
Cuba demands release of health workers in Bolivia

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The Cuban government on Friday demanded the release of four health workers unjustly detained in Bolivia, and announced the immediate withdrawal of members of its medical mission in the Andean country.

A statement from the Foreign Ministry stressed that the accusations against the four collaborators are completely false, after they were arrested for encouraging violent acts in Bolivia by the authorities who took power after the coup against President Evo Morales.

The statement also calls for an end to the instigations to violence against medical personnel who offer their services in that nation under government agreements.

In these circumstances, it emphasizes, Cuba will immediately withdraw the members of its medical mission.

Prensa Latina offers below the full text of the statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba:

STATEMENT:

In recent hours different authorities acting in the Plurinational State of Bolivia have presented the idea that Cuban collaborators are encouraging the protests that are taking place in Bolivia, joined by a similar approach on social networks, through accounts of doubtful origin and false profiles that incite violence against health personnel.

In that context, on November 13, four members of the Medical Brigade in El Alto were arrested by the police as they travelled to their place of residence with money withdrawn from a bank to pay for basic services and the rent of the 107 members of the Medical Brigade in that region.

The arrest came under the slanderous presumption that the money was dedicated to financing protests. The representatives of the police and the Public Ministry visited the headquarters of the Medical Brigade in El Alto and La Paz and confirmed, from documents, payrolls and bank details, that the amount of money coincided with that withdrawn regularly every month.

The four collaborators arrested are:

Amparo Lourdes Garcia Buchaca, Bachelor of Electromedicine. In Cuba he worked at the Provincial Center of Electromedicine in the province of Cienfuegos before starting the mission in Bolivia in March of this year.

Idalberto Delgado Baro, Bachelor of Economics from the Special Municipality of the Isle of Youth, who worked at the Municipal Electromedicine Center of the Isle of Youth when he joined the mission in Bolivia last March.

Ramon Emilio Alvarez Cepero, Specialist in Intensive Care and Endocrinology who worked in Cuba at the General Gustavo Aldereguia Hospital in the province of Cienfuegos until he began his mission in Bolivia in July 2017.

Alexander Torres Enriquez, specialist in Comprehensive General Medicine who worked in Cuba at the Carlos Verdugo Polyclinic in the province of Matanzas when he left to complete the mission on February 3, 2019.

Permanent contact with these Cuban cooperators has been maintained, through the Cuban Embassy in La Paz and the Medical Brigade Headquarters.

The four Cuban collaborators have a recognized career in accordance with their occupational profile and, like the remaining personnel of the mission in Bolivia, they have strictly and rigorously adhered to the humanitarian and cooperative work that motivated them to travel to that country under intergovernmental agreements.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejects the false accusations that these compañeros encourage or fund protests, which are based on deliberate lies without any grounds whatsoever.

In the circumstances described, the immediate return to the Homeland of the Cuban collaborators has been decided.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs demands that the detained cooperators be released immediately and that the Bolivian authorities guarantee the physical safety of each of the Cuban collaborators in accordance with the responsibilities acquired by the Bolivian State regarding their security and protection corresponding with signed intergovernmental agreements.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs calls on the Bolivian authorities to stop the exacerbation of irresponsible anti-Cuban and hateful expressions, defamations and instigations to violence against Cuban collaborators, who have provided their solidarity contribution to the health of that Bolivian sister people.

The millions of Bolivians who have received the altruistic care of the hundreds of Cuban doctors know perfectly well that lies cannot conceal the meritorious contribution and noble purpose of our health professionals.
