Beat: Politics

Spain and Guatemala strengthen their cooperation

Rajoy visit the Central American country

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USPA NEWS - The Spanish prime minister, Mariano Rajoy, is in Guatemala, responding to the invitation by the president of this country, Otto Pérez Molina, at the bilateral meeting the two leaders held in Veracruz, on the margins of the Ibero-American Summit.

As President Pro Tempore of the Central American Integration System, the president of Guatemala proposed to the Spanish Prime Minister to organize a Spain-SICA Summit, to be held on March 9 with the participation of the countries of the organization (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize and the Dominican Republic). However, this trip also has a clear bilateral component. Relations between the two countries are very fluid, as evidenced by the three occasions that have met the Spanish Prime Minister and President Pérez Molina, among which include Guatemalan President's visit to Madrid in March 2013 and, now, this visit.

One of the most important components of bilateral relations is development cooperation. Spain has been in Guatemala for over 25 years, with a volume of aid of more than 1,250 million dollars, and according to the Spanish Government, Guatemala is and will remain a priority for Spanish cooperation. So this Sunday, March 8, International Women's Day, the Prime Minister attends the Training Centre and School Workshop AECID in Antigua, where will visit the exhibition on the Spanish cooperation in Latin America about gender equality, one of the priority areas for action. They will also have the opportunity to meet the ongoing work of the association of indigenous women Kaqchikel Linguistic Community, of the Academy of Mayan Languages.

Cooperation on gender is part of the essence of Spanish cooperation and Guatemala has been no exception. Spain has promoted and supported institutions and civil society to address the terrible toll of violence. During the past eight years, Spain has allocated nearly nine million euros in Guatemala creation of a special justice system, which has resulted in the creation eleven Specialized Courts about Femicide and commissioning nine Special Prosecutors in violence against Women.

Meeting bilateral and Spain-SICA Summit

On Monday, March 9, both presidents will have a bilateral meeting in which the main aspects of the relations between Spain and Guatemala will be addressed. Since the restoration of diplomatic relations in 1985, links between both countries have increased and diversified in all areas. During this bilateral meeting, the Prime Minister will participate in the traditional ceremony of the Changing of the Rose special meaning and significance to Guatemala because it commemorates and tries to keep alive the spirit of peace agreement that would end the war in 1996, and that Spain had the opportunity to witness and to accompany the peace process that led to the signing.

The second part of the trip will start with the Spain-SICA Summit, which will focus on three topics of regional interest related to Central American integration. First, the Central American economic integration, which will also address the opportunities for the region Agreement European Union-Central Association, since the entry into force of the trade pillar in 2013. Second, the physical integration and development Central infrastructures essential to advance the free movement of goods and people. The Central interconnection will allow make Central America a more competitive market, and in this field Spain can offer the experience of Spanish companies internationally recognized.

Third, the presidents will address the security situation, which is the main threat to political stability, economic growth, development and welfare of citizens in the region. Finally, trade issues and opportunities open Central American integration will be addressed in a business meeting Spain-Guatemala to be held the same day March 9, parallel to the Summit, attended by Spanish companies and countries of SICA and allowing continue promoting economic and trade links in the area. The meeting will be closed by the Prime Minister and President Pérez Molina.

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