

Xinhua. 2015. "Venezuela advances in telecommunications sector in cooperation with China: Maduro". Xinhua, October 8

CARACAS, Oct. 7 (Xinhua) -- Venezuela is advancing in the telecommunications sector and expanding its domestic production lines thanks to the cooperation agreements signed with China, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said Wednesday.

During a government event held in the northwestern state of Falcon, the president said that all Venezuelans must have access to "high technology" and that this need has increased in the last few years after two plants were installed in cooperation with Chinese companies.

Maduro inaugurated a second production line of the state-owned VIT electronic equipment company that will manufacture over 150,000 servers, desktop computers, laptops and tablets and increase the capacity of the plant to nearly 400,000 units per year.

The factory, created in 2006 in cooperation with China, has so far produced more than 800,000 computers and over 10.2 million technological units, according to official data.

The company's goal is to reach 18 million units by 2019 and increase the export capacity of these products.

Maduro also took part in the presentation of three new Venezuelan cell phones of the local corporation Vtelca, a company created in 2007 in partnership with the Chinese company ZTE.

The new versions feature Android technology and are also manufactured at the Falcon complex.

Over seven million cell phones have been assembled since 2010, which gives Venezuela the status of having the highest per capita smartphone ownership in Latin America.

Maduro said that about 20 percent of the phones produced here will be exported mainly to the Caribbean nations and member countries of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur).

"We need to generate new sources of revenue besides oil that will force us to produce more and better quality products. In addition, a large percentage of those currencies will go back to the industry for investment," he said.

Meanwhile, the Venezuelan leader highlighted the country's need to create a new medical equipment industry to meet domestic demand and said this idea will be mulled over within the comprehensive strategic partnership with China.

Technology transfer is one of the most visible aspects of the existing cooperation between China and Venezuela, whose bilateral trade in 2013 exceeded 19 billion U.S. dollars. Enditem