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## ***Biden "holds the key" to continental integration: AMLO***

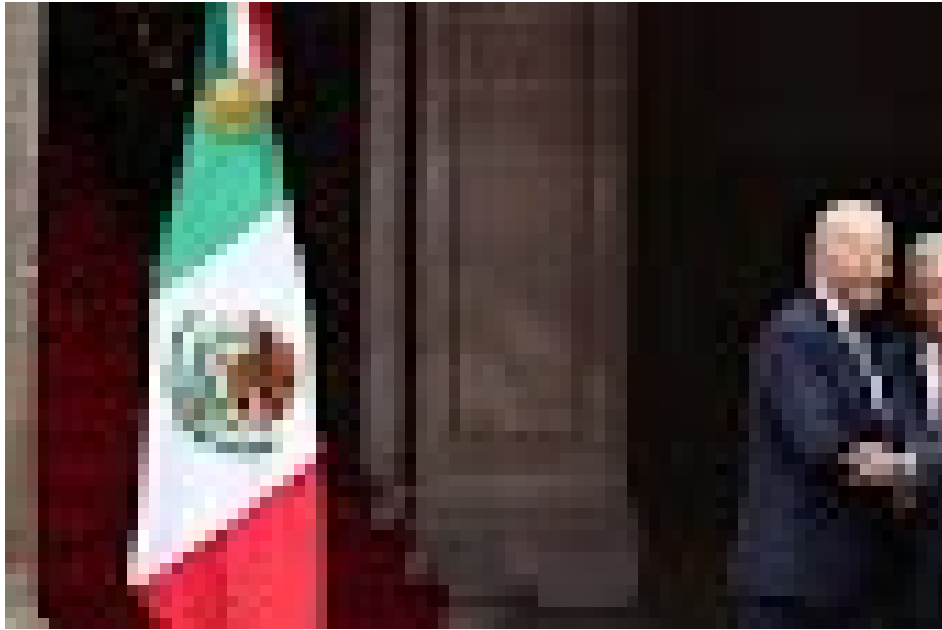
Thus, the Mexican president quoted the liberator Bolivar and said he was sure that with Biden's political decision that "beautiful utopia ... If heaven grants us the wish of a united America, that united America could be called the queen of nations, the mother of republics."



*Mexico City.* The two leaders put their interests and political visions on the bilateral table in the framework of the tenth Summit of North American Leaders (CLAN). The Mexican, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, betting on continental integration and sure that his US counterpart, Joe Biden, "has the key" to achieve it; The guest explained that the government of his country has allocated in the last 15 years "tens of billions of dollars" for the development of the hemisphere, but that it cannot be limited to a single region.

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U.S. President Joe Biden and Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador shake hands during a welcoming ceremony as part of the North American Leaders' Summit at the National Palace on Jan. 9, 2023, in Mexico City, Mexico. (Hector Vivas/Getty Images)

The presidents of Mexico and the United States opened the bilateral dialogue with messages in the middle of the Ambassadors room of the National Palace.

The host explained the need to achieve an integrated America and emphasized that it is precisely Biden who "has the key" to extend the dream of the liberator Simón Bolívar so that the united America becomes "the mother of republics."

The head of the White House pointed out his interest in this approach, although he noted that for three five-year periods support has been provided to the nations of the continent, but at the same time he has extended it to other corners of the world. He added that during the Summit he is interested in deepening shared security, actions to curb fentanyl trafficking and the phenomenon of irregular migration.

Accompanied by their delegations with high-level officials from the two governments, the first to take the floor was López Obrador, who opened by welcoming his guest and collaborators.

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"Dear President Biden: I am certain that you are a humanist and visionary ruler and that there are excellent conditions to initiate a new policy of economic and social integration in our continent."

He stressed that the North American trade agreement has shown itself to be a valuable instrument to consolidate production processes, taking advantage of the great potential represented by the region's domestic market. However, he noted, Pacific ports continue to receive ships full of goods from Asia.

"The question we ask ourselves is this: Couldn't we produce in America what we consume? Of course. It is a matter of defining and jointly planning our future development. Uniting and partnering in America is equivalent to ultimately consolidating the most important region in the world."

