

MINUTES HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION AREA OF THE ALBA-TCP

*Caracas, Venezuela, April 12th, 2021, 2:00 pm
Virtual Format*

In accordance with the mandate of the 18th Summit of Heads of State and Government, held on December 14, 2020, the High-Level Authorities on the Communication and Information Area of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), met in an unprecedented manner and in virtual format this April 12th, 2021, outlined a roadmap of political-communication actions in order to:

1. Strengthen the international presence and voice of ALBA-TCP, at raising the communication policy to a new level, understanding it as a tool of enormous value to promote interaction, integration and common actions among the peoples.
2. Project at the regional, multilateral and global levels, the policies and actions in which ALBA-TCP – faithful to its principles and values of cooperation, solidarity and complementarity – is working to defend the lives of its peoples within the framework of the impact caused by COVID-19.
3. Strengthen the actions of ALBA-TCP, which make it a valid, efficient and effective integration bloc allowing the creation of balance spaces in opposition to the existing asymmetries, in defense of true multilateralism and against unilateral and arbitrary aggressions on the sovereignty of the peoples.
4. Highlight the potentialities, struggles and cultures of the ALBA-TCP countries and peoples as the great force bringing life to the regional bloc.

Therefore, the following topics were developed and discussed in the work agenda:

1. The need to implement a joint communication plan to strengthen the operation of ALBA-TCP – in view of the turning point that 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic have meant for humanity – by focusing on a strategy that meets the most urgent needs of the region, and in which the Alliance's actions in defense of life are reflected.

2. Re-launching the ALBA-TCP Communication and Information policy, adapted to the new communication tools and aesthetics.
3. Needs, potentials and main communication issues of ALBA-TCP countries were addressed for the effective development of the strategies outlined, taking into account national realities, technical and training capacities, which allow for the development of mutual cooperation mechanisms.
4. The challenges posed by the rise of social networks and 3.0 platforms for democracies and security of member countries, in view of the need to adopt updated legislation to respond to and protect individual and collective freedoms. Venezuela made available to the members of the alliance the experiences and results achieved during the recent celebration of the Bicentennial Congress of the Peoples, Communicators chapter, where the topic of digital communication was addressed.
5. The streaming status of the TeleSUR signal in all ALBA-TCP countries, especially the signal in the English language in the Eastern Caribbean countries.
6. The conception of the term “intrapandemic” as a description of this global historical moment. The planet in pandemic is still in danger, therefore, it is difficult to talk about a post-pandemic world, being still in a situation when everything is re-defined.

The member countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP) agreed:

1. Work together on the development of an innovative and effective communicational strategy, which consolidates ALBA-TCP as an "Alliance for life", having as cross-cutting key points the moral power of ALBA-TCP, the strengthening of Multilateralism and the actions of the Alliance in the defense of life.
2. Launch two communication campaigns on those issues of greatest concern and pose serious challenges to life and survival of ALBA-TCP peoples:

- Campaign to show how the actions taken by the Alliance to guarantee the prevention, treatment and vaccination have helped our peoples facing the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Campaign to denounce the impact that the imposition of unilateral coercive measures and the arbitrary restriction of access to financing and States' own resources have on the full enjoyment of the human rights of our peoples, including the right to development, in violation of the provisions of public international law and international human rights law.
- To this end, a campaign team made up of experts from each country in the different fields required (politicians, communicators, journalists, designers) will be formed. This campaign team will have to adapt the proposed general conceptualization to the specific features of each country, design and produce the campaign material and implement it in each scenario.

3. Undertake actions to fight infodemic and disinformation in the context of the Pandemic, as the World Health Organization and the United Nations have also denounced, and which threatens the lives of the people and the possibility of accessing relevant and timely information to address the global health crisis.

4. Condemn the use of communication and information – as well as social networks – by the great powers and corporations, to censor official information and political leaders, particularly in our Alliance countries, violating the right of freedom of expression and access to quality and timely information of the peoples.

