

DECLARATION BY THE HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENTS OF BELIZE, COSTA RICA, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA, PANAMA AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FACING THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19

CENTRO AMERICA ALLIED AGAINST CORONA VIRUS

12th, March, 2020

The Heads of States and Governments of Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Dominican Republic having a extraordinary virtual session under the pro tempore Presidency of SICA, with Honduras in the charge.

Considering

That the World Health Organization, with globally alarming levels of spread and severity of cases by COVID-19, has declared this disease to be a pandemic. This implies the necessity of regional agreements on containment against its spread for the safety of our inhabitants.

The Resolution COMISCA 01-2020 adopted during the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COMISCA), held on 3rd of March, 2020, relative to the situation of threats of COVID-19, and the regional reaction in public health against the pandemic, where joint actions are established.

That faced of the threats of COVID-19, the General Secretariat of SICA and the Executive Secretariat of COMISCA have made efforts to establish regional, intersectoral approach in response to the pandemic

DECLARE

1. The importance given by the Governments of the member states of SICA for the tutelage and protection of the human security, public health and common good for population in the region, mainly in view of the expansion of COVID-19, which requires adopting joint measures and coordination to face it.
2. To the nations of the region, that our national health systems attend to the pandemic according to the protocols guided by the World Health Organization / Pan American Health Organization (WHO / PAHO), taking national measures through the Ministries and Secretaries of Health, including binational and cross-border collaboration of health services for comprehensive care of suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 and other public health problems.
3. Call on the population of the region to remain calm, be alert to official information and adopt the hygiene and prevention measures recommended by the health authorities.
4. Deepening and strengthening, through the General Secretariat of SICA (SG-SICA) and the

Executive Secretariat of COMISCA, permanent and fluent communication and cooperation with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries and Secretariat of Health, on the natural evolution of the disease, the new positive cases of COVID-19 and the measures adopted in response to the pandemic.

RECOMMEND

5. The Council of Ministers of Foreign Relations of SICA, the Council of Ministers of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COMISCA) and the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPRENAC) so that, with the accompaniment of the SICA General Secretariat, the Executive Secretariat of COMISCA and the Executive Directorate of the Coordination Center for Disaster Prevention, prepare a "Regional Contingency Plan aimed at complementing national efforts for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 and other rapidly spreading diseases", and maintain fluent communication on the natural evolution of the disease, the new positive COVID-19 cases and the measures adopted in response to the pandemic.
6. The Council of Ministers of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COMISCA):
 - a. To use the Joint Negotiation under SICA "COMISCA" for the purchase of medicines and medical devices for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 and other rapidly spreading diseases in consistency with the actions and measures of the Regional Contingency Plan.
 - b. To develop intersectoral actions that guarantee the supply of raw materials and other goods which are necessary for the production and commercialization of medicines and essential supplies for the comprehensive care of the pandemic.
7. The Central American Commission of Migration Directors, jointly with the Council of Ministers of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic and with the accompaniment of the General Secretariat of SICA, to define common procedures to guarantee the migratory conditions of people, in such a way that the adopted measures related to travelers are reinforced in response to the pandemic in all ports, airports and border points, protecting the human security and health of these people regardless of their nationality, establishing a sanitary cordon with harmonized measures for the entire region.
8. The Council of Ministers for Economic Integration (COMIECO) to guarantee the fluidity of international trade operations under current regional regulations, in close coordination with customs, health and migration authorities in order to avoid negative impacts on the economic and productive scaffolding of the region.
9. The Central American Council for Consumer Protection (CONCADECO) to coordinate with the national authorities for consumer protection on the adoption of measures to avoid the shortage, hoarding and speculation of prices of basic consumer goods, medicines, medical

devices, raw materials and other necessary goods for the production and marketing of medicines and essential supplies for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 and other rapidly spreading diseases.

