

# *Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Meets with U.S. Assistant Secretary*

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Quito, November 5 (RHC-Xinhua) -- Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño met with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roberta Jacobson in Quito Tuesday to discuss bilateral issues.

The U.S. Embassy said in a statement that Jacobson's four-day visit aims to "strengthen bilateral cooperation on issues of common interest which include education, trade, security, cultural heritage and clean energy."

Patiño said months ago that one of the purposes of Jacobson's visit is to prepare a future visit by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who is interested in discussing fundamental issues of the bilateral relations.

According to sources from the Foreign Ministry, issues discussed Tuesday included sensitive ones like the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency's participation in a Colombian armed attack in 2008 against the Colombian guerrilla FARC in the Ecuadorian territory.

They will also discuss the departure of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) from Ecuador after operating 53 years in the country in the absence of a new agreement on bilateral cooperation program. The USAID has been accused of supporting the Ecuadorian opposition.

Jacobson arrived in the Ecuadorian capital on Sunday for an official visit that will last until Wednesday, said the U.S. Embassy in the South American country.

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