

# *Bolivian President Evo Morales Urges Concrete UN Actions in Favor of Landlocked Countries*

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Vienna, November 3 (RHC)-- Bolivian President Evo Morales on Monday urged concrete UN actions in favor of countries that lack territorial access to the sea.

Addressing the *Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries* (LLDCs) in Vienna, Austria, Morales stressed that the seas are world natural heritage sites that belong to all of humanity and that many nations and peoples the world over see their development hampered by their lack of territorial access to the sea to facilitate their trade exchanges.

The Bolivian head of state thanked the UN for this type of meeting, which he said reaffirms the world body's permanent concern for the rights of landlocked developing states.

President Evo Morales recalled that Bolivia lost its access to the Pacific Ocean back in 1879, when the country was invaded by Chile. As a consequence, Bolivia was deprived of some 120 kilometers of coastal territory and 120,000 square kilometers of land where many of the world's top copper reserves are located.

Since assuming Bolivia's presidency in 2006, President Morales launched a crusade to win back the sea access his country lost over a century ago. In April 2012 and after several failed attempts to negotiate directly with Santiago de Chile, the Bolivian government filed a lawsuit against Chile at the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) lack territorial access to the sea, which means they face significant challenges in trade, transport and infrastructure amongst other areas. All landlocked developing countries have low gross domestic product (GDP) and low human development. A large proportion of the 32 landlocked developing countries are also classified as least developed countries.

There are 16 landlocked developing countries located in Africa, 10 in Asia, 4 in Europe and 2 in Latin America with a total population of approximately 442.5 million.

The 2nd United Nations Conference on *Landlocked Developing Countries*, which runs through November 5th is looking at ways to help LLDCs move forward with their sustainable development. Two thousand participants are attending the conference in Vienna, including Government representatives, Heads of States and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

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