

# *Extraordinary meeting on Ebola kicks off in Havana*

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Havana, Oct 20, (RHC), -- Heads of State and senior representatives of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) convene today in Havana for a special summit, to coordinate actions to fight the Ebola outbreak in Africa and prevent its further spread.

Cuban president Raul Castro officially opened the top level event with a welcome speech, where he expressed appreciation for the quick response given by regional governments to the call made by ALBA leadership to address the Ebola issue. He also highlighted the urgency of such matter.

Other speakers so far include Venezuelan President, Nicolas Maduro, who said countries in the region, with the proper preparedness and coordinated action, could fight and defeat the outbreak of Ebola.

A brief speech by World Health Organization Secretary General Margaret Chan, addressing participants at the summit, was also broadcast.

Attending the meeting are members of ALBA: Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Ecuador, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Lucia. Also, delegations from MERCOSUR countries, Haiti, Granada and St. Kitts and Nevis are also taking part as special guests.

Also representatives from international organizations like the United Nations (UN), the Pan American

Health Organization (PAHO) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) are participating in the debate, which aims to devise a joint regional mechanism to face the impending danger of the Ebola virus and to prevent the dissemination of the disease in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

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