

B. Proceedings

Conference-Roundtable—Coronavirus and International Affairs: Interventions

Interventions are short essays and other writings prepared by Conference-Roundtable participants and contributors in the lead up to the event. They form an integral part of the Conference-RoundTable proceedings and were written with two principal objectives. The first was to develop a contemporaneous record of various aspects of the pandemic at a time when COVID-19's scope and effects were only becoming known. They were, in this sense, meant to bear witness to the events as they unfolded. The second was to supplement the oral presentations and discussions during the Roundtable event. The interventions were to provide foundational materials and background to inform the final discussions held during the course of the April 2020 videoconference portion of the Conference Roundtable events.

Three Countries, One Feeling and the COVID-2019 Crisis

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Human beings have experienced new challenges every day, and that has allowed us to evolve. I was asked to speak briefly to the current state of the challenge of COVID-19 in three countries of Latin America to keep their people a life and as safe as they can.

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One of the reasons is to plead of the awareness of this person. Another reason is that I have really good friends from those countries and I'm suffering from the spread of this virus in their home countries as in my home country. But the main reason to talk about this is to make the people remember that this is time to take care of each other and the people around us, because life is all that we have. Each human being must respect the right to be a life and health.

In this report, I'm going to talk about the situation in Panama, Peru, and Cuba. There is not my intention to compare the quality of the health care system but I'm going to make a comparison between those countries referring to the evolution and spread of the COVID-2019. Let's analyze the spread of these three countries.

At the beginning of March, the three countries didn't have any reported cases. From this point I intend to progress in the evolution of this critical situation in alternatives days, involving the mentioned countries.

On March 6th this apparent stability changed bringing for the people of Peru the first reported case and the start point of the unstoppable chain of infections. The first case turned out to be a Peruvian citizen who had recently visited some European countries.²

Panama for its part began to deal with this lethal challenge on March 9th. The Panamanian government were being taking different preventive measures to assure the population. One of those was to have control over each person arriving just from countries with high numbers of cases like China and Italy. However, the first case in Panama came from Spain and this person wasn't subject to the health systems control.³

² "Ministra Hinojosa pidió tener confianza en el Sistema de Salud tras confirmarse primer caso de coronavirus en Perú" (6 March 2020); available [<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/minsa/noticias/86983-ministra-hinojosa-pidio-tener-confianza-en-el-sistema-de-salud-tras-confirmarse-primer-caso-de-coronavirus-en-peru>].

³ Aleida Salmaniego, "Mujer de 40 años es el primer caso de coronavirus en el país," *La Prensa* (10 March 2020); available

Cuba on March 11th faced the tree first cases of COVID-19, those persons were tourists that arrived from Lombardy, which at that time was the region of Italy with the highest number of infections. In march 12th were reported the first Cuban citizen infected which was been on Italy previously with his wife who was tested negative.⁴

To March 11th, Peru already counted with 11 positives COVID-19 cases. To this, the Peruvian government establishes that people from Italy, Spain, France and, China will be isolated for 14 days, from the moment of departure from the aforementioned countries. This, due to the rise of coronavirus-infected in the country.⁵

Panama, just four days after having the first reported case, already had 36 positive cases for COVID-19, 33 Panamanians and three foreigners. The government with the fast spread prohibits the entry of flights from Europe and take other preventives measures like activities and social events suspended, temporarily suspend boarding and disembarking of cruise ships and Implement the placement of tents for care in areas with the highest influx of patients and thus avoid the accumulation of people in the areas where the greatest number of cases of COVID-19 have occurred.⁶

In March 16th, Peru has 86 cases tested positives for COVID-19. To avoid the spread of the virus, the Ministry of Health recommends to the population, in the context of the health emergency arranged by the Government, home isolation

[<https://www.prensa.com/impres/panorama/mujer-de-40-anos-es-el-primer-caso-de-coronavirus-en-el-pais/>].

⁴ “Pandemia de COVID-19 en Cuba;” available [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandemia_de_enfermedad_por_coronavirus_de_2020_en_Cuba].

⁵ “Gobierno anuncia aislamiento preventivo a viajeros provenientes de China, España, Francia e Italia” (11 March 2020); available [<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/minsa/noticias/108693-gobierno-anuncia-aislamiento-preventivo-a-viajeros-provenientes-de-china-espana-francia-e-italia>].

