Cuba Will Overcome U.S. Aggressions, President Says

Viengsay Valdés Wins Positano Dance Award

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Meliá Jardines del Rey: A Safe Tourist Destination

By Roberto CAMPOS

HAVANA.- Spain’s Meliá hotel chain has added a new hotel to its list of safe tourist resorts in Cuba, with special protocols to face Covid-19.

Meliá Cuba’s sales manager Francisco Camps announced that Meliá Jardines del Rey was included on the list of resorts with the a Hygienic and Safe Tourism Certification, in agreement with Cuban authorities.

The certification, which complies with the protocols established by the Cuban Ministries of Public Health and Tourism, ensures safe vacations both to national and foreign tourists.

The announcement was followed by the arrival of Canadian tourists to Cuba’s northern keys as the first to come to the island since the borders were closed late March due to Covid-19.

Camps thanked the extra efforts made by tourism employees in Cuba, adding that Meliá Hoteles International is committed to guaranteeing the wellbeing of its clients under the slogan “Stay Safe with Meliá.”

Cuba’s Southern Tourist Resort

By Raúl ALVAREZ

HAVANA.- The Ancón peninsula, south of Trinidad – a city located in the central province of Sancti Spíritus - is trying to become Cuba’s most important sun and beach resort on the southern coast.

With this purpose in mind, the Meliá Trinidad and Iberostar Ancón hotels - four and five-star facilities, respectively - are currently under construction there. The peninsula is over 12 kilometers away from Trinidad, a Cultural Heritage Site founded by the Spanish in 1514.

These two hotels will join the Memories Trinidad del Mar, Village Costasur and Club Amigo Ancón hotels, already in operation.

According to specialists, this destination – located in the Caribbean Sea – has a lot of natural resources, beaches and mountains. It also allows for trips to Trinidad, a city often visited because of its architectural beauty.

Major Cuban hotels operated by Meliá International reopened its doors to national vacationers in July, complying with health protocols adopted to fight the current pandemic.

That list includes Hotel Tryp Habana Libre in Havana and Meliá Internacional Varadero and Sol Palmeras in Varadero, Matanzas Province, and Meliá Jardines del Rey, as mentioned above.

Health protocols at those resorts include the presence of nurses, doctors and epidemiologists.

With headquarters in Mallorca’s Balearic Island, Meliá has been Spain’s leading hotel chain since 2002 and runs over 350 hotels in 40 countries; 39 of them in Cuba.

Meanwhile, it was announced in Toronto that starting the last week of September, Air Canada Vacations will offer a direct, weekly flight from that city to the tourist facilities located in Jardines del Rey, as well as a similar flight from Montreal, in operation since September 4.

Tour operators from Canada - the main issuing country of tourists to Cuba - included the Cuban destination in their fall and winter programs.
Cuba Will Overcome U.S. Aggressions, President Says

By Orlando ORAMAS

HAVANA.- Cuba will withstand and defeat the new aggressions of the U.S. government, President Miguel Diaz-Canel said in his virtual speech for the top-level meeting of the UN General Assembly, which coincides with the 75th anniversary of the international organization.

In the video addressed to the international community, the head of the Cuban State denounced that the United States doesn't hide its intention to apply new and tougher aggressive measures against his country in the coming months.

"We declare once more that our people, proud of its history and committed to the ideals and work of the Revolution, will be able to withstand and win," he stressed.

The president noted during his speech that Washington's escalating hostility takes place as the island faces the Covid-19 pandemic, which doesn't surprise Cubans at this point.

Cuba, Diaz-Canel pointed out, has used its decade-long experience to fight terrible epidemics, some of them deliberately introduced into the country as part of the permanent war against the revolutionary process.

A group of measures were immediately implemented, backed up by the country's main capabilities and strengths: an organized socialist State responsible for watching over its people's health, with highly-qualified human capital and a society whose people largely participate in decision-making and the solution of their problems, the president sustained.

Diaz-Canel highlighted that the implementation of those measures, together with the knowledge accumulated over more than 60 years in creating and strengthening a universal and high-quality health system, plus scientific research and development, not only have preserved everyone's right to health but to better face pandemics as well.

"We have accomplished this despite tough restrictions of the prolonged economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the U.S. government and further intensified brutally over the past two years, even in times of the pandemic, proving the nature of this hostile policy towards Cuba." The White House has intensified the persecution of financial transactions and since 2019 has adopted new measures that contravene International Law to deprive the Cuban people of the possibility to buy the fuel needed for everyday life and its development, the president said.

With the objective of damaging and demonizing the Cuban Revolution and its allies, the United States publishes spurious, illegitimate lists with which it claims the right to financial transactions and since 2019 has adopted new measures that contravene International Law to deprive the Cuban people of the possibility to buy the fuel needed for everyday life and its development, the president said.

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Diaz-Canel demanded the end of the defamatory campaign "against the altruistic work of Cuba's international medical cooperation which, with high prestige and proven results, has helped saving hundreds of lives and reduced the impact of the disease in several ways."

Prestigious international personalities and social organizations have recognized the humanist work of the Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade Specialized in Disasters and Severe Epidemics, advocating that the brigade be granted the Nobel Peace Prize, he recalled.

While the United States ignores the call to unite efforts in the fight against the pandemic and withdraws from the World Health Organization, Cuba, "in response to requests and guided by the friendly and humanist vocation of its people, increases its cooperation- sending over 3,700 health collaborators organized in 46 medical brigades to 39 countries and territories affected by Covid-19," described the president.

Fight Against Covid-19

By Claudia DUPEIRÓN

HAVANA.- The Covid-19 pandemic has been a challenge for Cuba and the entire world. In our country, constant work is being done to save the lives of those infected with SARS-CoV-2.

After the fresh outbreak of the disease, Cuban authorities intensified epidemiological surveillance and early-detection actions.

One of the main strategies implemented by the health system includes early detection of infected people and stopping the chain of Covid-19 transmission in the western and central regions, where the situation is more complicated because of the high spread of positive cases.

In this sense, Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel insists on conducting an in-depth study of patients infected with SARS-CoV-2, especially of those whose sources of infection are not detected and do not have symptoms.

The number of real-time PCR tests that are conducted daily to detect new coronavirus cases has also increased and has reached as much as 8,128 in 24 hours. Currently, between seven to eight thousand tests are being conducted daily.

