

Campaign for Nobel Peace Prize for Cuban doctors begins in the U.S.



A new petition to nominate the Henry Reeve medical contingent for the Nobel Peace Prize has joined this broad international crusade with the announcement of the campaign in the United States.

The launch of the campaign will take place during a virtual conference with the participation of actor and activist Danny Glover and Cuba's ambassador in Washington, José Ramón Cabañas.

On his Twitter account, Glover confirmed his presence at the event on the Internet the day before.

"Tomorrow (today) I'll talk to the Cuban ambassador 'JoseRCabanias about #Covid19, Cuba and saving lives," he wrote.

More than two thousand doctors, nurses and medical professionals from Cuba have collaborated in 27 countries affected by COVID-19 (already 28 with the incorporation yesterday of Turks and Caicos Islands), according to a statement from the organizing committee of the U.S. campaign, sent to Prensa Latina.

"I was moved to tears to see the Cubans, at the height of the pandemic, going to the most infected part of Italy to help save lives," said Medea Benjamin, co-director of the peace group Codepink, which co-chairs the group along with Alicia Jrapko of the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity of Peoples.

"The heroic effort of Cuban doctors in this pandemic is not only the medical contribution they are making in many parts of the world, but also their great spirit of solidarity and love for humanity," Jrapko said.

The campaign has so far received the support of prominent intellectuals, artists, politicians and ordinary citizens from all over the world who recognize the outstanding contribution of this international brigade to the health and life of all human beings.

Initial supporters of the campaign, in addition to Glover, include Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, former President of Ecuador Rafael Correa, writers Alice Walker and Noam Chomsky, as well as filmmakers Oliver Stone and Petra Costa.

The International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics is named after an American soldier -- Henry Reeve -- who fought for Cuba during its First War of Independence (1868-1878).

Founded in 2005 by the leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, the medical brigade prepared to go to Louisiana after the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina that year. However, the U.S. government ignored the offer and several days later the Brigade was sent to Pakistan after a major earthquake struck that country.

More than 7,000 health professionals have been part of the Henry Reeve brigade in its nearly 15 years of existence and has received numerous international awards, including the Dr. Lee Jong-wook Memorial Award for Public Health in 2017 from the World Health Organization.

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