
Raúl Castro says ALBA is an Alternative to Hegemonic Model

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In his inaugural speech of the 13th Summit of ALBA-TCP, the President said it is imperative to guarantee sustainability of the social economic projects making them rational and efficient.

The work of ALBA in this decade allow us to face in better conditions the present and future challenges, he stressed. The foundational principles of solidarity, justice and cooperation have a renewed meaning, together with the urgency of uniting us in our diversity, inside the nations and between them, he added.

The Cuban President indicated this summit will allow to discuss important affairs of regional and international interest which require a united stand among the ALBA nations. Our voice is heard and recognized all over the world, always in defense of just causes, he said.

The Executive highlighted the importance and urgency of monitoring the agreements and commitments assumed at the Eighth Extraordinary Summit dedicated to prevention and struggle against the ebola virus, held last October 20.

The achievements of ALBA-TCP in its 10 years of existence, he affirmed, as the political consensus and defense of sovereignty and Independence of the peoples, our Alliance constitutes a powerful platform where audacious and revolutionary positions on the most important issues of the regional and international arena are shared.

Among the main achievements of ALBA-TCP stand out the fact that three million persons of 10

countries have recovered their eyesight thanks to the program Vision Now, a million patients have been diagnosed and treated after carrying out a genetic and psychosocial study on disabled persons, five million citizens of 18 countries in the region learned to read and write using the method Yo si puedo (Yes, I can).

Also, 23 thousand 944 community doctors of Latin America and the Caribbean have graduated due to programs developed by ALBA-TCP, of these 10 thousand 228 are from Alliance nations. Notable results in sports and culture have been achieved, he referred.

Despite the difficulties and the global crisis, economic advances have been significant as the creation of the Single System of Regional Compensation (SUCRE) and the Bank of ALBA, which contribute to the creation of a new financial architecture in the region.

In this spirit, we will work to move forward in the Complementary Economic Zone ALBA-Petrocaribe-Mercosur (Market of the South) with efficiency, rationality and perseverance, he added.

Raúl Castro summoned to give solidarity and support to Venezuela and the most energetic condemnation at the attempt to impose sanctions on that nation by the United States.

He added that the creation of ALBA and the Trade Treaty of the Peoples, resulted also in the strengthening of bonds between Venezuela and Cuba, based on solidarity between our peoples and governments, as well as the principles of social justice, economic complementarity and cooperation, assumed by the Alliance since its foundation and included in the Joint Declaration signed on December, 2004.

The Cuban President commented that the incorporation of Nicaragua, Bolivia and Ecuador and the later entry of Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda and St. Lucia, strengthened the Alliance with the singular perspective of the Caribbean peoples, have helped consolidate this mechanism and expanded its reach.

At this meeting two new members were added to ALBA-TCP: Grenada and Saint Christopher and Nevis. At the end of the meeting, President Maduro read a final declaration and announced the next meeting of ALBA-TCP for February 23 in Havana.
