
Eternal Chavez: "America is my homeland"

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Undisputed leader of the awakening of the new America, unconditional friend of Cuba, Hugo Chavez embodied the aspirations of his people. Hugo Chavez ceased physically to exist five years ago, but his legacy is more alive than ever. President and commander, he did not labour in vain. Beyond subjective appraisals, there is a resounding work, which he tirelessly worked for. It is at everyone's sight. No matter what exalted theoreticians, the spokespersons of the big hegemonic powers, capitalism propagandists say... the truth is that any president had done so much for Venezuela and the entire America.

He offered millions of his compatriots something that cannot be measured: a notion of dignity. He led them in the attainment of a homeland, which prevails over everything, the attainment of decorum. He woke them up from an almost ancestral lethargy, put in their hands the tools to build a future. He was deeply committed with the well-being of the ever forgotten ones. He was a brilliant leader, who spoke a lot, but did a lot at the same time. His affection, his friendliness and his extraordinary charisma placed him at the head of a renewing wave that changed the rules of the game. But charisma is not enough, as history has repeatedly demonstrated. The Chavez phenomenon was based on strong convictions, a humanist sense of an authentically Christian root, a diaphanous kindheartedness

and an honest militancy.

Some of his enemies said that Chavez captivated. Actually, what he used to do was to convince. He spoke to the poor in their language, sympathized with and urged them to fight. Ignoring (or pretending to ignore) the force of facts, his adversaries again and again called him dictator. There's an irrefutable fact no head of state of the continent underwent so many electoral processes. And always respecting people's will, the democratic spirit of his people.

Among so many facets of his political itinerary, there remains one of particular importance: his determined Latin Americanist vocation. Hugo Chavez articulated a new vision of unity, which kicks off from the recognition of differences to strengthen the extraordinary collective heritage of our peoples. He was a continental leader. The premise of that integration lies in both solidarity and complementation. His integrationist projects always started from the knowledge of sharing what you had, not what was left over. Petrocaribe, the Bolivarian Alliance for America (ALBA) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) created a solid platform for the very elusive project of Latin American unity. There lies his main legacy, which earned him his great stature as a statesman. Hugo Chavez Frias made Bolivar and Marti's dreams his own, but he was not happy with being a visionary: he was also a soldier. Five years after his death, our America honors him because America was the homeland for Chavez.

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