Ecuador Prepares for Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC

Quito, November 14 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Ecuador's Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño engaged in talks with Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Deputy Minister of Costa Rica and National Coordinator of CELAC, about its upcoming pro-tempore presidency of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Nations (CELAC) in 2015.

According to an official statement from Ecuador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the motive of the visit was to discuss the state of the region and steps Ecuador will take to prepare for the pro-tempore presidency. Costa Rica currently holds the pro-tempore presidency, and will transfer its position to Ecuador next year.

Solano met with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Political Integration Leonardo Arizaga, to discuss the current state of CELAC and the future of the body. Following the meeting with his counterpart, Minister Patiño received Solano, where he thanked the vice minister for his visit, and reassured him of Ecuador's serious commitment to carry on the responsibilities of the pro-tempore presidency.

The Foreign Ministry expressed its gratitude for the visit, saying that this interaction between member states helps strengthen the region and will help guide Ecuador as it presides over the body.

Founded in 2011, CELAC includes all the countries of the region except the United States and Canada. It aims at regional integration and cooperation. The pro-tempore presidency of CELAC rotates annually,

with the first three presidencies held by Chile, Cuba, and Costa Rica.

CELAC represents a break from U.S. influence in the region. Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa has stated that he expects CELAC will one day replace the OAS. As part of U.S. policy to isolate Cuba from the region, the OAS suspended Cuba's participation in 1962.