogance," Maduro said, "We're believing Christians. We're the type of Christians who take action while praying and thinking. And Christ came into this world to fight the Empires. He came to confront the Roman Empires. He risked his life. He sacrificed his life to fight the Roman Empire."

The Venezuelan leader said, “If there’s one good thing I can say about Christianity, it is its anti-imperialist nature and its seeking of truth and justice against the oppressors. I have no doubt that if Christ were among us today, he would have been at the forefront of the battle against imperialism, colonialism and all forms of oppression.”

During the interview, Maduro pointed to several meetings he had had with Ayatollah Khamenei over the years as well as the meeting between Chavez and the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

“I’ve always admired Imam Khamenei’s excellent memory. That he recalls the memories of those days is important. In the talks that I have had with him, he has recalled some of the conversations he had with Commander Chavez where Commander Chavez shared some of his memories about Cuba and Commander Fidel Castro. There was a time when a hurricane was heading straight toward Cuba. It was a Category 5 hurricane. A conversation took place between Fidel and Chavez. Fidel said, “Chavez! What you need to do right now is to pray. Pray for us!” Chavez started praying. That day passed and the hurricane changed its course. It didn’t cross over Cuba. Chavez called Fidel and said, “It’s a miracle!” Fidel replied, “Yes, it’s because God helps Chavez and Chavez’s friends.” In the last talk that I had with Imam Khamenei, he told me this story in a friendly, kind way in memory of Commander Chavez and Commander Fidel Castro,” he said.

“Holding a conversation with Imam Khamenei truly fills one with spirituality and wisdom. He likes the Venezuelan people. He likes the people’s ideals, and he always offers us great ideas and recommendations,” he underlined.

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