The region has great advantages, he said: a "young and creative" workforce, technological development, great wealth of natural resources and a geography that allows savings in transportation of these goods to satisfy markets. "Per capita consumption in the Americas is \$18,100 annually, while Asia's is \$4,400."

That integration, he stressed, must be supported by public and private investment for the well-being of all the peoples of the Americas. "Without excluding anyone."

Thus, he recalled that since 1961, when the then president of the United States, John F. Kennedy, launched the Alliance for Progress, in more than half a century there has not been a similar plan and with that ambition of support for Latin America and the Caribbean. Well, 10 billion dollars were allocated then, which today would be equivalent to 82 billion of that currency.

"Consequently, I maintain that it is time to end this forgetfulness, with abandonment, that disdain for Latin America and the Caribbean opposed to the policy of good neighborliness of that titan of freedom that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt and start with you, because there would be no other leader who could carry out this enterprise. Begin with you a new stage among the peoples and nations of the continent based on respect and mutual help. President Biden, you hold the key to opening and substantially improving relations between all the countries of the Americas."

López Obrador said he is aware that it is a complex and controversial initiative, in addition to its implementation involving numerous difficulties. "But in my opinion there is no better way to guarantee the prosperous, peaceful and just future that our peoples, our compatriots, as well as all the peoples of the continent and future generations deserve. The proposal, President Biden, is comprehensive, it implies consolidating ourselves as an economic region in the world, strengthening brotherhood in the Americas, respecting our differences and our sovereignty, ensuring that no one is left behind and that together we go in search of the beautiful utopia of freedom, equality and true democracy.

Thus, the Mexican president quoted the liberator Bolivar and said he was sure that with Biden's political decision that "beautiful utopia ... If heaven grants us the wish of a united America, that united America could be called the queen of nations, the mother of republics."



Biden holds the key to integration

Biden said he was pleased to be in Mexico and noted that last month the two nations celebrated the bicentennial of their relations.

"Looking at our shared history it is clear that if we are safer we will work better together. Mexico is a true partner and when we work together with common values and mutual respect there is nothing we cannot do."

Thus, he began to put his priorities to discussion: "Today we are going to talk about how we can deepen more in this relationship not only with Mexico but with the Western Hemisphere, this includes strengthening our supply chains so that we are even more competitive; We're also going to talk about our shared security, including our joint action to guard the fentanyl plague that has killed 100,000 Americans so far; and how we can address irregular migration. And I think that is already very well underway, above all we are committed to achieving a better future that is based on peace and prosperity for all our peoples."

He reversed certain comments from his host: "Mr. President, today and in the coming years, I hope to continue building this better future. And I would like to add that in the last 15 years we have spent billions of dollars in this hemisphere, tens of billions of dollars in the hemisphere, but what we must do is what you have done and I congratulate you for doing it, we must continue to support and build democratic institutions in the hemisphere."

He stressed that one thing the G7 could do was to reach an agreement that there would be a multi-billion dollar infrastructure project for the Western Hemisphere, for Latin America and for Africa.

"So there is a lot we can do, we have a lot to talk about and I hope I can do it because I am confident that we can achieve it, I feel confident that we are at a juncture of real change.

"The last fundamental change that happened in global politics was after World War II and now we are at a totally different juncture, we are at a turning point, what we do in the next few years is going to change as the light of the world in the coming decades and this is what we have the opportunity to do."

He stressed that his country is the nation that provides more assistance abroad than any other. "Not just in the hemisphere, but to the whole world. Unfortunately our responsibility does not only end with the Western Hemisphere, we are in the center of Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in Southeast Asia. So I wish we could focus on just one region, but we focus on multiple regions and well, this we have to work on, I feel confident that we can do a lot more in the coming years. Thank you for having us and I look forward to our conversation."



U.S. President Joe Biden (right) and Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (left) participate in a bilateral meeting at Mexico City's National Palace on Jan. 9, 2023. (Credit: JIM WATSON/AFP via Getty Images)

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Edited by [María Piedad Ossaba](#)

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