

Joint Communiqué

On the occasion of the official visit to Cuba of presidents Hugo Chávez Frías and Evo Morales Ayma on April 28 and 29, 2006, there was a broad-ranging dialogue with the President of the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba, celebrating the first anniversary of the agreements launching the implementation of ALBA, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America, which is bolstered by the proposed Peoples' Trade Agreements (TCP, by its acronym in Spanish). This dialogue included the analysis of the current international situation and, particularly, the challenges facing the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean in the present political, economic and social circumstances marked by an increase of the popular struggles against the failed neo-liberal policy and the search for new ways and means toward development with social justice in the framework of genuine fraternal Latin American and Caribbean integration.

The subject of ALBA, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America, was discussed by the three leaders as it is the basis of the exchanges and collaboration between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Republic of Cuba implemented since December 2004 with excellent results for both nations.

There was discussion of the initiative proposed by President Evo Morales regarding the TCP (Peoples' Trade Agreements) which shall be an instrument for cooperative and complementary exchanges between the nations whose goal it is to benefit their peoples, in direct contrast to the Free Trade Agreements which continue to increase the power and dominance of the trans-nationals.

The needs of the Bolivian people's development were analyzed as were the challenges faced by the 3-month old government of President Evo Morales, after winning an impressive electoral victory allowing, for the first time, the native communities and the indigenous peoples to participate in the government of their nation. The three leaders share the conviction that strong solidarity, mutual cooperation and aid between their peoples must prevail, free from any interest in business or market profits. In the particular case of Bolivia, they shall work on the complicated task of transforming the present reality of severe shortages of basic social services such as education and healthcare, while making the best possible use of natural resources such as gas, oil and others, for the development of its agricultural potential and the training of skilled human resources, so that the benefits may improve the lives of the poor, the exploited and the discriminated.

The leaders agree that only a new and genuine integration based on the principles of mutual aid, solidarity and respect for self-determination can provide a suitable response to the level of social justice, cultural diversity, equity and the right to development which all peoples deserve and claim for. Such integration is conceived as a political and economic relationship that is in stark contrast with that which has been established by FTAA and the free trade treaties.

For all the preceding reasons, the three leaders agreed that Bolivia, represented by her president, Evo Morales Ayma, should become part of the process of constructing and implementing the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America, starting with the development of the TCP among the three countries and to reiterate the Joint Declaration signed by the governments of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Republic of Cuba on December 14, 2004, in which the first guiding principles of ALBA were presented and which are presently joined by President Evo Morales Ayma and his nation.

Source:

29/04/2006

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Published on Fidel soldado de las ideas (<http://www.comandante.biz>)

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