Cuba has a network of molecular biology labs in Havana, the country's capital, as well as in the cities of Villa Clara (central region) and Santiago de Cuba (eastern), with subsidiary centers in the territories of Ciego de Ávila (central) and Holguín (eastern).

Due to the increase in the number of positive cases in the central province of Ciego de Ávila – where over 500 cases have been reported in September– the epidemiological surveillance system was strengthened in all 19 health areas and 2 secondary-attention institutions of the region.

As part of the preventive measures, Nasalferón was administered to all 4,319 workers of the Ciego de Ávila's health system.

Nasalferón is a biotechnological medicine produced in Cuba with a proven effectiveness that fosters the body's immune response, with a prophylactic function that reduces the potential symptoms of the disease.

Other products used in the fight against the pandemic include Human Transfer Factor and BiomodulinaT, a medicine that, since the very beginning has been administered in elderly centers, psycho-pedagogical institutions, psychiatric hospitals, and others.

National Director for Science and Technological Innovation at the Ministry of Public Health, Ileana Morales, stated that these products are very safe and most of them have been applied for more than 30 years.

In the meantime, the Cuban scientific community is developing four vaccine candidates against the new coronavirus; one of them, Soberana 01, is already undergoing the clinical trial phase.
Trump Strengthens the Blockade

By Martha ANDRÉS

U.S. president Donald Trump turned a blind eye to the numerous calls that have pushed for lifting sanctions against Cuba amidst the Covid-19 pandemic; instead, Trump strengthened the blockade that has been imposed by Washington on Havana for almost 60 years. As he and the previous administrations have done every year, on September 9, the head of the White House extended the use of the so-called Trading with the Enemy Act, a law enacted in 1917 that endorses in the U.S. legislation the economic, commercial and financial siege against the island. “I decided that it is in national interest to extend these measures against Cuba for one year,” the president said, while adding that he increased its freedom of action in relation to the fulfillment of that unilateral policy, which is annually rejected by the majority of the UN member nations. Over and above this fact, during the months of the pandemic, Trump not only maintained the numerous punishments promoted against Cuba since his arrival to power, but worsened others, like those announced on September 23 at the White House.

That day, at an event with some of the remaining leaders of the mercenary brigade 2506 – which suffered a crushing defeat in Cuba during the failed invasion of the Bay of Pigs (Playa Girón) on April 1961 – the Republican president announced his decision to prevent U.S. travelers from staying in state properties in Cuba.

The new restrictions, applicable since September 24, also prohibit the import of Cuban rum and cigars, and require specific licenses for certain travel categories, like those related to the assistance or organization of professional lectures and meetings.

The U.S. president insinuated that with the application of these new regulations, just like with others previously adopted, the purpose is to allegedly provide help to the Cuban people. However, U.S. analysts and the media say that this is a political maneuver intended to capture the votes of the Cuban-Americans in Florida, in light of the forthcoming elections of November 3, in which the president will run for reelection.

“The new restrictions announced by Trump in relation to Cuba do not surprise us at all, not only because of the moment in which they were issued but because these measures are purely symbolic, to win the sympathy of right sectors in view of the November elections,” co-chairwoman of the National Network for Solidarity with Cuba at the United States Alicia Jarpa told The Havana Reporter.

Three organizations based in the United States – the Center for Democracy in the Americas, Engage Cuba and the Washington Office on Latin American Issues – denounced that those punishments will cause more damage to the Cuban people and will also be detrimental to U.S. citizens.

The recent restrictions focus on one of the most evident objectives of Trump’s policy toward Cuba: preventing U.S. people’s travels to the island, which increased considerably as of the bilateral rapprochement process started during the Barack Obama (2009-2017) administration.

It also recalls that, from August 2013 to November 2018, the said program allowed Cuban doctors to care for 113,359,000 patients in over 3,600 Brazilian municipalities and provided permanent health coverage to 60,000,000 Brazilians. The Cuban ministry states that the alleged concerns the United States has on Cuban programs like “More Doctors”, are neither legitimate nor appropriate to be discussed at PAHO.

“If Cuba would have not been forced to withdraw its doctors from Brazil, they would have contributed to the control and fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in that country, the second most affected in the world,” the document adds.

In his speech at PAHO’s virtual meeting, on September 26, Cuban minister of Public Health José Angel Portal described the accusations of alleged human trafficking as complete and utter lies, and rejected the request that the United States made to that institution to monitor the Cuban internationalist medical brigades.

In response to U.S. delegate Garrett Grigsby at PAHO’s 58th Board of Directors, the Cuban minister said that the United States used the forum for political purposes.

“Cuba has not politicized this forum but the United States has, with its dishonest campaign against the international medical cooperation of our country, trying to discredit this organization,” Portal said.

Other recent measures the Trump administration has taken against Cuba – which Havana describes as electoral opportunism – include sanctions against director of the Entrepreneurial Administration Group S.A. (GAESA) Luis Alberto Rodríguez and the Cuban company American International Services (AIS), an entity involved in sending remittances to Cuban families.

According to Cuban authorities, these measures only contribute to increasing the will of resistance in the Cuban people.
HAVANA.- On August 24, the first stage of clinical trials for Soberana-01, Cuba's vaccine candidate against COVID-19, is for humanity a message of hope from Latin America and the Caribbean.

“Over 200 candidate vaccines are being developed around the world and only 30 were authorized to begin doing clinical trials,” said Dr. Vicente Vérez, General Director of Finlay Vaccine Institute. The potential vaccine is being tested on 676 volunteers in two stages, and the results will be made known at the beginning of 2021, he added.

Vérez affirmed that it is a milestone because Cuban scientists complied with all the requirements in spite of having quickened the process.

China is the country with the greatest number of candidates, followed by the United States, Great Britain, Russia, Germany and others like Australia and Japan, the expert noted.

“They are developed countries that have connections with multinationals, and Cuba is the first country in Latin America and the Caribbean to have attained this result. It’s a nation with poor economic resources but big in spirit, and that is why we are included in that group,” the scientist stressed.

Experts say that a vaccine requires several stages based on pharmaceutical, productive development, animal and toxicity trials. The international regulatory systems have simplified that set of steps with an objective to act quicker against the Covid-19 pandemic, without diminishing the importance of the safety of every single aspect.

“We have to finish phase I clinical trials with a small number of volunteers (676) to prove the vaccine is safe. Then, we’ll go to phase II with a larger number of volunteers, where it will be determined if the vaccine induces the needed immune response,” he explained.

