

Ecuador Hosts Regional Summit to Discuss '2020 Agenda'



Quito, May 6 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Foreign ministers and representatives of the 33 Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) have met in Quito to discuss Ecuador's proposals for five regional objectives to be met by the year 2020.

Ecuador holds the pro-tempore presidency of CELAC. On Tuesday, representatives discussed possible strategies to reduce extreme poverty and increase investment in science and technology.

Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño told the press that the 2020 Agenda will be finalized in the next two to three months, following further consultation with member states. Prior to entering the meeting, Patiño said: "We need an agenda for CELAC for 2020. We need to define how much we are going to reduce poverty. How we are going to advance on higher education, science and technology. How we are going to work to combat climate change, how we are going to finance development and infrastructure."

Reducing extreme poverty is a primary objective of the 2020 Agenda, as approximately 70 million people in the region live under \$1.25 a day. The creation of the Southern Observatory of Transnational Companies, an attempt to prevent corporate abuses such as Chevron's oil spill in Ecuador, is a proposal being analyzed by member states. It is expected to be inaugurated in Caracas in the next two months.

There is also discussion on creating a new regional human rights court. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Delcy Rodríguez explained that this was a sign that the region is building "an anti-neo-liberal model. Today's Latin America is not the same as it was in the 1990s. This is another Americas that builds its own development model, but above all else a model based on progress and for the benefit of people."

CELAC is looking to strengthen relations with other regional blocks, such as the European Union, and countries such as Russia, Turkey, India, Japan and China, which are already committed to investing \$250 billion in the region.

The 2020 Agenda under discussion will seek to further integrate CELAC member states and benefit people of the region through tangible development goals.

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