

Bolivia Drops Maritime Dispute with Chile at Weekend G-77 Summit



La Paz, June 13 (Xinhua-RHC) -- Bolivia has decided to remove its controversial maritime dispute with neighboring Chile from the agenda of the upcoming G-77 plus China Summit.

Including the dispute "could tarnish the image of the global event," said Reymi Ferreira, the Bolivian organizer of the June 14th and 15th summit in the eastern city of Santa Cruz, which aims to promote cooperation among the world's developing nations.

Before traveling to Brazil early Thursday to attend the opening of the 2014 World Cup, Bolivian President Evo Morales said if the issue is brought up and "some countries support Bolivia and others support Chile, it could lead to discord."

Ferreira said officials have also decided not to distribute to summit participants a book on the matter, entitled "The Sea."

"It's not the place for it," he said of the publication, which explains Bolivia's reasoning for taking its maritime dispute with Chile to the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

The dispute dates to the 1879 War of the Pacific, in which Bolivia lost some 400 km of coastline to neighboring Chile. The landlocked country has been pressing Chile to provide it with sea access, possibly through a leasing agreement of some kind.

Chile's former conservative government steadfastly refused to consider the possibility, but newly-arrived center-left President Michelle Bachelet has indicated her willingness to discuss Bolivia's request.

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