

Fruitful visit to South Africa by Cuban Deputy Health Minister



Pretoria, July 19 (RHC)-- Cuban Deputy Minister of Public Health, Alfredo González, met Thursday with the South African head of that ministry, Aaron Motsoaledi -- during a meeting in which they discussed the medical collaboration between both countries and its possible expansion.

The deputy minister met yesterday with Deputy Chancellor Lluwellyn Landers and with the Minister of the Presidency in charge of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Nkosozana Dlamini Zuma.

Gonzalez began his visit to South Africa in Cape Town on Sunday, where he attended the graduation of 57 South African doctors who studied in Cuba as part of a collaboration program promoted by the late presidents Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro.

As part of that idea, the training program for physicians from South Africa in Cuba emerged, backed by agreements between the Ministries of Health of both countries, signed in 1996.

Since then, young people from this Southern African nation have gradually joined the medical universities of Cuba to study for five years, after which they return to South Africa to complete the last year of studies.

This program began in 1997-98 with about 30 students per year and was significantly expanded in 2012 thanks to a new bilateral agreement. Currently 2,800 young South Africans are studying medicine in Cuba and 703 of them recently returned to complete their training period linked to local universities.

In his speech during the graduation ceremony of the 57 physicians in Cape Town, the vice minister said that during his stay in Cuba all South African students, along with those of other 120 nations, received training in teaching scenarios, under the principle of education at work.

This concept, he said, pursues the goal of a solid professional training and achieve the commitment of these students with their people from social, humanistic, ethical and revolutionary values, which correspond to the demands that the doctors of the 21st century have before them.

This program, González added, is a source of pride for the members of the faculty of Cuban universities for having contributed to the training of the health professionals of sister South Africa.

After his meeting with Minister Motsoaledi, González will hold a meeting with Cuban doctors who provide services in the province of Gauteng.

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