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The U.S. government allocates millions of dollars to obstruct Cuban medical cooperation

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs denounces and strongly condemns the United States government's recent aggression against Cuba through a USAID program to finance projects and seek information to discredit and sabotage Cuba's international health care cooperation in dozens of countries, benefitting millions of people. This plan joins the disgraceful pressure exerted on several governments to hamper Cuban cooperation, and previous attempts with the same purpose such as the special "parole" program meant to rob human resources trained in Cuba.

The core of this immoral slander is the totally unfounded allegation that Cuba is involved in the trafficking of persons and practices slavery, attempting to denigrate the meritorious work done voluntarily, over a long period of our history, by hundreds of thousands of Cuban health professionals and technicians in many countries, especially in the Third World.

This is an attack on bilateral programs and inter-governmental cooperation projects, all legitimately established by the Cuban government and those of dozens of countries, adhering to United Nations guidelines regarding South-South cooperation and meeting health standards sovereignly defined by the governments involved.

This is an attack against acts of solidarity that have been recognized by the international community and praised specifically by the highest authorities in the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization.

These lies reveal the base morality of the U.S government and politicians dedicated to the business of aggression against Cuba. The campaign is funded with millions of dollars and enjoys the complicity of several mass media outlets, in particular, unscrupulous reporters who sacrifice their supposed impartiality and objectivity to serve the political interests of the U.S. government.

For decades and today, in nations with unfavorable economic conditions, this cooperation has been, and is, provided as a gesture of solidarity, with costs covered practically in their totality by Cuba. Likewise, in line with United Nations conceptions on cooperation between developing nations, services are offered in several countries on the basis of complementarity and partial compensation.

This exchange is completely fair and legitimate among developing countries, many of which have natural riches, economies, and industrial development greater than Cuba's, but lack the human resources our state has been able to create – disinterested, humanist professionals willing to work under the most difficult conditions, on their own free will; and a conception of health care coverage that years of experience have allowed us to construct.

Cuban technicians and professionals who participate in these programs do so absolutely freely and voluntarily. During the fulfillment of their missions, they continue to receive their full salaries and additionally receive a stipend in the destination country, along with other forms of compensation.

In those cases in which Cuba receives compensation for the cooperation provided, these collaborators are meritoriously making a highly valuable, fair, and totally legitimate contribution to the financing, sustainability, and development of our massive, free healthcare system that is accessible to each and every Cuban, as well as cooperation programs that are carried out in many parts of the world.

Access to health care is a human right and the United States is committing a crime when it attempts to deny or obstruct its provision for political reasons or as an act of aggression.

Havana, August 29, 2019

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