



**CONTRIBUTION OF THE CUBAN SOCIETY OF INTENSIVE MEDICINE AND EMERGENCY, ASSOCIATED TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES OF HEALTH (CNSCS) ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO CUBA OF MRS. VIRGINIA VANDAN, INDEPENDENT EXPERT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY.**

The Cuban Society of Intensive and Emergency Medicine (SOCUMIE), as a scientific association of health, and as a part of the National Council of Scientific Societies of Health (CNSCS), welcomes the visit to our country of the Independent Expert on Human Rights and Solidarity Ms. Virginia Vandan, with the certainty that in her meetings with Cuban civil society organizations and State institutions, she will assess the efforts and achievements of Cuba and its organizations in the area of international solidarity.

Our scientific society, which is part of the legitimate Cuban civil society, consists of two thousand and four professionals, including specialists, doctors, nurses and technicians who work with patients with serious health conditions, most of whom have their lives at risk. Together with other health professionals, they are today the "contingent of white gowns" that in all of Cuba and in the most remote areas of our planet, in developing countries and in the most needed places, make the reality of one of the most basic principles of human rights of the third generation: international solidarity and cooperation, fulfilling one of the principles of the Revolution: to share what we have and not what we have left.

The Cuban Society of Intensive and Emergency Medicine (SOCUMIE) fulfills the objectives of contributing to raising the level of health of the Cuban population and the world in its constant evolution towards qualitatively higher stages; it promotes among its members the observance of medical ethics, the desire to overcome, the interest in science, the vocation of service and unconditional commitment with the health of the people; to contribute to the scientific training, professional updating, training, and improvement of health knowledge; to collaborate in the dissemination of the main scientific-technical achievements, the introduction of advanced technology and new prophylactic and therapeutic methods in the field of the specialty; at the same time the Society promotes the development of the scientific thinking of our professionals.

Our Society is one of the specialties that make up the Henry Reeve International Brigade, which acts in situations of health emergencies and natural disasters, which have carried out humanitarian and health assistance missions in 20 countries, with a total of 24 medical brigades. Its members have given assistance to more than 3.5 million people and has been memorable its participation in the eradication of the epidemic of Ebola that has hit several African countries. Because of its results and endeavor the Brigade recently obtained the Prize for Public Health in Memory Of Dr. Lee Jong-wook, awarded by the World Health Organization.

Our scientific society joins the National Council of Scientific Societies of Health, made up of thousands of professionals who are grouped in 63 scientific societies, which have offered international collaboration in health and today more than 42 thousand collaborators work in 63 countries of the world, where professionals not only provide welfare assistance, but also work without conditioning or interference, with respect to sovereignty, national laws, culture, religion and self-determination of nations in capacity-building in developing countries.

For more than 50 years Cuban health professionals through international medical collaboration have contributed to raising health indicators and saving countless lives in various places of international geography, a contribution from this small island, which has put its few resources into function of the health of its people and the help of other peoples of the world.

Another form of cooperation is the scholarship programs offered by the Cuban Government to study medicine. A good example is the Latin American School of Medicine, created in 1998 by Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, which has an enrollment of 10,000 students from all continents and receives in its facilities young people of low income, vulnerable and humble families, who cannot cover the costs of studies in their own countries. Its mission is to graduate general doctors, with a humanistic and ethical education, to ensure the right to life, help their countries and in order to assist the poorest, since health is not a universal or free in all countries of the world as should be.

If in 2000 the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly agreed on a set of actions that comprised the Millennium Development Goals, 17 years after its adoption; poverty continues to be one of the world's woes and millions of people suffer not only from this evil, but as part of the lack of access to health, suffer from malnutrition, unhealthiness, high rates of unnecessary maternal deaths, high infant mortality rates, children dying due to lack of care and

preventable diseases before reaching the age of 5, deaths that could be avoided with preventive and non-profit health systems, as the ones that prevails in the world today.

The most recent Sustainable Development Objectives, the ones that the international community supports and calls for their fulfillment, reiterate the need to take actions and measures that could contribute to the true sustainable development; and certainly health is one of the central issues that must be taken into account in the governments' public policies and in the actions of civil society as well.

Cuba and its institutions, its civil society organizations, work together for the true cooperation, just and solidarity. At the same time we make a call, from our small island, for the Government of the United States to put an end once and for all to the unjust economic, financial and economic blockade imposed to our country and at the same time we denounce the recent statement of White House President Donald Trump, who, ignoring the Cuban reality and supported by groups of the Cuban-American mafia of Miami, the past June 16<sup>th</sup>, revoked the presidential directive issued by the government of Mr. Barack Obama, which favored the normalization of bilateral relations. The measures announced by the new administration will seriously undermine the credibility of its foreign policy, it signify a setback in our bilateral relations and deepen the economic, financial and commercial blockade that the international community has rejected for more than 20 years and has cataloged as genocide and immoral, and that our people have heroically suffered and resisted for more than half a century. At the same time, this policy will severely limit compliance with the plans drawn up by the Cuban government and the relations between Cuban and US civil society.

One of the specialties that has suffered most from the effects of the US economic, financial and commercial blockade against Cuba is the intensive medicine and emergencies, since the work of doctors, nurses and technicians has been affected by the access to important medicines and technologies, since Cuba cannot acquire all the equipment and the necessary resources to support this specialty in the country and in its international cooperation efforts.

We urge, through this important visit of Mrs. Virginia Vendan, Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity, to prevail solidarity with Cuba's cause, against the immoral blockade policy that constitutes the greatest form of violence against its people and constitutes a serious violation of international law, while obstructing the sustainable development of the island.

Cuba will not stop in expressing and demonstrating its solidarity and collaboration within the country and with all the peoples of the world, and will defend peace and solidarity as a way to contribute, from a small country, with cooperation among peoples, to build a better world.