“A third stage will be needed afterwards where, although we know there is an immune response that is supposed to avoid disease, it will be necessary to prove its effectiveness in prevention of the disease. That is the roadmap to be followed. We’ve made the first step already, something very important in three months,” the expert noted.

The international regulatory system had to adapt to the situation due to the aggressiveness of the pandemic around the world, allowing changes to reduce the time needed to develop a vaccine, but maintaining the same safety procedures. It was necessary to understand this in order to secure the necessary conditions to produce a vaccine rapidly; to be aware of what to do, what to maintain and what to use from existing immunizers, Vérez commented.

“Our perception as scientists is that this is the first time humanity has generated so much scientific knowledge in such a short period of time, by private multinationals but a lot of public knowledge as well,” he said.

In this context, special systems were created to freely access official information; that is to say, the scientific community faced the disease in a different way to speed up the development of that technology.

All of that allowed Cuban researchers to determine that the process for the virus to enter into and colonize the host cell was based on a small fragment of the protein known as RBD, which “ends up acting like the key with which the virus opens the keyhole of the human cell that it has to enter to be able to reproduce itself,” explained Vérez.
Viengsay Valdés Wins Positano Dance Award

HAVANA.- The 48th Positano Dance Award “Léonide Massine” won by Cuban Viengsay Valdés in Italy reaffirms the talent of the dancer, trained on the Caribbean island that is rich in culture and education. The 2020 event honored Prima Ballerina Assoluta Alicia Alonso - precisely the year that she would have turned 100 - and recognized Valdés in the category of Best Dancer on the International Stage.

When announcing the decision, the jury of the Positano Award - one of the world’s oldest and most prestigious dance events - called the current director of the Cuban National Ballet Company (BNC) Alicia Alonso’s artistic successor. The announcement of the jury, which was presided over by the director of BALLET2000 international magazine, Alfo Agostini, highlights that the artist stands out for her excellent technique and intense presence on stage; moreover, she has played all of the leading roles of the repertoire in Cuba and internationally. It also recognizes the time Valdés shared the BNC direction together with the great Alicia Alonso, and in 2019 she was appointed as artistic director.

The prize Viengsay Valdés received this year in Positano is also a tribute to the memory of Alicia Alonso, the legend of universal ballet until she died in October 2019 at the age of 98. The dancer could not travel due to the current pandemic, so Cuba’s ambassador in Italy José Carlos Rodríguez received the award during the ceremony from Positano’s Mayor Michele De Lucia.

Valdés represents the ballet school created by Alicia, Fernando and Alberto Alonso, the seed of many great artists. It’s impossible to think of the Cuban people without dance in all of its possible forms, the diplomat said.

For the first time, the award ceremony was combined with videos by the laureates due to COVID-19, a disease that has forced the cancellation of events in most countries. “I want to sincerely thank all those people that have closely followed my artistic career and performances and, above all, those that have defended the Cuban ballet school and its permanence on international stages,” said Viengsay in her virtual message.

She then thanked the jury for having chosen her for an award granted to incomparable world dancers such as Carla Fracci, Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Maurice Béjart, Vladimir Vasiliev, Natalia Makarova, Alessandra Ferri, Mats Ek, Ana Laguna and Alicia Alonso, among other top-level dancers.

“Thank you and I hope to dance in Italy very soon to give you a big hug in person,” stated the director of the BNC, a company that earned the Cultural Heritage of the Nation designation.

Meanwhile, the jury granted the special lifetime career award to Anthony Dowell, undoubtedly the greatest English classic dancer of his generation, whom it described as danseur noble par excellence. Valdés and Dowell won the awards in the special categories, but other winners of the year were also announced during the ceremony. Among them are Cuban Alejandro Virelles, first dancer at Staatsballett Berlin; Russian Alyona Kovalyova of the Bolshoi Ballet; and Portuguese Marcelino Sambé of the London Royal Ballet.

Also awarded was Russian Oleg Ivenko of the Kazan Opera, who has been earning international prestige since 2018, when he played Rudolf Nureyev in Ralph Fiennes’s film White Raven.

International Mukimono Art Contest

HAVANA.- On October 20, a team of hotel chefs will represent Cuba in the Online International Mukimono Art Contest, headed by founder of the Cuban Artistic Cookery School Adolfo Enrique Espinosa.

The institution is the first of its type on the island and the professionals who are getting ready to take part in this tournament – organized by the Mexican Culinary Sculptors Association – work at the prestigious Varadero resort, in the Matanzas province.

Espinosa is also the ambassador of the Association of International Culinary and Carving Artists (AACATICUBA). More than 15 countries from three continents have so far confirmed their participation in the virtual event, led by an experienced, international jury.

“Mukimono is the term used to describe the art of decorating fruits and vegetables using the carving technique,” Espinosa told The Havana Reporter.

Different techniques and tools are used to attain this art form, similar to the sculpture of statues.

“Mukimono requires the use of special and very sharp knives, which are similar to those used to carve wood, rather than kitchen knives,” he commented.

According to Espinosa, for the competition, the Cuban team will try to reproduce a piece by the Cuban visual artist Zaida del Río. The artwork shows one of the iconic features of this painter and engraver: the female figure as a delicate, sensual, peaceful and powerful bird.

It is hard to tell the difference between the original and the copy; however, nothing surprises us about a team that is used to reproducing paintings and exhibits their works on easels, as if these were canvases, enjoying the public’s reaction.

At a distance, those pieces seem to be paintings, and on one occasion, during the holding of the Varadero Gourmet International Festival, a group of visual artists did the opposite: painting the work of those chefs.

“In our works, we always show Cubanness,” said the maestro, who shared photos on social media of models wearing details of the Mukimono art, including a wedding gown. The team of hotel chefs mainly use edible products as a base for carving, but sometimes they are also captivated by the ancient Japanese sculpture tradition.

The Artistic Cookery School, founded by Espinosa on January 2017, is attached to the Federation of Culinary Associations of the Republic of Cuba and collaborates with the Tourism Ministry.

Different Cuban institutions have welcomed their exhibits, such as the National Fine Arts Academy, the Conference Center, the Colonial Art Museum, the Lombillo Palace, the San Alejandro National Fine Arts Academy and different TV programs.

“We want to show that food art is a complete art. We also cook, and cooking is an art,” Espinosa concluded.
HAVANA.- Elpidio Valdés, the famous Cuban comic strip character, is one of those original creations that is not limited to a specific period of time or generation. He was created to live forever, leaving imprints on the imaginations of many generations.

