

## **Raul Receives Visiting ECLAC Executive Secretary**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 25 (acn) Army General Raul Castro, President of the councils of State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, received Alicia Barcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), who is on a visit to Cuba, according to a note published by the Granma newspaper.

During the cordial meeting, held on Thursday afternoon, they spoke about the excellent cooperation existing between Cuba and the ECLAC and the willingness to continue deepening it. Likewise, they tackled other topics on the regional and international agendas. The top official of the United Nations expressed her satisfaction for being able to contribute to the process of updating of the island's economic model.

Accompanying the distinguished visitor was Anibal Severino Rodriguez.

Cuba was also represented at the meeting by Bruno Rodriguez and Rodrigo Malmierca, ministers of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and Investment, respectively.

## **Scientific-productive poles to contribute to Cuban development**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 28 (acn) The revival of scientific-productive poles of the country is a contribution to national socio-economic development, said in this city Miguel Diaz-Canel, first vice president of the council of State and Ministers.

He noted that the fact of reviving and enhancing their functioning should be on the same principles of integration conceived by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro in the early 80s of last century, but adapted to the current context.

In a meeting with representatives of scientific institutions from the provinces of Havana, Mayabeque and Artemisa, Diaz-Canel highlighted the convening power of the latter, joined together in a collaborative entity to raise their contributions to the economy and society.

He described as essential the achievement of greater integration and speeding up the introduction of scientific and technological results, especially those resulting from innovation with high added value.

He suggested the need to extend to other sectors the successful experience of the Group of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Industries (BioCubaFarma), created in November 2012, in particular on the closure of the cycle of design-production and marketing of products and services.

Although subject to the decisions of the 7th Congress of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC by its Spanish acronym), to be held next April, priorities in science, technology and innovation are related to food production, tackling climate change and computerization and automation.

The rational water management, basic and natural sciences, energy, particularly renewable, physical planning, comprehensive development of the population, biotechnology and medical-pharmaceutical production, as well as social and educational sciences and their technologies are included in this strategy.

At the meeting with Diaz-Canel, scientists approved the organizational principles of the Poles and their proposals for topics to be discussed at their sessions in June, September and December.

With emphasis on the introduction of the results, three scientific-productive poles were settled only in the province of Havana: the Biological Front (1981), the one on Western Havana (1991) and those of Humanities in a period of two years.

Their branches in the provinces of the nation were created shortly after.

In general, they all formed alliances to enhance resources, dedication to work and the idea that science was a tool for development, amidst of emergencies of the so-called special period.

### **Ricardo Cabrisas Receives FM of Gabon**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 24 (acn) Ricardo Cabrisas, Vice-president of the Council of Ministers, received Emmanuel Issoze Ngondet, Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Francophonie and Regional Integration of the Gabonese Republic, who is on an official visit to Cuba.

During the meeting, held on Thursday afternoon, they spoke about the good state of bilateral relations and expressed the willingness to continue working to expand the political, economic and cooperation bonds existing between the two countries.

To this end, the Gabonese party expressed its intention to participate in the next International Fair of Havana, as well as to advance in the process of negotiation of several bilateral agreements establishing a stronger legal framework to support new initiatives between the two countries, including a Trade Agreement and a new Cooperation Agreement.

They also discussed various issues of interest of international topicality.

The distinguished visitor was accompanied by Jean Claude Moussounda, Ambassador of the Gabonese Republic to Cuba; Madeleine Berre, Minister of Commerce, Small and Medium Enterprises, Craftsmanship, Tourism and Development of Services; Serge Mickoto, Director General of the Gabonese Strategic Investment Fund, and other officials of the Gabonese Embassy to Havana.

Cuba was also represented at the meeting by Angel Villa, Director of Sub-Saharan Africa, and Gospel Montero, an official of that Department, both of them from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **Seventh imported Zika case in Cuba**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 28 (acn) It was diagnosed the seventh imported case of patient confirmed with Zika virus, corresponding to 36 years old Cuban collaborator, Comprehensive General Medicine specialist (MGI in Spanish), who arrived in the country from Brazil on March 22, and resident of No. 304 of B Street, between Calixto Garcia and Los Maceos in the city of Guantanamo.

Although she has not presented symptoms, by being a pregnant with 28.2 weeks of gestation coming from Brazil, her admission is decided immediately after arrival for surveillance at Angel Arturo Aballí Hospital in Havana, carrying out sampling for isolation of Zika, which was sent to Pedro Kouri Institute of Tropical Medicine (IPK by its Spanish acronym).

