

U.S. Military Bases in Colombia Threaten Regional Peace: ALBA

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HAVANA: U.S. military bases in Colombia are a grave threat to the peace, security and stability in Latin America and the Caribbean region, the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas (ALBA) said Monday.

In a final declaration at the ALBA summit, the group strongly condemned American political and military activities in the region and an agreement the U.S. signed with Colombia to set up or use military bases in that country.

The ALBA said that Latin America and the Caribbean must be free of foreign military bases, reaffirming that it is unacceptable to use the fight against drug trafficking and international terrorism as excuses to increase America's military presence in the area.

The ALBA's member countries said the real aim of the United States was to control the region's economic resources and markets and to hold back ongoing social changes there.

That aim, the ALBA said, was evident in a document justifying development of the Palanquero air base issued by the U.S. Air Force in May.

The presidents of the ALBA member countries urged Colombia to reconsider the establishment of military bases included in an agreement it signed with the United States.

The establishment of those bases is a real danger to the region and an obstacle for the integration of Latin America and the Caribbean, the presidents said.

The ALBA supports Venezuela's right of "setting under alert its country" due to the clear risk for its national security because of U.S. troops deployed near its border.

The ALBA is made up of Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as well as Venezuela.

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