The Mambí (Cuban rebel) and pro-independence fighter first appeared in the Pionero Magazine on August 14, 1970, created by Cuban caricaturist Juan Padrón; becoming part of the Cuban identity with hundreds of stories taken to literature, television and movies.

This character is as real as the heroes represented by each facet of his personality: irreverent and contentious, always ready to fight for independence as Colonel of the Cuban Liberation Army that faced Spanish colonialism in the 19th Century.

Children and adults alike enjoy his adventures and Cuban humor, which is why he is so much popular, becoming part of the island’s cultural heritage.

Produced by the Cuban Film Industry, ICAIC, the Mambí fighter has served as inspiration for three feature films, with stories of his father’s death, the beginning of the Independence War, efforts to carry a shipment of weapons from the United States to Cuba and his adventures during U.S. intervention.

About two dozen episodes were filmed between 1974 and 2000, including adventures such as the ones about the military train, convoy against the New York Police, the meeting with Palmiche (his horse), the battle against the rayadillos (Spanish soldiers), the history of the machete and his wedding with María Silvia, among others.

His famous phrases are part of Cuban slang, so much so, that it is normal to hear people in the street saying things like “so long, compay.”

All the characters in this cartoon emphasize his transcendence. Both his friends and enemies make Elpidio what he is today, and his stories feature María Silvia, his horse Palmiche, General Resóplez (his enemy), Pepito, Eutelia, the captain of the counter-guerrilla, Media Cara, Oliverio (the innovator), Cortico, Fico, to name a few.

The voices play a major role in this cartoon, performed by the Cuban artists Frank González, Tony González, Manuel Marín, Eddy Vidal, María Eugenia García, Irela Bravo, Juan Julio Alfonso, Teresita Rúa and Erdwin Fernández.

In every adventure Elpidio Valdés says: “lots of machetes are yet to be waved,” which is why many Cubans are paying tribute to him these days with the campaign #MuchoMachetePorDarTodavía.

Half a century after the character was created, the homages also honor the recently deceased caricaturist, Juan Padrón, while other activities are promoted by the Ministry of Culture, the Cuban Fund of Cultural Assets (FCBC), ICAIC and La Manigua Cultural and Creative Center.

The FCBC’s Collage Ediciones publishing house joins the tributes with the launch of the book “50 años de Elpidio Valdés” (50 years of Elpidio Valdés), with over 200 pages of short stories. In addition, Facebook and Instagram users post gifs and stickers with phrases of the cartoon, while a website with information about all the characters was inaugurated recently.
Pandemic Still Spreads Alarm

HAVANA. More than six months after the declaration of Covid-19 as a pandemic and about 10 months after the start of the infection, the number of cases confirmed and people dead because of the virus continue to increase.

According to the data provided by the World Health Organization (WHO), about 34 million people in 185 countries have become infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the agent responsible for the disease, and about 1 million have died, while the number of recovered patients reaches 22 million.

The abovementioned organization states that the American region is the most affected by the new coronavirus, followed by South Asia, Europe and the Middle East. The United States, Brazil, India, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Italy, Peru, France, Spain and Iran are included among the countries with the highest numbers of confirmed cases and deaths.

Personal and global economies have been strongly affected, and thus the society at large. From the psychological point of view, the pandemic is considered a highly stressful and threatening event that, according to specialists, can be a catastrophic situation.

Different emotions have been in the air, most of the time negative, strong and painful feelings that affect daily routine and the way people see the world.

In relation to potential psycho-physiological signs, specialists highlight issues of insomnia, nightmares, reduction or loss of appetite, and neglect of healthy habits.

Scientists from all over the world tirelessly work on the development of vaccines that can generate a specific and long-duration immunological response, in addition to avoiding the virus’s replication; however, until now, there are no conclusive studies.

About 190 labs and institutions all over the world research potential vaccines against the new coronavirus, of which 35 are already undergoing clinical trials on humans.

Dr Soumya Swaminathan, WHO scientific director, recently warned that it will probably not be possible to return to life as it was before Covid-19 until 2022, the date in which enough people are expected to be vaccinated in order to develop immunity.

“Trials require dozens of thousands of people and at least six months in order to test their efficacy and safety; thus, we will have to wait until at least the end of 2020 or the beginning of 2021 to have reliable results,” she affirmed.

In that sense, WHO Health Emergency director Mike Ryan stated that the search of a vaccine “should not be a race between companies or countries, but against the virus; a race to save lives.”

“Once a vaccine against Covid-19 is obtained, it is essential to guarantee quick, fair and equitable access to it,” WHO General Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has reiterated.

“This virus will not be the last pandemic nor the last world health emergency, but with adequate political and financial investments, we can prevent and mitigate future pandemics and protect our future and that of the generations to come,” he noted.
Andrew Holness, a key figure of the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) over the past ten years, has begun a new term as Prime Minister after a resounding victory in the September 3 general elections. This is the second consecutive term and third total since he got involved in his country’s political life. This year the Jamaican politician was re-elected with an overwhelming win at the polls. Holness and the JLP won 57.1 percent of votes and 48 of 63 seats in Parliament, while the oppositional People’s National Party obtained 37 percent of votes and only 15 seats. In 2016, they had won with a narrow margin of 0.38 percent and one legislative seat; so, the results obtained now corroborate that his performance over the past four years receives great support.

The first time Holness headed the government was not as a result of elections but rather replacing Prime Minister Bruce Golding (October 2011-January 2012) when he resigned. During the swearing-in ceremony for his new term, the 48-year-old politician said he assumes power to go on “with our recovery plan,” referring to corruption, the economy and social security as government’s priorities.

But the most pressing task is to fight the Covid-19 pandemic, which has been increasingly affecting the country. At the end of September, Jamaica confirmed 6,000 cases and 93 deaths. In this regard, Holness warned that Jamaica “must be ready to learn to live with the COVID-19 disease,” because the country cannot be closed forever, clearly alluding to the need to open up to international tourism, one of the country’s main sources of income.

“This government has been ordered to act quickly in achieving the great fate of this country. We will not waste it. We’ll use it wisely to build public trust,” he said when inaugurating his new term.

As part of his anti-corruption plans, Hones sustained that every representative and minister elect will participate in the activities organized by the Integrity Commission to fight corruption.

