

# *Nicolás Maduro receives Colombian President Gustavo Petro in Caracas*

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Caracas, January 7 (RHC)-- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro received this Saturday his Colombian counterpart, Gustavo Petro, with whom he will discuss issues of bilateral interest, after their first meeting on November 1st last year.

President Petro was received with honors at the Miraflores presidential palace, minutes after landing at the Simon Bolivar International Airport, which serves Caracas, where he was welcomed by the Executive Vice President, Delcy Rodriguez, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yvan Gil, and the Colombian ambassador to Venezuela, Armando Benedetti.

The meeting between the two leaders takes place one week after the nations completed the opening of their common border, which remained closed for seven years.

Specifically, the Tienditas International Bridge -now called Atanasio Girardot-, which connects the Colombian department of Norte de Santander with the Venezuelan state of Táchira, was reopened.

On September 26, Caracas and Bogota reopened their border crossings, which had remained closed to vehicular and commercial transport since 2015. The symbolic opening ceremony was held at the Simón Bolívar International Bridge and was attended by the Colombian president and Venezuelan authorities.

In addition, at the end of last year, the Venezuelan capital was the scene of a round of negotiations between Petro's government and representatives of the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla.

The process ended with the signing of four agreements in the framework of Petro's efforts to achieve the so-called "total peace". On the other hand, it was confirmed that the second cycle of dialogues, which will begin this January, will take place in Mexico.

After meeting with Maduro, Petro will head to Chile on Monday, where he will meet with his Chilean counterpart, Gabriel Boric, as part of a state visit.

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