

Colombian President Meets with Facebook Founder Over Free Internet



Bogota, January 15 (RHC-Xinhua) -- Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Wednesday met with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg in Bogota to discuss plans to bring Internet service to the masses.

The move is part of Zuckerberg's internet.org initiative, designed to make "affordable internet access available to the two thirds of the world who are not yet connected," according to the program's website.

The idea is to "bring internet to the masses, since that will have wonderful positive effects in the areas of equity and education," said Santos during the meeting, according to Colombia's Caracol news network.

Santos, who has spearheaded negotiations with Colombia's armed leftist rebels to end five decades of fighting, and Zuckerberg both agreed the initiative can help the nation's peace effort.

"Many conflicts exist because of a lack of understanding. Greater communication can help resolve these situations and the Internet, in general, is a tool for doing that," Zuckerberg was quoted as saying.

Zuckerberg arrived in Bogota early Wednesday as part of his push to promote internet.org. Colombia is the first country in Latin America and fourth in the world to sign up for the program, right after Indonesia, Tanzania and Kenya, according to Caracol.

In Colombia, Internet access will be available to low-income households via the country's cellphone operator Tigo, the agency said.

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