

Turkey a country with economic importance

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon said Turkey was a country with high economic and political importance in a world rapidly moving .

ANKARA

Speaking to the students and faculty members at the Ankara University on Friday, President Santos said that his visit to Turkey was crucial to consolidation of ties between Turkey and Colombia.

Turkish-Colombian relations must be placed on solid base and be fruitful. The Latin American Research Center at the Ankara University is crucial to boost relations, Santos said.

Many many years ago, individuals with Turkish passports moved to Latin America. This was a great migration. Most of these people settled in Colombia and facilitated Turkey's presence in Colombia, Santos said.

Turkish president welcomes his Colombian counterpart Abdullah Gül welcomed Juan Manuel Santos Calderon at the Çankaya Presidential Residence in Ankara with full military honors.

Kaynak: <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/component/content/article/111-alt-manset-haberleri-en/103322-turkey-a-country-with-economic-importance>

‘Respect for human rights, public support a must in fighting terrorism’



Finding the two countries' terrorist groups comparable, the Colombian president told Turkey that respect for human rights and support from the people are necessary ingredients in effectively combating terrorism ahead of his official visit on Friday.

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, who began an official visit to Turkey on Friday, offered the Turkish government advice on its decades-long struggle against the outlawed Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), during an interview with Today's Zaman ahead of his arrival. "What I can say about the lessons we have learned from our experience is that the only effective way to fight against these illegal groups is to do it with total respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, intensively using intelligence and winning over the hearts of the civilian population which, at the end of the day, is always in need of safety, security and well-being," he said in emailed remarks.

Santos said the government tried to lead an open peace process with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC), even establishing a de-militarized zone. When the terrorist group instead continued attacking the civilian population, the public, 98 percent of which now repudiates the FARC, was outraged and rallied in support.

But the Colombian government has not closed its doors to the FARC if it decides to cease violence and work toward a peace resolution. "If they stop resorting to violence, intimidation and terrorism, they'll always find that the government is willing to sit down and discuss. In fact, we're building a legal framework enabling them to return to society, provided that they meet the duties of truth, justice and reparation in favor of their victims," Santos said.

According to Santos, Colombia's struggle against the FARC is very similar to that of Turkey against the PKK. "In fact, while they are different organizations with different claims, we may find similarities between the fight of the Colombian state against the FARC and the fight of Turkey against the PKK, particularly because both groups have resorted to terrorism and drug trafficking," Santos said.

The FARC, which has killed 41 of 1,300 candidates in local elections and wreaks havoc through bombings and isolated terrorist attacks, also drags down the economy by scaring investors off, while the government finds itself plugging all of its resources into combating

terrorism.

The Colombian government has made tremendous strides against its separatist terrorists, Santos said, but there is definitely room for improvement.

The leader of FARC was killed recently after Santos firmly promised to fight the group when he took office last August. The country's war on drugs has been deemed successful and, in the minds of many Colombians, the FARC has lost power. The Colombian government has been able to push the FARC out of all but the most remote areas of the country.

But this is not the end of the fight against terrorism in Colombia, Santos adds. "The demise of the top leader of the FARC does not mean, unfortunately, the end of that terrorist group. But it greatly weakens them, as the terrorist group has been weakening in recent years. My government will continue to firmly fight all illegal armed groups, promoting the demobilization of their members and strengthening the presence of public institutions throughout our territory," he affirmed.

Santos, the first Colombian president to visit Turkey, is negotiating a free trade agreement and an investment protection treaty with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and President Abdullah Gül. "Unfortunately, there is not much Turkish investment in Colombia," Santos said, listing two Turkish companies in his country. "But we hope this will soon change," he added.

Despite the geographical distance, Santos said business relations with Turkey are important and expanding. Last year bilateral trade between Turkey and Colombia was valued at \$268 million. During the first eight months of this year, Santos said bilateral trade has exceeded \$439 million. "Imagine how these figures may grow with a free trade agreement. There's lots of potential," he said.

