

ALBA Countries Draw Up Joint Action Plan Against Ebola



Havana, October 20 (RHC) -- The countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) regional bloc put together an action plan for a joint response to the Ebola pandemic in Africa. The Final Declaration of the ALBA Extraordinary Summit on Ebola lists as one of its main objectives the strengthening of "professional development for experts in the treatment of Ebola patients" and the "provision of the required medical personnel and supplies for a successful campaign against the disease."

The Extraordinary Summit of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) concluded on Monday with the conviction that prevention is the best weapon against Ebola.

The president of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, read the final statement signed by all member countries of the regional organization, which include Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Ecuador, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Lucia.

The text states ALBA member countries' deep concern over the rapidly expanding Ebola pandemic in West Africa and the lack of an international, strong reaction to the emergency. The ALBA members agreed to take preemptive actions to deal with this threat using all necessary resources.

"We hereby agree to coordinate our efforts to prevent and deal with the Ebola epidemic, including rapidly providing and using assistance among our countries, with health care workers and relevant supplies and materials," said the text.

ALBA's Epidemiological Surveillance Network was also activated as an immediate result of the meeting. It will provide necessary aid and research data to regional countries and international organizations.

Also, regional governments will provide assistance to medical personnel on the ground in Africa, such as the Cuba's Henry Reeve Brigade in Sierra Leone, and pledged "to contribute with highly qualified health personnel to join the efforts of this contingent on tasks that are required in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean."

To share and generate capacities for the diagnosis of Ebola as well as to carry out public education campaigns about the prevention of and response to Ebola was agreed by the heads of state and delegations at the Extraordinary Summit.

Along with members of ALBA, the high level meeting was also attended by delegations from MERCOSUR countries: Haiti, Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis.

Representatives from international organizations like the United Nations, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) took part in the debate, which helped devise a joint regional mechanism to face the impending danger of the Ebola virus and to prevent the dissemination of the disease in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

A link to the full text of the Declaration is available on our website: www.radiohc.cu.

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