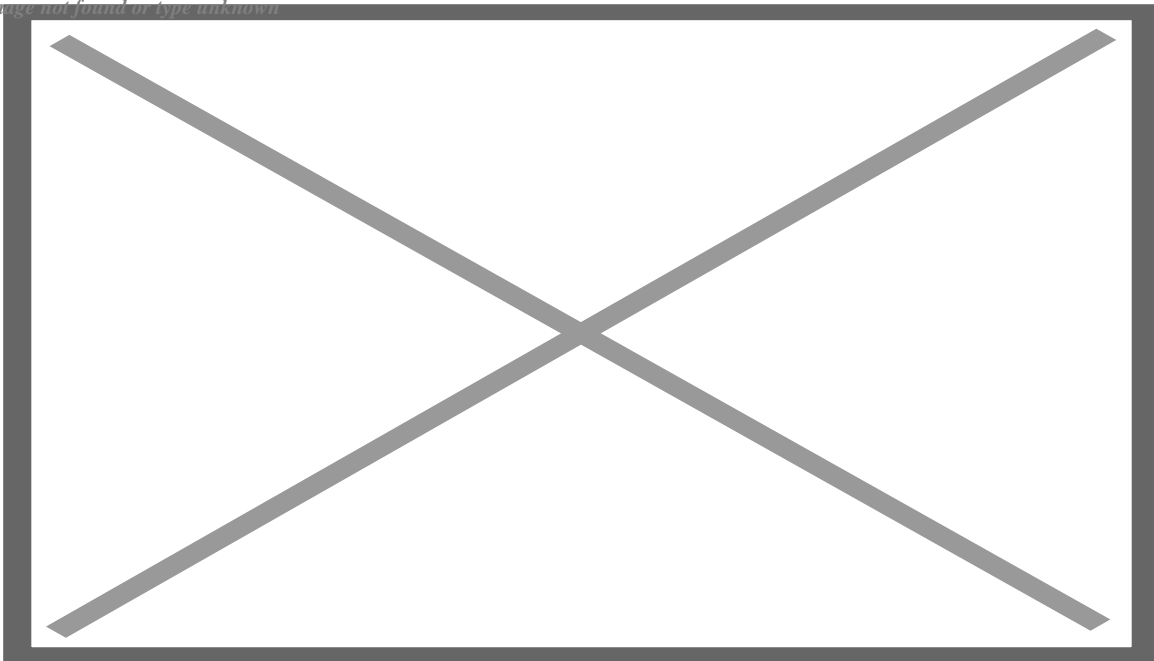


Mexico will not hand over Pacific Alliance presidency to Peru's Boluarte

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President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, Mexico DF, Mexico, Feb. 17, 2023. | Photo: EFE

Mexico City, February 18 (RHC)-- Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) declared that he does not intend to hand over the pro-tempore presidency of the Pacific Alliance to Peruvian President Dina Boluarte.

"I do not will to hand over this integration mechanism's presidency to a spurious government. I do not want to legitimize a coup against freedoms and human rights," AMLO stated. He explained that he will ask the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (SRE) to notify the Rio Group, a regional permanent consultation mechanism, of his stance. "The Rio Group will have the final decision on this. If it decides I should hand over the presidency, I will do so," AMLO stressed.

The Mexican president should have handed over the presidency to former Peruvian President Pedro Castillo at the 17th Pacific Alliance Summit, initially scheduled to be held in Mexico in November 2022.

At that time, however, the Peruvian Congress prevented Castillo from leaving his country by accusing him of alleged charges of a criminal organization. The Pacific Alliance summit was rescheduled for December 14, 2022, in Lima so that Castillo could assume the presidency.

However, on December 7th -- one week before the scheduled summit -- the Peruvian Congress ordered the imprisonment of Castillo, whom it replaced with Boluarte. AMLO has since supported the former president by granting asylum to his wife and children and denouncing that he was a victim of an oligarchy-led coup.

"There was no legal basis for imprisoning Castillo. Behind his case, there is a class-based, racist attitude. Castillo is a rural teacher, a humble man whom the Peruvian right harassed since the beginning of his political campaign," AMLO affirmed.

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