

# *Argentinean and Colombian Presidents Promote Neo-liberalism After Bilateral Meeting*

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Bogota, June 17 (RHC)-- Argentinean President Mauricio Macri visited Colombia to meet with his counterpart, Juan Manuel Santos, and both emerged from the meeting pushing for neo-liberal trade agreements.

For his part, Macri called for closer ties between the Mercosur trading bloc and the Pacific Alliance. Together, the two blocs make up a total of 10 Latin American countries.

Since becoming president of Argentina, Macri has signaled his intention to reorient the Mercosur bloc as a neo-liberal platform. After a wave of progressive and leftist presidents came to power throughout the region, the bloc had become more focused on promoting regional integration.

The presidents of Colombia and Argentina met for over an hour in private, where they also reportedly talked about the situation in Venezuela. Santos, whose country shares a long border with Venezuela, was diplomatic in his comments, saying that his government supports dialogue between the government and the opposition.

Macri, who has been hostile toward the government of Nicolas Maduro, was more critical and alleged that there was a human rights crisis in Venezuela. Ironically, President Macri himself has been the subject of intense criticism in Argentina over his alleged lack of respect for human rights.

The two heads-of-state signed a number of bilateral agreements and President Santos indicated that his country would support efforts by the Argentinean foreign minister, Susana Malcorra, to secure the post of secretary-general of the United Nations.

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