On March 26 the IPK laboratory reported that the real-time PCR performed on the patient at the time of admission is positive for Zika virus. She remains asymptomatic.

## **Cuba and Holland Sign Agreement on Bilateral Debt**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 24 (acn) Ricardo Cabrisas, Vice-president of the Council of Ministers, received Norbertus W. M. Braakhuis, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Havana, and Gerald Enting, Deputy Director of the Export Credit Insurance Division and representative of the Ministry of Finance of that country.

During this meeting, held on Wednesday morning as part of the process of implementation of the Multilateral Agreement signed by the Ad-Hoc Group of Countries Creditors of Cuba in the Paris Club with the Republic of Cuba, two legal instruments were signed by Vice-president Ricardo Cabrisas.

The first one, between the Government of the Republic of Cuba and the Government of the Netherlands, represented by the Dutch Bank of Investment, was signed by the Ambassador, and the second one between the Government of the Republic of Cuba and the Government of the Netherlands, for commercial credits, insured by the Atradius Dutch State Business NV, was signed by Gerald Enting.

The two parties confirmed that the agreements signed represent an important contribution and an incentive to the further development of economic, commercial and financial relations between Cuba and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The occasion was also conducive to hold exchanges on the positive state of bilateral relations and their potential for expansion and strengthening in areas of mutual interest, where bilateral trade between the two countries places the Netherlands among Cuba's top 10 trading partners.

Also attending the meeting was Pieter Hendrik Olivier Van Schaardenburg, Senior Claims and Recoveries Manager at Atradius Agency (Credit Insurance Company).

Cuba was also represented at the meeting by Isaac Hernandez, Director of External Debt of the Central Bank of Cuba; Yamila Fernandez, Director General of Economics of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment; Aleida Gonzalez, Vice-president of the National Bank of Cuba, and Elio Rodriguez, Director for Europe and Canada and Manuel Pirez, Director of International Law, both of them from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, respectively.

### **Cuba: Close to 85 Million Doses of Anti-polio Vaccine Administered**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 23 (acn) From 26 February 1962 to date Cuba has administered almost 85 million doses of anti-polio vaccine, which confirms the country as the first in Latin America to eradicate the dreaded childhood disease.

This has made it possible that the entire population under 68 is protected against this illness, said in an exclusive interview with the Cuban News Agency Dr. Marlen Valcarcel, director of the

National Immunization Program of the Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP).

Such an event of international significance in the health field established guidelines in mass campaigns in the national archipelago, starting from the free immunization for children under three years and their subsequent reactivation, protecting them against the poliovirus caused by this disease.

The specialist specified that in the second stage of the 55th National Anti-polio Vaccination Campaign, which will run from March 28 to April 3 in the country, the second dose of the oral vaccine will be administered to nearly half a million children, 372,856 of them under three years of age, who were given the first dose in February.

### **Experts from 40 Countries will Participate in Cuban Diabetes Congress**

HAVANA, Cuba, Mar 18 (acn) Specialists from over 40 countries will discuss the control of diabetes and vascular treatment during two congresses that will be held simultaneously on December 9th in the famous Varadero Beach Resort.

During an exclusive interview with Dr. Manuel Raices, president of the scientific committee announced that the forum called Controlling Diabetes and its severe complications will be held in plenary conferences and symposiums and will treat the prevention of the disease and metabolic control and molecular biology in the healing processes.

The event will also center in the existing therapies in the world for the management of the ulcers of diabetic foot and the implementation of health programs, directed at the integral control of the patient with diabetes, said Dr. Raices, expert of the Biotechnology Center of the BioCubaFarma group.

Meanwhile, the AngioCaribe 2016 International Congress will center its attention in vascular treatments and procedures associated with vascular surgery with special emphasis in healing therapies associated to non-diabetic wounds, he said.

With the registry to the event, participants will be able to participate in all of the scientific sessions taking into account the association of the work of ulcers in diabetic foot and the arterial diseases in patients.

He added that the participants will also discuss the tools and methodologies developed and implemented in the management of wounds and vascular complications and surgery.

The International Diabetics Federation reports that diabetes currently affects over 415 million people in the world, close to half of the patients cannot control the sugar levels in the blood with the current medication in the markets, diet or exercises increasing the risk of complications.

In Cuba, there is almost one million people with diabetes due to the inadequate living styles like the lack of exercise, obesity and mainly the food habits, he stressed.