The creation of more than 150,000 jobs, subsidies for micro, small and medium-sized companies and the construction of 70,000 houses are other promises made by the prime minister.

In this regard, he pledged that all cities will have free Wi-Fi in their downtown areas and public schools will have enlarged bandwidth, while six new academies of science, technology, engineering and mathematics will be established.
**French Advocate Nobel Prize for Cuban Doctors**

**By Waldo MENDILUZA**

French advocates are at the forefront of the request to grant the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize to the Cuban medical brigades that have been fighting COVID-19 in different parts of the world, which they consider an example of altruism. In different ways, politicians, MPs, intellectuals, trade unionists, members of solidarity organizations and citizens all state their support for the proposal, which by the end of April became an international campaign, publicized on social media by the Cuba Linda and France Cuba associations.

The role of the Cuban health professionals in the fight against the pandemic can no longer be hidden or ignored by the mainstream media, because in spite of the unspeakable blockade imposed by the United States for over 50 years, Cuba sends its white-coat army to all four corners of the world, even to Europe, the organizations had stated.

A Facebook group and a request on the French website MesOpinions.com allowed hundreds of organizations and thousands of people from different continents to raise their voice in favor of the brigades being awarded, created to acknowledge those who contribute to world peace. In an interview with The Havana Reporter, environmentalist MP for the southern department of Bocas de Ródano, François-Michel Lambert, said that it is easy to support the proposal because Cuba has a decade-long history of providing international medical assistance and since 2005, its Henry Reeve Contingent has reached African, Latin American, European and Asian countries affected by natural disasters and epidemics. “Cuba and its doctors save lives throughout the world and they show it again in times of COVID-19; no one can deny that, nor the example of solidarity that they set in the field of health,” stated Lambert, chairman of the France-Cuba Friendship Group at the National Assembly, who agreed to submit the proposal to the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

MP leader André Chassaingé also noted that the Henry Reeve brigades deserve receiving the prize for the contribution they have made towards the fight against the pandemic in other countries, and for the solidarity Cuba has illustrated since the triumph of the Revolution.

“This is not transitory. Cuba has sent doctors to several nations and their researchers have provided products that are of great use in the fight diseases, like Interferon Alfa 2b and Heberprot-P,” said Chassaingé, MP for the central department of Puy-de-Dôme and chairman of the Democratic and Republican Left Group at the National Assembly.

According to leader of the French Communist Party (PFC) Laurent Péra, granting them the Nobel Peace Prize would be fair recognition of Cuban professionals, who spare no effort nor sacrifice to help others throughout the world, especially those living in the most vulnerable communities.

“Winning this battle is a way of fighting the murderous blockade and its objective to prevent Cuba’s access food and medicine,” said Chassaingé, MP for the central department of Puy-de-Dôme and chairman of the Democratic and Republican Left Group at the National Assembly.

Among the intellectuals who raised their voices in favor of the request, Salim Lamrani and Ignacio Ramonet are at the forefront, while the trade union sector was represented by leader of the Valle del Marne General Labor Confederation (CGT) Cédric Quintin, who described the work of the Henry Reeve brigades in the fight against the pandemic as valuable and exceptional. “How is it possible not to feel admiration for those who are on the front line in remote places to fight the disease, risking their own health and vindicating, stethoscope in hand, that Homeland is humanity, as José Martí said,” Lamrani, an academician and essayist, commented.

Minister of Higher Education José Ramón Saborido highlighted the factor of students’ anxiety, as some have been inactive since last March. He also recalled the responsibility the university community has shown. “We must restart the school year wherever possible; we don’t have the right to postpone it, because the country needs trained professionals and that is the task of higher education,” he noted.

In relation to entrance exams for higher education – now set for this month – the minister explained that they maintain their commitment: that each high school graduate will have access to a quota in higher education, in which over 100 careers and another 40 short-term (four-year) programs are available.

Due to the second wind of the pandemic, the Ministry of Higher Education and the University of Havana provided an update about entrance examinations to the university, final examinations of university students, the conclusion of the 2019-2020 school year and the beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year. These topics include flexible and necessary changes, in response to the pandemic’s development.

All universities, including those located in provinces with current cases of the virus, are expected to close out the 2019-2020 academic year before the end of December. There will be a single call for entrance examinations, which will take place in October and November, with the exception of the Havana and Ciego de Ávila provinces, where it will all depend on the development of the epidemiological situation, and students’ abilities to prepare for their exams.
HAVANA.- From his window, Cuban photographer Gabriel Guerra Bianchini captured the essence of Havana, a city that witnesses new practices and behaviors of its inhabitants due to the COVID-19 pandemic. “Social isolation allowed me to go back to my roots; to express myself, create and work alone on ideas and dreams that have been pending. Before, I was more focused on collective projects, like big festivals, events and albums,” he said.

This first series was followed by surrealistic portraits, which he thought up together with his partner, Denise Roque. Then, he focused on the representation of empty streets. “Those photos were popular on social media along with others taken in the last few months, and will be incorporated into a future exhibit,” Bianchini added.

His images have been included in online exhibits, like the one organized by the Gorría Gallery-Workshop. “The virtual initiatives have been an interesting experience. Although people log in and admire those works virtually, it is strange to see empty gallery spaces. I miss openings and the interaction with people,” he commented.

On the premise that creativity contributes to entertainment and spiritual values, Bianchini also participated in the audiovisual world with the music video Noche sin fin y mar, by singer/songwriter Silvio Rodríguez, dedicated to musician Luis Eduardo Aute. “It is a beautiful song and for four days, we were very nervous and busy in the making of the material. It was a small team; we could not take shots outside, and abided by all health measures. In the end, it was beautiful,” he said.

Bianchini’s photographs, as well as those of other Cuban and Latin American artists, will join an exhibit in Casa de América, in Madrid (Spain). The Lugano Culture Museum, in Switzerland, also selected four of his works to exhibit in an Italian gallery. “All artists suffer and are grateful. In a way, we need contrast to live, build, feel and know the limits of emotions and give them the importance they deserve. Photography keeps me active, happy and optimistic,” he concluded.
The Two Sides of Bolivia’s General Elections

By Nara RAMS

The resignation of Bolivia’s de facto president Jeanine Áñez defines a new electoral scenario where two options are anticipated, although the Movement to Socialism-Political Instrument for Peoples’ Sovereignty party (MAS-IPSP) still has preference. Áñez, who took up office in the context of a coup d’état staged on November 10, 2019, resigned the presidential candidature last September 17. When announcing the decision, the de facto president affirmed that if the conservative right does not join forces, “Morales will return.” She was making reference to former president Evo Morales (2006-2019), who resigned his post because of the pressure exerted by leaders of the armed forces and the police after his victory in the elections held on October 20, 2019.

