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Cuban President Raul Castro Inaugurates New Health Research Centers

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Cuban President Raul Castro inaugurated Tuesday in Havana the new headquarters of the Centers for State Control of Drugs and the National Coordinator of Clinical Trials.

The Cuban president was accompanied by Margaret Chan, Director General of the World Health Organization, who cut the inaugural ribbon at the ceremony. The modern facility, with six levels and glass exterior, is located in the western suburbs of the Cuban capital.

Raul Castro and the general directors of WHO and PAHO, the Pan-American Health Organization, were received by directors of the CENCEC, María Amparo Pascual, and CECMED, Rafael Pérez Cristiá.

CECMED has laboratories for quality control of drugs and medical devices that comply with the Standards of Practice established by WHO and PAHO, allowing certification as regional reference center.

Created in 1989, the CECMED's mission is to promote and protect the health of the population through a system of regulation, control and inspection to ensure the safety, efficiency and quality of medicines, medical equipment and devices.

Meanwhile, the National Coordinator of Clinical Trials or CENCEC is responsible for designing and conducting clinical trials of medical, pharmaceutical and biotechnology products, as well as any other health technology, meeting International Standards of Practice. It has 107 employees, of which 72 percent are women and 73 are college-level professionals and technicians.