10. The Finance Ministers of the SICA Member States, with their capacity as governors of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, to request the increase of the Emergency Fund available in CABEI, which is currently USD \$ 250,000.00 per country, to contribute to the attention of the immediate needs to address the pandemic.
11. The Council of Ministers of Treasury or Finance of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COSEFIN) to carry out the necessary joint actions in the face of international financial organizations that guarantee the availability of resources necessary for the financing of the "Regional Contingency Plan aimed at complementing national efforts for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 and other rapidly spreading diseases", and other essential national actions in the context of attention to the present pandemic.
12. The Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), according to its nature as a development bank, to suggest the Meeting of Heads of State and Government of SICA Member States, through the General Secretariat of SICA, the pertinent propositions for financing programs aimed at addressing the economic impacts generated by the coronavirus pandemic, prioritizing the most affected sectors, including management of the necessary resources for their execution.
13. The Central American Monetary Council to monitor the evolution of regional economic indicators, warn in advance of the need to adopt measures to avoid negative impacts on economic activity resulting from the present pandemic and coordinate actions with the Council of Ministers for Economic Integration (COMIECO) and other sectoral councils in this regard.
14. The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of SICA, to hold an extraordinary session in the form of political dialogue to provide follow-ups to this situation.
15. The Organs and Institutions of SICA to strengthen regional actions in their respective area of competence to avoid negative impacts of the pandemic and report to the Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the SICA Member States, through the General Secretariat of SICA, the regional actions that they would adopt to put into effect, as well as the progress, results and impacts that they generate.

We express our solidarity with the governments and peoples of the countries that have been severely affected by this disease and we join efforts so that the measures to contain, reduce and control COVID-19 are deepened within the framework of WHO / PAHO.

We will continue looking for solutions to address the economic effects of the crisis, mechanisms to mitigate it, and the strengthening of mechanisms to support the private sector with integration and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, all within the framework of SICA.

Adopted in virtual meeting by **Juan Orlando Hernández**, President of the Republic of Honduras; **Alejandro Giammattei**, President of the Republic of Guatemala; **Daniel Ortega**, President of the Republic of Nicaragua; **Carlos Alvarado**, President of the Republic of Costa Rica; **Laurentino Cortizo**, President of the Republic of Panama; **Danilo Medina**, President of the Dominican Republic; and **Hugo Patt**, Deputy Prime Minister of Belize; on Twelfth day of March two thousand and twenty. The Declaration, due to its nature of being adopted in a virtual meeting, will be signed later.

We stress the presence during this virtual meeting of colleague **Rosario Murillo**, Vice President of Nicaragua; **Vinicio Cerezo**, General Secretariat of SICA; **Lisandro Rosales**, Secretary of State in the Office of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation of Honduras; **Rodolfo Solano**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica; **Alejandro Ferrer**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama; **Miguel Martínez Morales**, Head of the Government Center of Guatemala; **Gustavo Adolfo Montalvo Franco**, Minister of the Presidency of the Dominican Republic; **Arlette Marengo**, Advisory Minister to the President for International Relations of Nicaragua; **Valdrack Jaenstchke**, Advisory Minister to the President for International Relations and the Greater Caribbean of Nicaragua; and **Sidhartha Marín**, Advisory Minister to the President for Policies and International Affairs of Nicaragua; **Daniel Salas Peraza**, Minister of Health of Costa Rica; **Alba Consuelo Flores**, Secretary of Health of Honduras; **Carolina Dávila**, Minister of Health of Nicaragua; **Rafael Sánchez Cárdenas**, Minister of Public Health of the Dominican Republic; **Luis Francisco Sucre**, Vice Minister of Health of Panama; **Annie Lou Burns**, Chief Executive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belize; **Yashin Dujon**, Chief Executive, Belize Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation; **George Gough**, Chief Executive, Belize Ministry of Health; and **Duane Belisle**, Chief Executive, Belize Ministry of Investment and Trade; **Alexander Solís**, President of the National Emergency Commission; **Carlos Sáenz**, Secretary General of the MINSA of Nicaragua; **Olinda Salguero**, Chief of Staff of SG-SICA; **Werner Vargas**, Executive Director of SG-SICA; **Dante Mossi**, President of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, CABEI; **Melvin Redondo**, General Secretary of the Secretariat for Economic Integration of SICA (SIECA) ; **Alejandro Solís**, Executive Secretary of the Council of Ministers of Health of SICA (COMISCA); **Claudia Herrera**, Executive Secretary of the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC).