

# *Venezuelan President Calls on Latin America to Pursue Unity*

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San José, January 29 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro stated Wednesday that Latin America is living in a "new historic era" marked by unity and great opportunity. President Maduro also predicted that the 21st century will "mark the end of imperialism." Maduro made his comments during opening statements by the heads of state and government at the CELAC Summit being held in Costa Rica.

The Venezuelan president called on his colleagues to continue the efforts at strengthening regional integration. "I call for the (necessary) political will, for respect and the needed diversity to continue down the path of the building of a new Latin America and Caribbean. From Venezuela, we will continue to make our small contribution with volition, love and patience," said Maduro.

During his speech, Maduro also backed Nicaragua's intervention in favor of Puerto Rican independence and reiterated his call for the blockade against Cuba to be lifted.

President Maduro denounced the visit of former presidents of Chile, Colombia and

Mexico to Venezuela to participate in a forum organized by the right-wing opposition. "This is not tolerable in the current political life of Latin America and the Caribbean," stated Maduro. He questioned if any other head of state in the region would tolerate an opposition that seeks to remove through coups and other undemocratic means.

Maduro's speech was followed by Bolivian President Evo Morales, who also centered his comments on the progress the region has made in the face of U.S. imperialism.

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