Santos pointed out that The Economist included Turkey and Colombia in the so-called CIVETS group -- along with Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt and South Africa -- in its list of emerging economies with the highest expected growth rates. The CIVETS group fell ranked second in the emerging economies with the highest growth rates. The BRIC group, made up of Brazil, Russia, India and China, ranked first. "The time has come for us to get to know each other more, to explore the many things that unite us, to enrich each other with our differences, and to move forward together in order to achieve greater development for our people," he said.

The leaders completed the fourth round of negotiations two weeks ago in Ankara. Santos said he hopes they will sign the agreement in the next round of negotiations, to be held next year in Bogotá. "It would be a real pleasure to sign it in Bogotá, hopefully with the presence of President Gül. It would be an honor for us," he said.

While in Turkey, Santos also inaugurated Colombia's embassy in Ankara. In a speech at Ankara University, Santos described Turkey as a country that is rising in economic and political stature and said the two countries must "join forces." Santos is also scheduled to meet with Erdoğan and other leaders during his visit.

"However, the most important goal is to establish closer contact with the Turkish people and their government, in order for us to mutually cooperate hereinafter on several aspects of mutual interest," Santos stressed.

Kaynak : <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-263264-respect-for-human-rights-public-support-a-must-in-fighting-terrorism.html>

Colombian president pays 1st visit to Turkey

The Colombian president has called for closer cooperation between Bogota and Ankara during the first presidential visit by his country to Turkey.

Juan Manuel Santos, who is scheduled to inaugurate Colombia's embassy in the Turkish capital, met Turkish President Abdullah Gul on Friday.

In a speech at Ankara university, Santos described Turkey as a country that is rising in economic and political stature and said the two countries must "join forces."

Santos is also scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other leaders during the two-day visit.

Turkey has been expanding diplomatic outreach to Latin American countries to increase trade.

Kaynak: http://www.taiwannews.com.tw/etn/news_content.php?id=1762816

Turkey a country with high economic and political importance, says Colombian President Santos

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon said Friday that Turkey was a country with high economic and political importance in a world rapidly moving.



Speaking to students and faculty members at the Ankara University on Friday, President Santos said that his visit to Turkey was crucial to consolidation of ties between Turkey and Colombia.

Turkish-Colombian relations must be placed on solid base and be fruitful. The Latin American Research Center at the Ankara University is crucial to boost relations, Santos said.

Many many years ago, individuals with Turkish passports moved to Latin America. This was a great migration. Most of these people settled in Colombia and facilitated Turkey's presence in Colombia, Santos said.

According to a research conducted a few years ago, more than 50 percent of the population in our region had ties to Turkey. We were very surprised by the research, Santos said.

Colombia is going through a tough period. We have to fight against many problems. Colombia has become the center of illicit drug distribution. It is a country regarded to have violence and as one in which human rights are violated, Santos said.

For years, we had to defend ourselves. As such, Colombia could not demonstrate its potential, Santos said.

Colombia has extremely strong institutions and we want to become a country that is important in the global platform, Santos noted.

Colombia has become a dynamic and strong democracy in a decade. In only a period of 10 years, we have become a country with importance, Santos underlined. We are seeking for an important position in foreign policy. This is why we are here in Turkey today. We think we can work together in a new world, Santos said.

Pointing out the importance Ataturk attached to peace, Santos said that they were in search of peace both in their country and abroad.

Problems of the world affect us all. We need to unite and establish a common stance. If we share common views, we will then gain importance, Santos said.

We are not against Europeans. But we demand tax discipline from them. We need to tell the Europeans that they should have tax discipline as the lack of discipline affects us, Santos said.

I was impressed by the Literature Faculty of Ankara University. Colombia attaches high importance to literature. We believe that Colombians speak the most beautiful Spanish in the world, Santos said.

We believe we should increase our contacts with the Ankara University. If necessary, we can send a delegation of Colombian rectors to Ankara, Santos also said.

Following the conference, President Santos participated in a ceremony to inaugurate the monument on Colombian thinker Rufino Jose Cuervo at the Ankara University.

President Santos is the first Colombian president to make an official trip to Turkey.

Kaynak : <http://en.cumhuriyet.com/?hn=294002>