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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In October, 2006, Venezuela sought temporary membership of the Security Council, but President Bush undertook Venezuela's candidature as a personal affront and spoke to a number of world leaders including Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, to vote for Guatemala, the other South American candidate, Panama instead was voted as a compromise candidate. The United States and its cronies are making a determined effort to undermine the influence of Chavez Hugo. He visited India in March, 2005, and spent some time with the leaders of the Leftist Government in West Bengal.

The re-election of Lula da Silva as President of Brazil in October, 2006, has reinforced the influence and clout of Chavez. He has already become a role model for some of the developing countries of the world. Chavez was re-elected President in December, 2006. A referendum was held in Venezuela, which sought to perpetuate the presidency of Chavez and bestow him with vast powers in Dec. 2007; he, nevertheless, lost the referendum narrowly.