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Trade and peace on the Colombian-Venezuelan border



Sources: Rebellion [Image: Colombian President Gustavo Petro (left) and Venezuelan Transport Minister Ramón Velásquez shake hands during the ceremonial act to reopen the borders of the two countries. (Credit: YURI CORTEZ/AFP via Getty Images)]

The reopening of the Colombian-Venezuelan border on September 26 has been a relevant political, economic and peace triumph between the two countries, a fact that has been minimized by the large Western media that yearn to maintain tensions in that area in order to affect the Bolivarian Revolution.

After being closed for seven years (2015) due to the actions of paramilitary gangs, drug traffickers and destabilizing aggressions against Venezuela from Colombian territory, launched by the regimes of former Colombian presidents Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018)

and Iván Duque (2018-2022), the arrival of the current president Gustavo Petro opens a new era for those sister nations.

The first steps opened were the Simón Bolívar and Francisco de Paula International Bridges that link the north of Santander with the state of Táchira.

These countries, along their 2 219 kilometres of border, have six bridges and two river interconnection posts. Air connections will gradually resume.

The Bolivarian Republic has suffered from the government of Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010) until the departure of Duque, numerous attacks by paramilitary and mercenary gangs that have tried, with the consent of the United States, to destabilize the governments of Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro.

That is why it is a huge triumph that with the coming to power of President Petro, diplomatic relations between Bogotá and Caracas have been restored in favor of political understanding and peace.

To combat smuggling and drug gangs, Venezuela and Colombia activated the binational Coordination Committee that will have thousands of members of their Armed Forces from both nations to counter these illicit activities.

The Simón Bolívar International Bridge, where the reopening ceremony took place, is the main land route that connects [Colombia](#) with [Venezuela](#). It is located on the [Táchira River](#), which in that section marks the [border between both nations](#). It is 315 meters long, 2 lanes and a width of 7.3 meters.

Por esa vía, inaugurada oficialmente en 1962, pasa el 80 % de las exportaciones procedentes de los dos países que conectan las ciudades colombianas de [Cúcuta](#) y [Villa del Rosario](#), en el [departamento de Norte de Santander](#), con las venezolanas de [San Antonio](#) y [San Cristóbal](#) del [Estado Táchira](#).

Por todos los puestos fronterizos transitarán ahora legalmente unas 30 000 personas al día, las que ya no tendrán que hacerlo de forma ilegal por los pasos clandestinos que controlaban las mafias.

Después de años de baja económica en Venezuela, debido principalmente al bloqueo comercial-financiero que le ha impuesto Estados Unidos, a partir de 2021 su Producto Interno Bruto (PIB) creció 1,9 % y se espera que en 2022 alcance 8,3 %, uno de los mayores de América Latina.

El intercambio comercial bilateral entre los años 2000 y 2009, promedió los 1 793 millones de dólares, aunque en 2008 alcanzó los 5 117 millones. A partir de 2010 decayó ante las tensiones de los regímenes colombianos hasta su cierre total en 2015.

En el acto de reapertura el presidente Gustavo Petro señaló que la globalización ante todo es comercio y una relación entre vecinos y aseguró que las ciudades vecinas florecerán nuevamente en los próximos meses.

Para el embajador colombiano en Caracas, Armando Benedetti, el intercambio comercial podría alcanzar en poco tiempo los 10 000 millones de dólares con beneficio para más de una 12 millones de personas que viven cerca de las fronteras.

Los principales productos que Colombia vende a Venezuela son combustibles y aceites minerales, materias plásticas y manufacturas, azúcares, artículos de confitería, papel, cartón, y farmacéuticos.

Mientras que de Venezuela a Colombia se envían productos químicos orgánicos, hierro, acero, plásticos, combustibles y manufacturas, entre otros.

After the restoration of relations on August 7, Bogotá and Caracas have begun to work together in areas such as military, commercial, economic, political and diplomatic.

With the emergence of independent progressive governments, less controlled by the United States, Latin America as a whole can become a region where peace, social justice, trade and the economy benefit the vast majorities that are still discriminated against in the region.

Apparently, with the recent example of peace relations between Colombia and Venezuela, Latin America is changing for the better. Let us hope that those examples will be maintained.

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