

Africa, COVID-19 and migration



The COVID-19 pandemic is now present in most countries of Africa, where there are more than 16,500 infected people and nearly 900 deaths.

Africa is considered a vast geographic area and poses a great concern among specialists due to its vulnerable characteristics.

A report by the World Health Organization indicates that there are barely five thousand intensive care beds and two thousand ventilators in the entire continent, which is clearly not enough to fight the coronavirus.

The Ethiopian airport welcomed a plane loaded with face masks, medicines and a brigade to assist some 30,000 infected people, that will be moved to five countries: Djibouti, Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia and Tanzania.

The UN intends to establish humanitarian corridors to cover and support the huge African continent. The International Monetary Fund, the IMF, also announced a plan to alleviate the debt to several African nations for at least six months.

All possible help is necessary and appreciated by these people living in inhumane conditions where the basic sanitary measures to prevent COVID-19 and social distancing are simply impossible to follow.

The presence of the pandemic on the African continent has also further pushed migration to Europe, an extremely dangerous journey that entails the crossing of deserts, the exposure to ruthless traffickers and,

a hazardous voyage across the Mediterranean Sea.

Italy -- the country chosen by many migrants to begin to a new life -- is going through critical weeks for SARS-CoV-2 and its borders are closed to everyone, including undocumented travelers fleeing from other dangers.

In recent days, some 150 migrants were rescued by a ship from the German organization Alan Kurdi, right when they were nearly drowning, but Italian authorities asked them to remain on board for at least 14 days before leaving the ship.

There have been recent complaints about the conditions in which these migrants are kept, in places such as Libya, where they suffer from violence, torture, abuse, slavery and prostitution.

This phenomenon represents a great humanitarian drama. But the only solution to mass migration is to generate development, employment and social well-being in their home countries. If this is not accomplished, people only have the alternative to choose the place where they prefer to die.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/especiales/comentarios/220308-africa-covid-19-and-migration>



Radio Habana Cuba