

U.S. and Peruvian presidents confer

by UPI

WASHINGTON - President George Bush and Peruvian President Alan Garcia met in Washington Monday for what Bush called "very constructive" dialogue about "the neighborhood."

"We talked about the neighborhood," Bush said. "As we discussed, the United States wants the people of South America to fully understand we care about their future; that we want there to be prosperity in the region; that we respect leaders who provide basic education and health care. So we had a very constructive conversation."

According to a news release from the White House, Garcia said he and the American president talked about their "contribution to the hemisphere and to humanity, to mankind."

"And that is the fight against drugs, and the fight against coke," Garcia said. "We have started a head-on fight against drug trafficking in my country, against money laundering and against coca leaf production, by offering farmers alternative crops, which is a way for them to earn a living in a just and legal way."

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said in a statement after speaking with Garcia that he urges the Bush administration "to make good on their pledge to refocus on our own neighborhood after years of neglect."

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