

# *Venezuela and St. Lucia sign cooperation agreement*

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Caracas, October 8 (RHC)-- The President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, and the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Philip J. Pierre, on an official visit to the South American country, signed this Friday three documents to strengthen strategic relations, which will allow progress in the construction of a new region.

The signing of the documents took place after the president received the Saint Lucian premier at the Miraflores Palace, who has had a busy work agenda since his arrival in Venezuela in the morning. "I think it is important to explain to our people how we are moving forward in the construction of a new Latin America, a new Caribbean, a new region, based on a fundamental principle: mutual respect, love among peoples, active solidarity, cooperation for mutual benefit, win-win", said the Venezuelan president.

In this sense, he explained that the documents signed on this day include a Road Map for the Development of Cooperation between both countries, in areas such as education, tourism, fishing, food sovereignty, air transportation, infrastructure, among others.

"In the conversation we had for more than an hour, we have reached great agreements on all these issues", the Venezuelan President stressed, and assured that a concrete action plan has been established to promote the roadmap that will allow for shared food production in Saint Lucia and Venezuela and to increase trade.

Likewise, an agreement on air services and a Joint Declaration were signed between the Venezuelan president and the premier of Saint Lucia, ratifying the ties of brotherhood and cooperation between the countries they represent.

According to the Venezuelan dignitary, the Air Services Agreement, which will be active as of next November, will allow "opening air operations and connecting Saint Lucia with Venezuela, Venezuela with Saint Lucia".

In this regard, the Head of State said he was "sure that these flights will be very successful and will increase the exchange of our peoples for tourism and to strengthen relations".

With respect to the Joint Declaration, President Maduro indicated that with it both governments ratify "the principles of self-determination of the peoples, of Latin America and the Caribbean as a territory of the principles of cooperation, solidarity, brotherhood, mutual benefit, progressive and upward development of relations, the founding principles of our peoples".

"We have proposed to turn the cooperative relationship of joint work and brotherhood of Saint Lucia and Venezuela into a model to follow for relations with the entire Caribbean and with other peoples, a relationship that is brilliant, that gives concrete results, that raises the quality of life of our people," the Venezuelan dignitary emphasized.

For his part, the premier of Saint Lucia rejected and described as unjust the coercive and unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States against Venezuela.

"We consider that any sanction applied to a country, due to its political system, is unjust. We also believe that sanctions are very painful for countries, and as we have requested on several occasions, we have demanded that the sanctions applied to the people of Venezuela be lifted," he said.

Philip J. Pierre assured that both governments will work to strengthen bilateral relations, and underlined his hope that "Venezuela will be liberated so that it can develop its people and, by extension, its friends within the Caribbean Community (Caricom)".

The premier of Saint Lucia arrived in Caracas (capital of Venezuela) in the morning hours, and was received by Foreign Minister Yván Gil. Throughout the day he has had a busy work agenda, which has included meetings with senior leaders of the Venezuelan Government.

Bilateral relations between Venezuela and Saint Lucia began in 1979, and since then they share similar ideals regarding freedom and self-determination of the peoples.

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