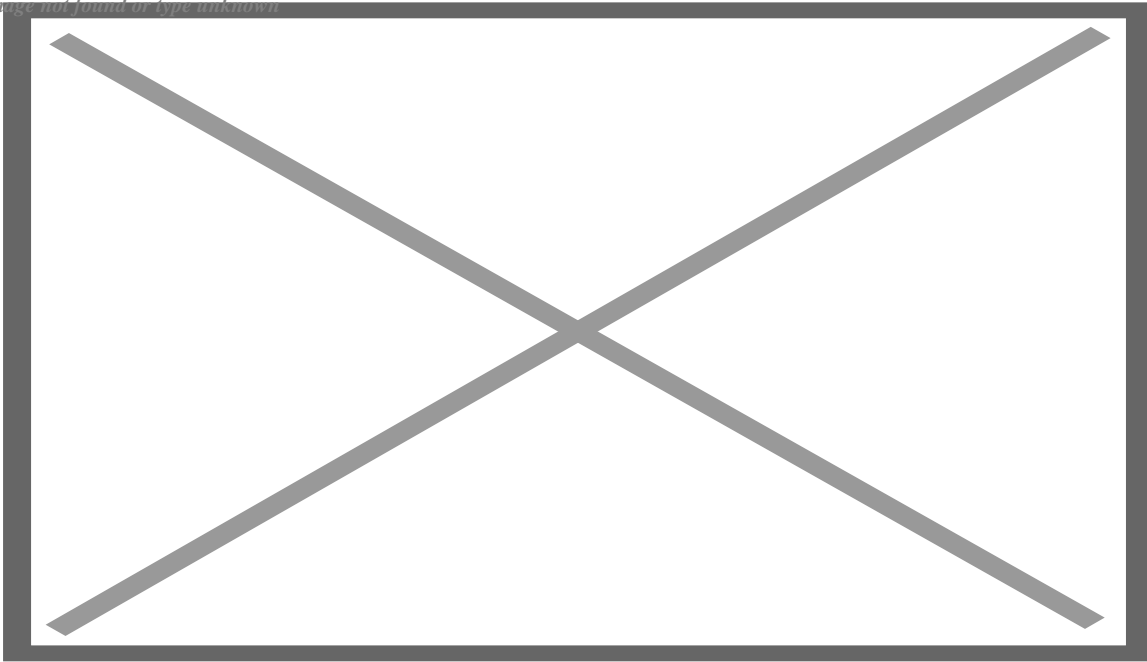


# *Colombia proposes CELAC to concretize integration plans*

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**The Colombian head of state assured that there is a great distance between the rhetoric of Latin American integration and reality. | Photo: Video Capture**

Buenos Aires, January 25 (RHC)-- The president of Colombia, Gustavo Petro, proposed on Tuesday to the member countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) to concretize integration on the basis of concrete projects.

During his speech at the VII Summit of Heads of State and Government of the regional organization, Petro assured that CELAC can be the definitive space for Latin American integration "if we give it binding power" so that what is done, said and agreed becomes a reality.

The Colombian head of state assured that there is a great distance between the rhetoric of Latin American integration and reality and gave as an example that the region did not know how to face together the COVID-19 pandemic.

He also urged his colleagues to create strategies to improve communication between nations. In his opinion, Latin America and the Caribbean can take the experience of the European Union, which

integrated as a bloc and use its own centrifugal forces within its diversity, to achieve this unity.

"That experience should be integrated with ours. Latin American integration has centripetal forces, which take us out of our own environment and which are logical and must be understood."

"Mexico, undoubtedly, has to talk to the United States and Canada, in the same North American space, in its own complexity. Brazil in its power of its own economy must talk with China, South Africa and India, trying to ensure that the world does not become unipolar," Petro added.

On the other hand, he commented that in Latin America "we have some geopolitical cards of immense power to talk about, if we talk together, and one of them is the Amazon rainforest, considered the third pillar to save humanity from the climate crisis".

The Colombian president reiterated that the way out of this crisis is to reduce to zero the use of coal and oil, that is to say, to devalue fossil capital, which implies a real change of power and economy in the world.

Petro added in his speech that in the integration of electric energy networks from Patagonia to Alaska, if clean energies such as wind, solar, water and geothermal energy were used, they could provide so much energy that not only the region would have security and surpluses.

He expressed that it is not only about exporting lithium or other necessary mining-energy resources, it is about industrializing it, it is about energies starting the industrialization process together with knowledge to be the mark left by the new Latin American progressivism for the future.

"We do not have to be raw exporters of oil and coal as we used to be of gold, having the same colonial system of five centuries ago", emphasized the President.

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