

# *Cuban minister points to problems in implementation of Agenda 2030*

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Havana, July 15 (RHC)-- Rodrigo Malmierca, Cuban Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment, stated in a virtual meeting on Sustainable Development that compliance with Agenda 2030 is at risk, a situation that is becoming more complex due to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking at the United Nations High-Level Policy Forum on Sustainable Development, Malmierca urged countries to implement urgent actions to minimize the consequences of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which causes the infectious disease, damaging the economy and society.

Common strategies will "prevent delays or setbacks in the achievement of the Goals and their targets and reinforce positive trends in their implementation," the minister stated.

Cuba, he said, as pro-tempore president of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and its regional forum, considers that the region's disadvantageous position in the face of the COVID-19 is increasing debt levels and the unstable economic performance of the area, which this year projects the worst fall in GDP in its history.

The minister called for strengthening the financial, monetary, fiscal and social protection systems, taking into account the "various needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, particularly the least developed ones."

Rodrigo Malmierca called for setting aside political differences and seeking solutions through solidarity and international cooperation. And he reiterated Cuba's offer to provide nations with its experience in confronting COVID-19 and the collaborative medical brigades, despite the campaign of lies that the U.S. government is carrying out against the island's medical personnel.

The Cuban minister also acknowledged the contribution of ECLAC and Alicia Barcena, its Executive Secretary, in accompanying the region during the health crisis.

"The challenges in fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals are many and very great, the challenges and obstacles persist, but we believe that our actions can ensure success and change the course towards a 2030 like the one we all want," he said.

The meeting on Sustainable Development, which runs through July 17, is organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Council's Department of Economic and Social Affairs and focuses on analyzing the impacts of the COVID-19.

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