

Lancet editor calls Trump's WHO funding freeze a crime against humanity



London, April 16 (RHC)-- Donald Trump's decision to cut U.S. funding to the World Health Organization sparked international outrage and condemnation.

On Tuesday, Trump announced he would cut off U.S. support of the WHO -- even as the death rate from the coronavirus pandemic continues to accelerate with worldwide confirmed deaths topping 127,000.

Observers say that Trump is seeking to shift blame for his administration's disastrous handling of the pandemic onto the United Nations public health agency, accusing the WHO of helping China to cover up the spread of the coronavirus when it emerged late last year.

Reacting to the announcement, Richard Horton, editor-in-chief of The Lancet medical journal -- one of the most prestigious medical publications in the world -- tweeted: "President Trump's decision to defund WHO is simply this: a crime against humanity. Every scientist, every health worker, every citizen must resist and rebel against this appalling betrayal of global solidarity."

That same day, on Tuesday, the United States reported 2,228 people died of COVID-19 -- the highest one-day death toll for any nation. In New York, city officials have revised the death toll since the start of the pandemic to more than 10,000, adding in nearly 4,000 previously unreported deaths presumed to be caused by the coronavirus. About 1 in 800 New York City residents has died of the disease.

On Tuesday, New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority agreed to a union demand for COVID-19 death benefits. Beneficiaries of transit workers who die of the virus will receive \$500,000 and three years' worth of healthcare benefits. At least 59 New York City subway and bus workers have died of COVID-19 so far, with more than 2,200 testing positive.

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