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## ***Ankara, Algiers and Tehran: the first stages of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro's Eurasian tour***

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The first stage of the Eurasian tour of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro ends. A trip that, being the president absent from the country for more than five days, according to articles 235 and 187, numeral 17, of the constitution, required the authorization of the parliament, which was granted unanimously. Discretion about the later stages of the tour is justified considering the attacks that the president has suffered and the threats that loom,

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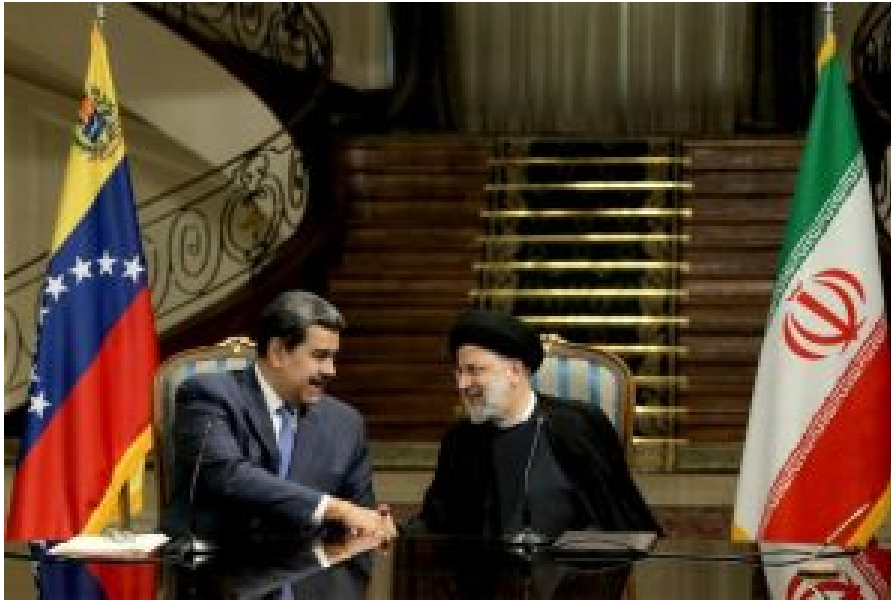
starting with neighboring Colombia, in the context of the conflict in Ukraine. And even more so in the hypothesis of a subsequent visit by Maduro to Russia.



In the request sent to parliament, Maduro explained the reasons for the trip: to promote the country's interests in favor of the Venezuelan people at the highest level, and with this in mind, deepen cooperation agreements in various areas, such as science, technology, agriculture, transportation, tourism, culture and energy. Areas of relationship already widely underway in the first three countries visited: Turkey, Algeria and Iran.

With [Ankara](#), Caracas has signed three agricultural, financial and tourism agreements. With [Algeria](#), a major producer of oil and natural gas, a member of OPEC and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), there was talk of how to strengthen cooperation, and the creation of an airline between the two nations was announced. In Iran, a country with which consolidated relations have been maintained for years, the respective heads of state have signed agreements "for twenty years of development of relations between the two republics" in the political, cultural, economic, oil, petrochemical and tourism fields. With Iran, Venezuela has so far signed 250 cooperation agreements.

Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi called relations between the two countries "strategic" and praised Venezuela's "resistance to aggression." Then, he referred to the importance of technological cooperation to increase productive capacity. Iran has a long experience, because, despite the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States, it has created the technology to make up to 30% of desert areas productive.



Seyed Ebrahim Raisi president of Iran and Nicolás Maduro. GETTY IMAGES

The diversification of the productive model and the path towards food sovereignty was one of the objectives of the trip, given the economic data that register a sharp increase in raw materials, consumer prices and inflation, as well as the possibility of famine in developing countries, due to the "sanctions" of the US and the EU against Russia, the leading international exporter of wheat.

"The cycle of U.S. hegemony in the world is over," Maduro said in an interview on Iranian television, "the new world is already in sight." He then thanked Iran for the solidarity and courage shown, amid the U.S. siege on the Venezuelan economy, in repelling the attack on oil tankers that had come to carry fuel to Caracas.

The three countries visited so far are strategic for the ongoing conflict and for the possibility of shaping a multicentric and multipolar world capable of countering US hegemony. And it is precisely in this perspective that the importance of the Eurasian tour led by the president of a country that contains the world's first reserves of oil and gold and an immense amount of other attractive resources for a capitalism in structural crisis that is trying to reshape its power worldwide arises.

In Algeria, the hydrocarbons sector accounts for around 30% of GDP, 60% of tax revenues and 93% of exports. After Russia and Norway, Algeria is the third largest natural gas supplier to the European Union, it is also Africa's leading producer of natural gas and the sixth largest exporter in the world. And it is estimated that it could be among the first countries in the world in reserves of gold, uranium, diamonds, copper.

After the foreign policy outlined by Chávez, Maduro – who accompanied the commander as foreign minister – continued with an anti-imperialist policy based on the diplomacy of peace with social justice: a policy of non-interference, but also of active protagonism in the deactivation of conflicts. "The whole world must wake up and react to protect and support the historical claims of the Saharawi people," he said firmly sharing Algeria's decision to suspend a cooperation treaty with Spain, active since 2002, for Madrid's recent alliance with Morocco, to the detriment of the demands of the Saharawi people. He then denounced the daily crimes committed in Palestine by Israeli colonialism and welcomed the position shared with Algiers on the situation in Libya.

"Venezuela," Maduro said in Turkey, "in addition to great material resources, has a doctrine and morality that allow it to assume a vanguard role in the continent for the construction of a multicentric world, a world of cooperation, dialogue, respect between different civilizations, ideologies, religions and cultures." A world in which Ankara plays its game, especially complex in the current context, given its geopolitical position, both in relation to Russia and the European Union, and to the United States, as Turkey is a member of NATO.

Anatolia is an important energy crossing, both for gas from Azerbaijan bound for Europe, at a time when Europeans want to reduce dependence on Russian supplies, and for hydrocarbons from Central Asia and Iran. Although Washington tried to overthrow Erdogan in 2016, and today tries to take advantage of the competition between Ankara and Moscow, following the outbreak of conflict in Ukraine, Turkey is the largest importer of American liquefied natural gas since February 24, 2022. Ankara seeks to consolidate an equidistance between the United States and Russia, increasing its strategic importance and its military prestige, aware that it is facing an unprecedented opportunity.

With his eyes on the June 18, 2023 presidential election, as he tries to influence Finland's entry into NATO, Erdogan knows, however, that he has a big knife in his throat with his dependence on the dollar. With inflation on the rise internationally, Turkey's is around 70%, and the central bank must deplete its greenback reserves to avoid the lira's collapse and its monetary policy based on low interest rates. The relationship with Venezuela, which is already well advanced in the pursuit of monetary sovereignty through cryptocurrency movements and relations with China and Russia, may be a strength.

Venezuela is Turkey's largest partner in Latin America and the Caribbean. Diplomatic relations between Turkey and Venezuela date back to 1957, but it was in 2009 that they deepened with the implementation of the High-Level Joint Commission, which opened the way for a win-win relationship, through strategic agreements in the energy, mining, petrochemical, agricultural, tourism, technological, industrial, educational, food, aeronautical, cultural, housing and international development sectors.

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