

Peru's President Elect Travels to Brazil Aboard Brazil's Air Force One

Contributed by Newsroom
Monday, 12 June 2006

Peruvian elected president Alan Garcia is scheduled to travel Tuesday to Brazil invited by Brazilian President Lula da Silva, revealed Garcia's press secretary.

Garcia, 57, elected for a second time president (1985/1990) will be talking with Lula da Silva about a free trade agreement his future administration has plans to sign.

"The visit will help raise diplomatic, trade and economic links between Peru and Brazil, which we hope will turn into strong investments and jobs for Peruvians," said Luis Gonzales Posada, a member of parliament from Garcia's APRA party.

Garcia will be traveling in Brazil's Air Force One, a compliment from President Lula da Silva.

Since last January Brazil has access to the Pacific through a binational Integration bridge in the common border.

In an interview with Brazil's O Globo daily from Rio, Mr. Garcia said that it was in Peru's interest to "increase trade relations with Brazil" and insisted he was hopeful that "Brazil will finally set eyes on the Pacific, with Peru as its main port".

Garcia added he had great admiration for President Lula da Silva and "obviously I would vote for him, if I could" in the coming October presidential election.

The Peruvian elected president also recalled that when Lula's administration and his Workers Party were suffering a barrage of corruption claims, he addressed a letter to the presidents of the International Socialist titled "In defense of Lula".

"I know he was very grateful and appreciated very much the letter," said Garcia.

In related news, from Caracas Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez said relations with Peru "remain frozen" until elected president Garcia apologizes for the offensive language with Venezuela.

"Relations are in deep freeze, and won't come out unless the elected president of Peru formally apologizes to the Venezuelan people for its offenses and insults".

Only then will the president of Venezuela "extend his hands" to Peru's elected president, said Chavez during his Sunday program "Hello president".

Chavez said Garcia was the first to insult Venezuela and also offended his "manly honor" saying he beats his wife.

"Alan Garcia was elected president of Peru, we respect that, but we do not applaud," added Chavez who openly supported Ollanta Humala all along the campaign.

However Chavez said he was surprised at the vote difference between Garcia and Humala and the number of void and annulled ballots in the run off.

Chavez exchanged insults with Garcia during the campaign and promised to break diplomatic relations if the now elected president was the winner.

Peru-Venezuela's relations have been strained for some time and last April 30, current Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo recalled the ambassador in Caracas arguing Chavez was meddling in Peru's internal affairs and for calling Toledo a "traitor to indigenous Peruvians" for having signed a trade agreement with the United States.

Mercopress - www.mercopress.com