

# *Sierra Leone President Koroma Welcomes Cuban Medical Personnel*

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Havana, October 11 (RHC) -- The President of Sierra Leone, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, has welcomed the 165 Cuban medical personnel -- including doctors and nurses -- at the State House, the local Sierra Express Media reported.

The delegation was led by the Cuban Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Jorge F. Lefebre Nicolas. The group is made up of 63 doctors and 102 nurses and professionals.

At the meeting, President Koroma expressed his satisfaction about the intervention of the Cubans as they have come at a time when the country was in a great need and said that such help has demonstrated that Cuba is indeed a friend of Sierra Leone. "This is a friendship that we have experienced since the 1970's and today you have demonstrated that you are a great friend of the country."

He assured the delegation that the people of Sierra Leone will appreciate this gesture as they had paid the supreme sacrifice to come and not only send in equipment, but also send in frontline soldiers to aid the fight against Ebola. In any war, the frontline soldiers are very critical, the president noted, adding that it is their strength, commitment and determination that will help the country win the war.

As the country is going through a challenging moment, President Koroma stated that in order to really get ahead of the virus, the country needs a minimum of 3,000 health workers, including doctors and nurses.

For his part, Cuban Ambassador Jorge F. Lefebre Nicolas said that the Cuban medical team was in the country to help contain the spread of the virus, saying that “a friend in need is a friend indeed.” With the initial six months stay in the country, Lefebre said with the medical capacity and willingness to help, the Cubans will stay in the country as long as it takes until the disease is contained.

He reported to the President that the Cuban medical staff would be deployed across the country. The Ambassador also expressed appreciation to Sierra Leone for the support the country has been giving to Cuba in the United Nations, as part of the worldwide campaign against the U.S. economic blockade of the island.

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