
Macri and Santos Promote Neoliberalism After Bilateral Meeting

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The presidents of Argentina and Colombia also discussed Venezuela and agreed to push for a recall vote to be held there this year.

Argentine President Mauricio Macri visited Colombia Wednesday to meet with his counterpart, Juan Manuel Santos, and both emerged from the meeting pushing for neoliberal trade agreements.

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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.

"We have to take advantage of the great relationship we have to further increase trade links," said Colombian President Santos during a press conference after his meeting with Macri.

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

The pair met for over an hour in private where they also 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.

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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 Argentine foreign minister, Susana Malcorra, to secure the post of secretary-general of the United Nations.

Macri will remain in Colombia until Friday, where he will participate in the World Economic Forum in Medellin.