5. Reject – in the most categorical manner – the actions undertaken by social networks such as Twitter and Facebook, against some political spokespersons and government institutions of the countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), such as what happened on March 27th, 2021 against the Facebook account of the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which was closed when he was broadcasting an official report on the fight against COVID-19 in Venezuela.



6. Tackle the use of information and communication media as a tool of hostile propaganda against developing countries, with the aim of promoting their policies of government change, by plunging our population with propaganda and disinformation operations through social networks and other mass media.

7. Express our concern about the corporate regime of control and supranational government intended to be exercised by the large companies that manage social networks by committing serious irregularities associated with personal data theft through "big data", selective censorship, disinformation and promotion of fake news, incitement to hatred and violence, cyberbullying, psychological manipulation of citizens and the appearance of addictions and diseases that affect global public health.

8. Reaffirm the need to strengthen alternative, free, diverse, and responsible media and sources of communication that reflect the realities and interests of the peoples of the member states of the Alliance.

9. Hold a meeting of presidents of television stations and public media of the ALBA-TCP countries in May 2021, with a view to establishing mechanisms for cooperation and exchange of information in order to bring our realities closer, as well as to coordinate and agree on joint editorial lines for addressing topics of national and international interest, among other topics.

10. Build contacts and new collaboration alliances with media from allied countries, such as Russia, China, Iran, Turkey and others, with a view to showing the achievements of the Alliance in other places and making our realities known at global level.

11. Hold a meeting of journalists, alternative media and digital influencers from ALBA-TCP member countries, for the construction of "Alba Digital" or "Alba 3.0", in June, within the framework of the Bicentennial of the Battle of Carabobo in Venezuela.

12. Implement a cooperation strategy – through the Bank of ALBA – to strengthen technological capacities and develop training programs in the communication field, in order to expand capacities for the production and dissemination of contents among the countries of the regional bloc.

13. Arrange a permanent schedule of meetings between the different research institutes (think tanks), network of intellectuals, artists and social movements in defense of humanity, with the aim of creating an anti-imperialist thinking that nurtures the political work of the ALBA-TCP countries and proposes strategies to face the intrapandemic world.

14. Progress in the consolidation of information and communication strategies that are deeply grounded in the historical, cultural, political and social processes of our peoples, strengthening alternative, inclusive, intercultural, timely and quality communication.

15. Reaffirm the role of TeleSUR as an instrument of communicational integration par excellence of ALBA-TCP and as the main weapon in the media and counter-hegemonic battle of the Alliance, hence we condemn the attempts of some countries to interrupt its signal in their eagerness to destabilize Latin American political and integrationist processes. We renew our commitment to reactivate and guarantee TeleSUR's signal in the territories of the ALBA-TCP countries, by working together to achieve this.

16. Organize a schedule of meetings between national authorities in the area of communication and information and the designation of a focal point per country.

17. Approve the refreshing of ALBA-TCP's graphic identity, with a view to showing the Alliance in an integral way and making its ethical and political principles visible.

18. Approve the launch of the ALBA-TCP Web page, as a collective effort to strengthen the communicational and informative role of the Alliance within the framework of an increasingly demanding world context from the communication and information point of view.



19. Condemn the persecution against journalists, the dismantling of State media and the assault and subsequent abrupt shutdown of the *Radios de los Pueblos Originarios (RPOs)* (community radio stations) occurred during the de facto government, as an attack against the right to information of indigenous peoples, as a result of the coup d'état that took place in Bolivia in November 2019.

20. Welcome the restoration of democracy, respect for freedom of expression and diversity of opinions promoted by the constitutional government of Luis Arce in the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Caracas, April 12th, 2021

Countries:

- **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**
- **Republic of Cuba**
- **Plurinational State of Bolivia**
- **Republic of Nicaragua**
- **Commonwealth of Dominica**
- **Antigua and Barbuda**
- **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**
- **Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis**
- **Grenada**