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**Russian foreign minister bolsters diplomatic ties with Mexico**

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Mexico City, February 7 (RHC)-- Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov held a meeting with his Mexican counterpart, Marcelo Ebrard, to strengthen trade, political and diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Although Lavrov's agenda in Mexico City was tight, both ministers took the time to address crucial issues in the economy and trade, such as Russia's cooperation in strengthening the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

"It has been a very productive visit, we reached an agreement on cultural centers, the peaceful use of outer space, links with police agencies for the fight against terrorism, and we also covered the introduction of a visa-free regime for our citizens," said the Russian Foreign Minister.

Also, Lavrov pondered the importance of diplomatic ties with Mexico, "after Brazil; the country is the second most important partner for Russia (...) between 2016 and 2018, bilateral trade reached 2.4 billion dollars," he added. Within the framework of a friendly environment, Mexican president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, was invited by Moscow to attend the great event in May that commemorates the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

The Russian diplomat reiterated that both Mexico and his nation respect the freedom and self-determination of nations, "Venezuelans are the only ones who can solve their problems ... the situation won't be resolved with attempts to provoke a confrontation of forces and military

intervention, "he added.

"Mexico and Russia, we believe that the region must have a multipolar order ... Venezuela must solve its problems through inclusive dialogue among all the important forces in the country," said Foreign Minister Lavrov.

"Russia will maintain economic ties with the constitutional government of Venezuela. The U.S. idea for Venezuela, we believe undermines economic ties and contradicts the letter of the U.N. and World Trade Organization," reiterated the Russian minister.

Lavrov expects to arrive in Caracas on Thursday, to be received by Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza, followed by an interview with Vice President Delcy Rodríguez and finally a summit with the head of state, Nicolás Maduro.

The representative of Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the White House must understand that the western region is multipolar. "The U.S. believes they should prevail in the region, but now we have a multipolar world," he said. He also questioned the statements by former Washington National Security adviser, John Bolton, that countries like Russia and China could not be part of the West, "the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean must defend their progress against U.S. threats," he added.

"We do not make these approaches in the region to generate a destabilization against the United States," Lavrov said.

Edited by Ed Newman

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