

《南方共同市场发表声明呼吁委内瑞拉停止暴力》

The members of South America's Mercosur trade bloc called for an end to violence in Venezuela in a joint statement on Friday, while Brazil and Argentina expressed wariness about the US in preparing possible economic sanctions.

Mercosur members Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay again called on Venezuela to release political prisoners and offered to facilitate talks between President Nicolas Maduro's socialist government and the opposition in the statement, issued as the nations met in Mendoza, Argentina to discuss trade and regional integration.

The Pacific Alliance is a younger Latin American trade bloc that gathers Mexico, Chile, Peru and Colombia.

The statement comes days after US officials said they were preparing sanctions against Venezuelan government figures.



Uruguay's President Tabare Vazquez talks to Brazil's President Michel Temer before the official photo at the

Mercosur trade bloc summit in Mendoza, Argentina, July 21, 2017. /Reuters Photo

"We have to recover Mercosur's trade dynamism, and to recover that dynamism we have to promote a number of connections, the first being the one we are negotiating with the European Union, and the one we are pushing forward with the Pacific Alliance," Argentina's Foreign Affairs Minister Jorge Faurie told reporters following the summit.

However, Mercosur members said they still faced the challenge of strengthening free trade between the member states and perfecting the customs union as a tool towards greater international competitiveness.

They also needed "to strengthen the region's exporting competitiveness by reducing the production, logistics and administrative costs, both regionally and nationally."



Argentina's President Maruricio Macri, Paraguay's President Horacio Cartes and Bolivia's President Evo Morales (front row, L-R) guesture alongside Ecuador's head of the delegation Diego Rivadenira Espinoza and Mexico's Ambassador in Argentina Mabel Gomez Oliver as they pose for the official photo at the Mercosure trade bloc summit in Mendoza, Argentina, July 21, 2017. /Reuters Photo

Mendoza's local minister of finance, Lisandro Nieri, told Xinhua, "For us, it would be very important to lower logistical costs through better agreements with neighboring Chile."

The presidents of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay attended the summit, traditionally held every six months.

Political squabbling, mainly between Brazil and Argentina and former member Venezuela, over the latter's handling of its political and economic crises, delayed this summit by a year and a half.

The bloc addressed the issue by calling for renewed dialogue between Venezuela's government and its opposition forces.

(With inputs from Xinhua and Reuters)

