

Remarks by the Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Kingdom of Belgium, H.E. Dr. Claudia Salerno Caldera, on behalf of ALBA-TCP (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America)

Solemn act of commemoration of the 197th Anniversary of the Independence of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

Brussels, Place de la Monnaie, August 6, 2022

Dear Ambassadors, Chargés d'Affaires, comrades, people of Belgium and people of Bolivia:

It is an honour for me to give these words today on behalf of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America–People's Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP).

Created in 2004, ALBA-TCP is a political, social and economic collaboration and complementation project between Latin American and Caribbean countries, made up of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (seat of its Executive Secretary); the Republic of Cuba; the Plurinational State of Bolivia; the Republic of Nicaragua; the Commonwealth of Dominica; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Antigua and Barbuda; and Saint Lucia.

Dear Friends, brothers and sisters,

Almost 200 years ago, our Liberator Simón Bolívar, developed a strategic plan against the disgraceful colonial domination, consolidating a liberating, patriotic and pro-independence force launching a Campaign to the South to liberate peoples under the imperial oppression, defeating the forces of the Spanish empire in the territories of Venezuela (his homeland), Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Bolivia, with the final aim of founding a confederation of South American and Caribbean republics.

Congressman Manuel Martín Cruz famously said: “*Si de Rómulo Roma, de Bolívar Bolivia (If from Romulus comes Rome, then from Bolívar comes Bolivia)*”. The name stuck and Bolivia became the Republic’s official name on October 3rd, 1825.

Today we are here together to celebrate and honour 197 years of Bolivia's Independence.

The Alliance (ALBA TCP), is an unfading inspiration of the “*Patria Grande*”, *dreamt by Simon Bolivar*; **as we believe in the definitive birth of a new anti-**

colonial and anti-imperialist world, based on cooperation, brotherhood and solidarity among peoples.

With the creation of ALBA, institutional and legal form was given to our new Regional Integration Alliance of free nations, willing to reduce existing inequalities, and making a common front to face challenges of the new times.

We continue materializing the emancipating ideas of our American independence heroes, the same ideas that have been reinforced in the 21st century by the leaders Hugo Chávez and Fidel Castro, upon which, the guiding principles of ALBA-TCP have been outlined.

We reaffirm every day, our commitment to continue working within the framework of International Law, to achieve that Latin America and the Caribbean remains a region free of colonialism and colonies, including all its new expressions as unilateral coercive measures and political coactions.

Dear brothers and sisters,

This is the time that calls us to achieve the second and definitive independence: against the imperialism, together with the peoples, and based on multilateralism and the unrestricted respect for international law, in particular the principles of sovereignty, self-determination and non-intervention in internal affairs.

We accompany you Bolivia, in your celebration, beloved daughter of our America, to which you have given a philosophy of life that inspires our existence:

Vivir Bien entre nosotros, Vivir Bien con lo que nos rodea y Vivir Bien consigo mismo.

To Live Well among us, Live Well with what surrounds us and Live Well with oneself.

JALLALLA BOLIVIA!

Thank you!