“With the resignation of Áñez, the pro-coup bloc will only have two leaders: Mesa and Camacho,” said Gabriel Villalba, director of the Nuestro Americano en Bolivia Study Center. Villalba explained that the Bolivian electorate will make a decision next October, and above the ideological preferences, the economic will prevail. “We have a free-market, neoliberal, economic deregulation bloc that leads the State to its minimal expression and removes its fundamental and primary economic protection. That’s Mesa, Fernando Camacho and Tuto Quiroga’s pro-coup bloc, now without Áñez,” he noted.

He also added that on the other side is the national, popular bloc, represented by MAS-IPSP, whose presidential candidate is Luis Arce, with a clear vision of the economy based on state regulation, hoping to revitalize the sector for the benefit of all. In that sense, the party headed by Evo Morales has the lead, because of Arce’s role as Minister of Economics for 14 years, a post ECLAC, the Inter-American Development Bank and other specialized international organizations, as Villalba acknowledged.

Infringement of Peace Agreement Leads to Violence in Colombia

By Oday TROYA

Although a Peace Agreement was signed in 2016, assassinations, massacres, confrontations between armed groups, forced displacement, and military and police abuses continue to prevail in Colombia as though the agreement does not exist.

According to Senator Victoria Sandino of the Common Alternative Revolutionary Alternative Force (FARC) party, this escalation of violence, which has worsened in recent weeks due to police brutality, is a structural consequence that largely affects social leaders, youth, farmers, indigenous groups, women, former combatants and the LGBT community. Therefore, Sandino said, it is necessary to comply with all measures of the Final Agreement, and that the parties - the government and former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) sustains it is a commitment that it will continue to fulfill, working towards the agreements set during the nearly four-year-long talks in Havana, Cuba.

The former guerrilla group recalled that on September 8, two National Police agents arrested Javier Ordóñez in Bogota after giving him 13 electric shocks with a Taser. He was then beaten 40 times, causing him nine skull fractures and several other injuries. “Ordóñez had no vital signs when he arrived at the clinic where he was moved, thus becoming another fatal victim of the Colombian State,” she denounced.

Multiple protests were held in the Colombian capital on September 9 to condemn the incident, and they were brutally suppressed by the police. “It must be said clearly. That night the National Police of Colombia committed a massacre that left 13 people killed and 220 victims of physical violence, 70 people injured by gunfire and 150 others by other causes,” the senator stressed.

These are not isolated events, noted Sandino, and sustained that the country is immersed in a profound and very serious Human Rights crisis that has the Colombian people’s lives and integrity at risk. From January to now, some 58 massacres have been reported in Colombia, growing exponentially with up to three murders recorded in one day, she added.

Likewise, more than 1,000 social and community leaders have been assassinated since the Peace Agreement was signed in 2016, and those that “laid down our weapons and signed the treaty are being persecuted,” Ordóñez said.

With over 225 former guerrilla fighters killed, forced displacements, people held in captivity by armed groups and forced disappearances also characterizing this shocking scenario, the situation in Colombia is extremely serious and cannot be understood in isolation. There is a structural problem stimulated by big powers, the senator warned.

According to the congresswoman, President Iván Duque ignores the public clamor and deliberately decides not to adopt measures to stop violence (such as Point 3.4 of the Peace Agreement). On the contrary, his discourse seems to give a free pass to police and military abuses; he has photos with them and refuses to recognize the need for reform.
The Need for Monetary Unification

By Alberto CORONA

Despite the adverse circumstances of the Cuban economy, the government is aware that the current dual currency system must be eradicated without delay, as it hinders the development of the country’s productive forces. The importance of that topic has been highlighted throughout the past few weeks, after local authorities insisted that achieving that goal is a pressing matter for readjusting the currency and credit system in the country, immersed in the implementation of a new socioeconomic strategy aimed at boosting development and coping with the crisis caused by COVID-19.

Although experts agree that currency unification is urgent and necessary, it is not enough to sort out and update the economy, which is severely affected by the intensification of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States for more than 50 years.

Therefore, the difficult conditions of the Cuban economy entail a challenge to local authorities when eliminating the problems caused by the dual currency and exchange system, and mitigating its impact on all fronts of national life.

Referring to this topic, the Central Bank of Cuba’s (BCC) Director for Economic Studies, Yolanda Garcia, told the press that the current context marked by the pandemic, the intensification of the blockade and the origin of the monetary duality should be taken into consideration. The disappearance of the USSR and the collapse of the socialist block in Eastern Europe in the 1990s badly affected the Caribbean island, she recalled.

From 1989 to 1993, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dropped nearly 35 percent; fuel consumption was cut by less than half and foreign trade shrank by more than 80 percent, Garcia stressed. Similarly, the official noted, the escalation of the U.S. economic siege on Cuba aggravated the shortage of supplies on retail markets and caused strong monetary imbalances.

Hence, the Cuban peso (CUP) lost its purchasing power and functions as a means of exchange, reserve value and unit of accounting, while facilitating the conditions for the existing dollarization, as evident in the informal market.

That situation forced the country to design measures aimed at reviving the economy, placing it back on the international market and coping with major macroeconomic imbalances.

However, Garcia stressed that the dollarization never reached the entire economy, because wages, services and social security, among other activities, continued to operate in Cuban pesos.

Later on, in 2003 and 2004, the economic recovery allowed the gradually replacement of the dollar to the Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC). Two local currencies have been circulating in the country since then: the CUP and the CUC, thus giving way to monetary duality on the internal market.

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PHOTOS: Prensa Latina.
Employment and Salary: A Transversal Reform

By Isaura Diez

HAVANA.- Labor incentive, salary reform and increase of national production are all part of the fundamental triad of the Cuban socio-economic strategy to face the crisis caused by COVID-19. The plan aims to attain productive links in order to substitute imports in a context characterized by economic, commercial and financial persecution from the U.S. government, as part of the strengthening of the blockade imposed on Cuba for more than 50 years.

In this scenario, the policy on employment, salary, social care and security is included among the 16 most important objectives of the Cuban strategy, because of its impact on the economy and the society at large.

