

Venezuela Hosts MERCOSUR Labor Congress



Caracas, February 15 (RHC) -- The first Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) Labor Congress opened in Caracas on Friday with host Industries Minister Wilmer Barrientos calling upon MERCOSUR members to use the bloc to promote unity and social development.

Speaking at the opening, Barrientos said the congress should serve "to generate policies that transform the economic model of the south to one in which the true value of work is determined by the effort and conscience of workers."

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua also spoke on the occasion, saying the congress was the result of the struggle and victory of the workers of South America against the neo-liberalism of the past decades.

"We are here ... to coordinate the effort to recover and boost the production of companies, of goods, of capital and of service," said Jaua, whose country is holding the rotating presidency of the bloc.

The two-day congress is being attended by some 30 representatives of companies that have been nationalized or recovered in Venezuela, and in other MERCOSUR members -- Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Bolivia.

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