⁶ Gobierno de Panamá, COMUNICADO N° 7 (13 March 2020); available [<http://www.minsa.gob.pa/noticia/comunicado-ndeg-7>].

(quarantine) for 14 days. The Peruvian government the same day it is decreed in National Emergency for 15 days.⁷

On the same date, Panama has reported 69 COVID-19 cases with one fatal victim and implements the "Protégete Panama" sanitary hygiene plan, which consists of the application of measures, which were called rings, to confront the situation the country is facing before COVID-19.⁸

In Cuba, the sanitary authorities reported on March 20th that had been rise 21 cases positives for COVID-19. On this date the Cuban government announced the closure of the borders, understanding the serious consequences that would continue to receive foreign visitors. As it was supposed the first local transmission event happened, derivate in the following days, four relatives and a friend of a Cuban citizen infected, were positive for the coronavirus.⁹

Peru on March 21th had 318 cases tested positives and 5 deaths reported for COVID-19. Five days later the country counted 580 cases tested positives and 9 deaths.¹⁰

For the day March 23th Panama reported 345 confirmed cases and 6 deaths. With this increasing situation, the Panamanian government keeps taking measures like curfew and dry law making sure to enforce the most number of people

⁷ Government of Perú "Minsa: Casos confirmados por coronavirus COVID-19 ascienden a 86" (16 March 2020); available [<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/minsa/noticias/108958-comunicado-oficial-de-prensa-coronavirus-n-13>].

⁸ Government of Panama, "Los seis anillos del "Plan Protégete Panamá" (24 March 2020); available [<http://www.minsa.gob.pa/noticia/los-seis-anillos-del-plan-protegete-panama>].

⁹ "Cuba: primer caso de transmisión local del coronavirus" (30 March 2020); available [<https://oncubanews.com/cuba/cuba-primer-evento-de-transmission-local-del-coronavirus/>].

¹⁰ Government of Perú, "Minsa: Casos confirmados por coronavirus COVID-19 son 580 en Perú (Comunicado N° 34)" (26 March 2020); available [<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/minsa/noticias/111476-minsa-casos-confirmados-por-coronavirus-covid-19-son-580-en-peru-comunicado-n-34>].

insolated.¹¹ What is interesting is that all governments sought to apply similar measures—quarantines of some severity or other but largely similar to what had been applied in other states. That of the government of Panamá was typical:

La medida, apegada al plan “Protégete Panamá”, se establece para salvaguardar la paz y seguridad de toda la población a lo largo y ancho del país y se hace de forma progresiva como una medida previa a establecer una cuarentena nacional. De igual forma, se establece que la jornada laboral en el sector público será de 8:00 a.m. a 12:00 m.d; exceptuando los servidores que, por la naturaleza, de sus funciones deban mantenerse operativos.¹²

Despite the measures of each country take for avoiding the spread of the virus it was not sufficient. The data show that for the date March 31st, the number of cases had increased considerably as show below:

- Cuba 212 tested positive cases, 6 deaths.
- Peru 1 065 tested positive cases, 30 deaths.
- Panama 1 181 tested positive cases, 30 deaths.

Sadly, any of this government have the immediate solution in their hands. The solution most begins in the awareness of each citizen of these countries that even though the number of cases is going up, they don't understand that the virus evolution work through person to person and each time that they go out there is a high percentage of spread it.

Ever since the human being began to organize in society, he has ensured the safety of the places he considers his territories. As it is difficult to have consensus on the decisions to be taken in a society, society allowed to have people who direct those decisions. Since the beginning of this pandemic, we have

¹¹ Government of Panamá, “COMUNICADO No.25 Ministerio de Salud anuncia nuevas medidas de movilidad para combatir la propagación del COVID-19” (23 March 2020); available [http://www.minsa.gob.pa/noticia/comunicado-no25-ministerio-de-salud-anuncia-nuevas-medidas-de-movilidad-para-combatir-la].

¹² Ibid.

left all the responsibility in the governments without thinking that we have the greatest burden ourselves.

IF each person decided to appeal to their sense of humanity and assumed command of their territory to protect their health, it could be said that once we all agreed, we did something to safeguard the common good more precious, “**The life**”.

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