In a world characterized by the negative effects of COVID-19, neoliberal policies and market economy, Cuba foresees developing its productive forces while providing social care to the most vulnerable.

The strategy approved last July foresees that remuneration for the work done is "the main source of income that maintains decent living conditions, while allowing the increase of material and spiritual wellbeing and the fulfillment of individual, collective and social projects," as stated in the Constitution.

For that reason, the plan addresses faster hiring processes; higher representation of young workers, and generating quality jobs that combine national and local interests.

Minister of Labor and Social Security Marta Elena Feitó recently affirmed that amidst the current epidemiological situation, it is essential to adjust hiring mechanisms, putting emphasis on the use of distance work and teleworking.

Making self-employment more flexible and paying performance-related results are other actions of the strategy, which provides guarantees for social protection.

All of these actions are intended to improve arrangements in social security; modifying pensions’ sliding scale, and matching working mothers’ treatment in all sectors.

In light of the obsolete registers currently in use, the digitalization of systems is one of the latest developments.

Cuban president Miguel Díaz-Canel stressed that the prolonged international crisis and the opinion of the population were taken into consideration during the discussion of the strategy, which allows for a greater association between science and academics on a development standpoint.

GOVERNMENTAL TRADE BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

Concern for the right of the citizen is inherent to Cuba’s governability, as the political will prioritizes individuals over the market.

The country had previously adopted 36 measures in the labor, salary and social security fields to prevent and fight COVID-19. Some of those measures included remote work, relocation of workers in other jobs, salary raises, and exemption from tax payment to 240,000 representatives of the non-state sector.

However, providing job and salary opportunities were devised long before the current epidemiological situation.

In 2008, first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party Raúl Castro stated that: "making coherent, steady and well-thought progress, until salary recovers its role and the standard of living of each person is directly related to the income legally received; that is, to the importance and amount of work provided to the society, is a strategic objective."

Díaz-Canel recently highlighted that the current strategy is based on the National Economic and Social Development Plan, the Conceptualization of the Economic and Social Model and the updating of the Guidelines – documents approved in 2016 during the seventh congress of the Cuban Communist Party.

The data provided by the National Statistics and Information Office shows that the average salary in Cuba has increased year after year since the abovementioned date.

According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the total number of workers in the state sector reaches about 2 million people, while there are over 613 thousand in the private or self-employed sector.

Cuban Tourism Attracts Special Attention

By Tino Manuel

HAVANA.- Tourism and its development plans attract special attention in Cuba’s governmental programs in spite of COVID-19, illustrated by a tabloid that is currently in circulation around the island.

The document, entitled ‘Summary of the economic-social strategy to support the economy and face the world crisis caused by COVID-19,’ covers all fields of Cuban society, where tourism receives top priority.

Health, social protection, state and private sectors, phases of recovery and the State Plan and Budget for 2021, are some of the topics included in the said document.

In relation to tourism, the text states that in spite of the slowdown in its growth rate, the sector continues to be the driving force for the development of the country. This comprehensive plan foresees fostering the certification of good practices linked to the control of COVID-19 through a regulation entitled ‘A Safer and Cleaner Tourism,’ granted by the ministries of Public Health and Tourism.

According to this document, there is plenty of space to be used by the national manufacturers in the provision of competitive and high-quality goods and services to meet the demands of the tourism sector, an essential source of foreign currencies that are addressed to development.

The document also underlines the importance of the readjustment of this sector to the new scenario and states the measures that the government will implement based on its recovery capacity, as well as the strategies to do so.

The said measures include promoting destination campaigns, the renovation of the Cuban tourist product, the improvement of its quality and the encouragement of travelers’ arrival.

Other measures in the document include improving communication; fostering international tourism in order to get the number of visitors reached in 2018; strengthening online sale channels, and concluding all hiring requests in Cubatravel, the Cuban tourism website.

Similarly, the text stresses the importance of identifying specialized tourism issuers, particularly in areas such as diving, fishing, nature trips and high potential markets, in addition to promoting the increase or opening of direct flights to different Cuban destinations.

Fostering the use of renewable sources; finding ways to make offers to the domestic market in foreign currencies, including trips abroad, are other topics that also appear in the document.
Omara Durand at the Peak of International Para Athletics

By Jhonah Díaz

After setting several records and achieving unmatched success, Cuban athlete Omara Durand is already considered a Paralympic sport legend, even though she still is on the road to stardom. There are sufficient grounds for acclaiming this sport star who, at the age of 28, continues to add achievements to her career, which fills her millions of fans with pride and hope.

After 12 years of supremacy on global tracks and as the renowned winner of the 100m, 200m and 400m races -- in the T-12 category for visually impaired athletes -- last September Duran was granted another award in recognition of her outstanding career. Without much difficulty, she headed the online vote of the International Paralympic Committee held on Twitter to select the most outstanding event attained by a Paralympic athlete in the last 10 years. Thus, thanks to the three gold medals reached in Río de Janeiro 2016, Durand, a native of the Santiago de Cuba province, beat British cyclist Sarah Storey in the final round by 499 votes to 229, according to the survey conducted by the Paralympic Games. “It is all the result of my hard work and dedication,” Durand told The Havana Reporter in an exclusive interview. “I am the result of the understanding and support of my parents, relatives and of course my coach Miriam Ferrer, as well as the rest of the officials of the Cuban sport,” she added. Before moving to the decisive round, the sprinter left other outstanding athletes behind, like Iranian weightlifter Siamand Rahman; Italian foil fencer Beatrice Bebe Vio; and Italian cyclist Alex Zanardi – the latter, in the semifinal round. Durand’s races on Brazilian soil were unforgettable: world records in 100 and 400 meters (11.40 and 51.71, respectively), in addition to a sensational 23.57 in 200 m – in which she also has the world record with 23.03.

Omara also acknowledged the work conducted by her guide, Yunior Kindelan, who also helped her reach remarkable success in 2019 after winning three gold medals in the VI Para-Pan-American Games held in Lima (Peru) and the World Athletic Championship held in Dubai (United Arab Emirates) for people with special needs. Thanks to the expertise of her coach Miriam Ferrer, the Cuban athlete has become a sprint legend and is venerated today as the female version of Usain Bolt in the world para-athletic field.

