

Bogota Models Sin Hambre Program on Brazil's Zero Hunger

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Luis Eduardo Garzon, mayor of Bogota, capital of Colombia, affirmed that the Administration of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva "is very important for Brazilian democracy and social development."

He made this declaration during a ceremony, earlier this month, in which Lula was handed the keys to the city. According to Garzon, actions undertaken in Brazil are reflected throughout South America.

The mayor gave as an example the Zero Hunger program, which served as a model for the "Bogota Sin Hambre" project in the Colombian capital.

"This program provided us advisory assistance to implement complementary nutritional activities for more than 100,000 boys and girls. We established community restaurants and milk banks," he informed. Garzon said that Brazil also serves as a model for activities in the areas of health and education.

The mayor went on to note that there is a difference between being a leftist opposition and being a leftist government. "Lula's Administration did an important thing: It invited entrepreneurs and acted responsibly in fiscal affairs. Moreover, it did not reject the United States. It works together with that country," Garzon pointed out.

This was Lula's first official visit to Bogota and his third trip to Colombia since taking office in 2003. Garzon was elected mayor of Bogota by the Independent Democratic Pole (PDI), a leftist political grouping opposed to the government of Colombian president Uribe. Like Lula, Garzon comes from a poor family and has political origins linked to the labor movement.

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