

# *CELAC belongs to everyone*

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By Roberto Morejón

One of the most frequently heard concepts during the eighth CELAC summit in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was the need to preserve peace in the region, precisely a decade after its proclamation as such in a previous meeting.

The forum of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States brought together in Kingstown statesmen and other representatives of more than thirty members, who highlighted the need to maintain peace in the region.

They recalled that this is taking place in a world full of turbulence and in need of cooperation, the same that the Caribbean island promoted during the year of its pro tempore presidency.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines became the first member of the Caribbean Community to assume such responsibility, and performed it with precision, especially in areas such as economic recovery and environmental sustainability, although it also played a role in the mediation of a border dispute.

Now the rotating presidency is in the hands of Honduras, so its president Xiomara Castro expressed interest in advocating CELAC meetings with China and the European Union.

Honduras must play its role in a thorny international context and this was emphasized, among others, by the presidents of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva, and Colombia, Gustavo Petro, who urged an immediate end to the Israeli offensive in Gaza.

Violence in Haiti and Ecuador came up as a topic at the meeting in Kingstown, when UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres took the floor.

The high official of the global organization insisted on the need to achieve a political solution and to provide financial support to Haiti to stop its current crisis.

As expected, the CELAC meeting once again hosted a high-level delegation from Cuba, headed by President Miguel Díaz-Canel, who reaffirmed his country's commitment to strengthening peace and unity in Latin America and the Caribbean. The President highlighted the honor for Cuba that the signing of the document proclaiming the region as a peace zone took place in Havana.

As the president of Cuba pointed out, defending peace also implies the rejection of unilateral coercive measures and blockades imposed by powerful countries. The government of Saint Vincent should feel satisfied with the management of the pro tempore presidency of a bloc which, as Díaz Canel said in Argentina in 2023 "is a work of all of us".

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