

# *Uruguay's Foreign Minister Makes Bid to Lead Organization of American States*

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Montevideo, February 19 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Uruguay's Foreign Minister Luis Almagro delivered a formal presentation Wednesday to the Organization of American States (OAS) outlining the proposals and initiatives he would undertake should he be elected as the bloc's next secretary-general.

"Together we can give the OAS credibility that all of us are asking for," Almagro stated in his speech to the organization's permanent council.

The OAS is scheduled to elect the successor to Chile's Jose Miguel Insulza in March. Insulza's tenure has been marred by accusations that he supports right-wing Venezuelan opposition groups.

Uruguay's Almagro, who is currently the only contender for the OAS secretary-general post, recently joined an increasingly large chorus of supporters defending Venezuelan democracy in the face of destabilization efforts by right-wing opposition forces in the country and Washington.

"In 2015 we should definitely leave behind the OAS of the cold war," Almagro added. The OAS has also long been accused by several regional governments for being overly influenced by U.S. foreign policy.

According to a 2014 Congressional Research Service report, the United States is the organization's largest donor, contributing nearly US\$65.7 million in fiscal year 2013, which is equivalent to 41 percent of the total 2013 OAS budget.

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