

# *Venezuela promotes sustainable local economy to counteract U.S. blockade*

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Montevideo, August 30 (RHC)-- Venezuela's Vice President of Planning and Development Ricardo Menendez stressed Wednesday that the government will "redouble" its efforts to guarantee the protection of the population through the "Plan of the Homeland" 2019-2025 and the objectives of the U.N. 2030 Agenda.

"Venezuela will take a leap forward, all the sustainable development goals set by the United Nations System by 2030, we will reach them by 2025 (...) and if they plan to continue attacking the food plans, we will strengthen the popular distribution systems and the Local Supply and Production Committee (Clap)," Mendendez stated in the XVI Conference of Ministers and Chiefs of Planning of Latin America and the Caribbean held in Uruguay.

The Venezuelan representative denounced the economic blockade unilaterally imposed by the United States, as the main culprit for the current situation the country faces. In his intervention, Menendez explained that foreign banks have blocked more than US\$5 billion of Venezuelan assets and the country has lost almost US\$125 billion, which impedes the purchase of mainly medicine and food.

"There is extremely serious harm done, some countries talk about the humanitarian issue in Venezuela and don't talk about what the financial blockade means," he told the foreign dignitaries, adding that although "Venezuela has resources abroad, sufficient to guarantee the entire provision of food and medicine, but there is a kind of complicity that seeks asphyxiation from an economic point of view."

During the meeting, representatives from the region discussed the need to strengthen the capacities and resilience of peoples to natural hazards, the interest of building an ecosystem of territorial development policies and the reduction of territorial inequalities.

This activity serves as a prelude to the XVII Meeting of the Regional Planning Council, organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is scheduled to take place on Wednesday and Thursday.

Menendez met with ECLAC's Executive Secretary Alicia Barcena to speak of the economic situation and the U.S. imposed sanctions.

"I am not in favor of sanctions, from any point of view, because they affect people; I believe that political discrepancies have to be resolved in the political sphere and I believe that economic sanctions of any kind distort democracy and hurt society," Barcena said after meeting with Venezuela's envoy.

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