It is worth mentioning that she has not lost a single race since 2008, when she made her debut in the Beijing Paralympic Games. On that occasion, when she was just 18 years old, she was the specialists’ favorite; however, a muscle distension affected her psychologically and prevented her from reaching the podium. Durand started practicing sports when she was 7 years old. Her visual disability filled her world with frustration, shyness and obstacles. However, her congenital cataract – a condition that causes chronic myopia (which makes it impossible to see things that are far away clearly) and astigmatism (which prevents the eye from focusing) - did not put a damper on her hopes and today she has set an example for millions of people.

Cuban Greco-Roman Wrestlers Win Tickets to Tokyo

By Fidel Manzanares

The athletes of Cuba’s Greco-Roman wrestling team resumed their training with their sights set on the Olympic Games in Tokyo, rescheduled for July 23-August 8, 2021 after they were postponed due to COVID-19. In remarks to The Havana Reporter, the team manager Raúl Trujillo said that during quarantine, athletes followed the training program via internet, and after five months their health indicators are very good, according to the medical examination made by specialists.

One of the Cuban athletes hitting the headlines is Mijaín López, the three-time Olympic champion who Cuba has high hopes for during the event in Japan next year. “Mijaín creates a good impression. At 38, he is in excellent shape, has the required weight and stands out for his professionalism. We also have Ismael Borrero, another world champion and very experienced athlete,” Trujillo commented. After the pre-Olympic tournament in Ottawa, Canada, the entire Cuban team obtained tickets to Tokyo, which includes Luis Orta (60 kilogram division), Borrero (67), Yosvany Peña (77), Daniel Gregorich (87), Gabriel Rosillo (97) and López (130).

“The classic style wrestlers trust (their) talent and training because, in addition to having qualified, we have figures that stimulate competitiveness within the team,” the manager added. The International Federation of Associated Wrestling is currently organizing two world championships: one in November for the under-23 category in Finland, and the other in Serbia at the end of December for adult wrestlers. Working up to those events, training must be constant and the athletes recognize the importance of “shining” during this atypical year so as to make it to the Tokyo Olympic Games in excellent shape.

“Gregorich and Rosillo (21) will compete at the U23 World Wrestling Championships and they could surprise us in Tokyo; we have a lot of faith in them,” noted Trujillo, who also takes into consideration the strict health protocols to fight COVID-19.

Together with boxing, athletics and judo teams, Cuban wrestlers (free-style included) are on the front line that aims to boost the name of the Caribbean island during the world’s most important multi-sport event.
Potential Chaos of 2020 U.S. Elections

By Bienvenido AYALA

The whole world nervously awaits the results of the November 3 U.S. presidential elections, which very well might lead to widespread turmoil. Such statements have been made by several experts over the past few weeks, taking into consideration the state of the current Trump and Biden campaigns. One aspect that complicates this year’s elections is the massive use of mail-in voting. Chris Gagin, lawyer and advisor to Republicans for the Rule of Law organization, told The Hill. The "victory" on the night of the elections will be illusory the following days or weeks, because some states will count mail-in votes after counting the votes made at the polls in person. A poll revealed recently that only 22 percent of Republicans are planning to vote by mail, as compared to 72 percent of Democrats. This difference could give the illusion of Trump winning the elections that night, Gagin commented.

Something blatantly obvious about U.S. President Donald Trump is that he is now one of the most controversial personalities in the United States and many parts of the world. Many even consider him despicable. He has reacted inadequately in several respects. The environment is a clear example: since his arrival to power he has adopted measures and made remarks that leave the world perplexed, as was the decision announced on June 1, 2017 that the United States would formally begin to leave the Paris Treaty on climate change signed in 2015.

On the other hand, Trump's unfair and unprofessional response against racism and police brutality in several U.S. cities is another example of a conduct away from what a president should be like. The health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemics had already warned that he foresees fraud and mishandling of forest resources.

Referring to such possible chaos, the chief editor of The American Prospect, David Dayen, warned that some of the “worst examples” of elections and transitions in the country’s history could happen again during the 2020 elections, perhaps worse than ever before. The expert mentioned the presidential elections of November 7, 1876—the hardest-fought and most intense in the history of the United States—when Samuel J. Tilden defeated Republican candidate Rutherford B. Hayes.

Tilden had gotten 184 votes and Hayes 165, but 20 votes had not been counted and the dispute dragged on. The votes were from Florida, Louisiana and South Carolina. There was so much confusion that, after intense negotiations, the Democrats granted victory to Hayes, who took office on March 4, 1877. Another favorable element for chaos is the unsolved process of replacing the late Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a debate that has had a strong impact on the Senate.

In this context, on September 23 the Department of the Treasury announced a number of measures to tighten the blockade against Cuba. But this whole analysis refers to the high point of the November 3 elections: the race for the White House. The first for spots in the House of Representatives and Senate are characterized by similarly irregular conditions.

Anything can happen on November 3 and the result might not be as disputed as it was in 1876. However, there is no smoke without fire, as the saying goes.

Donald Trump's Clumsy Actions

By Roberto HERNÁNDEZ

In the middle of the pandemic, Trump refuses to comply with health measures while campaigning, and has done numerous proselytizing acts, even in closed spaces. Concerning this, the ABC News Chief White House Correspondent, Jonathan Karl, said recently that doing in situ reports of the Republican president’s acts during the pandemic is like “taking your entire family to Fallujah in the middle of the war.” He was thus referring to the Iraqi city where violent combats were waged during the U.S. attack of that country. Trump has also made “incursions” with regards to the COVID-19 vaccine, and democratic candidate Joe Biden has criticized him for not listening to scientists before making COVID-19-related decisions.

On September 16, the president repeatedly contradicted the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Robert Redfield, who he said was wrong about the chronogram for a possible vaccine against Coronavirus and the effectiveness of using face masks.

Trump reiterated in press conference that Redfield had made a “mistake” saying that the vaccine would not be available for the public in general until the middle of 2021, as the president wants to have it ready before the November 3 elections. Trump’s clumsiness in the international arena gets worse and worse since occupying the White House in January 2017. The irrational policy and unilateral sanctions against Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, China and Russia, the attacks against Palestine in the Middle East in alliance with Israel, his behavior at the United Nations against multilateralism and his verbal attacks even against his most loyal allies are some instances of the harm that the president has caused in this sensitive sector.

In spite of these and other errors, in recent weeks two members of the Swedish Parliament nominated the U.S. president to the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize, something that was strongly rejected by the international public opinion.

It is not yet clear whether or not the tycoon-president will be able to make true his dream of staying at the White House for another four years.