

Cuban Doctors Save 260 Lives in Sierra Leone



Geneva, February 19 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Cuban authorities reported on national television Wednesday that their operation to fight Ebola in Sierra Leone was having success.

“We have managed to save the lives of 260 people who were in a very, very bad state, and through our treatment they were cured and have gotten on with their lives,” said Jorge Delgado, head of the brigade of doctors and nurses to EFE news agency.

Cuban doctors arrived in Sierra Leone, still facing one of the worst Ebola epidemics in history, in October last year, committing over 400 doctors to the West African region. Twenty-four Cuban doctors were already in the country as part of Cuba’s ongoing medical assistance to countries which need it.

Delgado is participating in a conference in Geneva on Foreign Medical Teams that are fighting the Ebola epidemic. Eighty-six organizations from 11 countries are attending the conference, including three Cuban brigade heads.

The average age of Cuban doctors and nurses in Sierra Leone is 47, meaning that many have 20 to 25 years of experience.

In their time there so far, the doctors and nurses have treated over 1,000 people, but not all of them had Ebola; many others had other illnesses with similar symptoms, such as malaria.

Delgado said he felt optimistic. While his team was previously treating 20 cases per day, now they treat just 3 to 4 patients.

He also pointed to secret burials as a key cause of infection. Ebola is more contagious at the time of death or after a person has died. He said that despite many awareness raising campaigns to help prevent the spread of Ebola, many people continued to perform burials in unsafe ways.

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