

Cuban Health Minister denied visa to participate in PAHO meeting in Washington



Havana, October 1 (RHC)-- Cuba said on Monday the Trump administration denied its health minister a visa to attend a Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) meeting in Washington and accused the United States of repeatedly violating its obligations as the host of an international organization.

Reuters reports that the Cuban Embassy in Washington wrote an email on Monday to those who had been invited to attend an event with Health Minister Jose Angel Portal Miranda while he was in the U.S. capital for the PAHO meeting this week, saying it was canceled because he and his delegation had not been given visas.

PAHO is the World Health Organization's regional office for the Americas.

"The government of the United States is yet again arbitrarily and unwarrantedly in breach of its obligations as a host country of an international organization," read the email seen by Reuters.

Earlier this month, Washington ordered the expulsion from the United States of two members of Cuba's delegation to the United Nations for trying to "conduct influence operations" harmful to U.S. national security.

On Monday the U.S. State Department said it was imposing visa restrictions on Cuban officials responsible for "exploitative" labor practices in the island nation's medical services exports program.

"Profiting from the work of the Cuban doctors has been the decades-long practice of the Castros, and it continues today," the State Department said in a statement.

Cuba has rejected those allegations as lies aimed at tarnishing its health service. The Cuban doctors often work in poor, remote regions with little other healthcare coverage.

Last week in New York, Cuban Foreign Minister, Bruno Rodriguez, said that the island's international assistance in the health sector is an effort that clearly follows the pattern of South-South cooperation that the United Nations has been promoting since the 1970s.

He added that despite efforts to discredit this contribution and the slanderous accusations against it, it is a cooperation praised and recognized by the international community, and It is appreciated by those who have benefited and enjoyed its valuable impact.

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