

Former Ecuadorean minister says leaving UNASUR favors U.S. interests



Quito, September 20 (RHC)-- Reacting to the legislative vote on Wednesday where the Ecuadorean government finalized its withdrawal from the Constitutional Treaty of UNASUR, leaving the bloc, former foreign minister of the nation, Guillaume Long, said the move favor United States interests.

The exit from the South American organization, founded in 2008 in a bid to form a stronger regional bloc to better position the region in negotiations with foreign powers, will be detrimental to Ecuador's interests said Long, who represented the Andean country to the United Nations between 2016 and 2017.

"Washington was always suspicious of Mercosur, and even boycotted" the pact, said the former diplomat. "Since the end of the 1990s, the U.S. government has always actively sought a solution similar to the NAFTA trade agreement with Mexico for the entire region," referring to all of Latin America.

The government of Lenin Moreno is now the second to formalize its abandonment of the treaty, putting it in the ranks of right-wing Colombian President Ivan Duque, who on Aug. 27, 2018, made a similar decision to leave the pact.

Since April 2018, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Peru also suspended their participation, leaving Venezuela, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname and Uruguay as active members of Unasur.

UNASUR's headquarters, located in Quito, Ecuador and whose property was donated by the previous government of Rafael Correa, will return to state hands, leaving the body without any building. In July 2018, Lenin Moreno announced his plans for the building, which are that he hopes to create an intercultural university.

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