

UN says sanctions against Venezuela affects cancer patients



Approximately 190 cancer patients are on the waiting list to receive treatment abroad. | Photo: Minci

United Nations, July 22 (RHC)-- A group of rapporteurs and independent human rights experts of the United Nations denounced Wednesday that the economic sanctions imposed by the United States (US)

government on Venezuela put cancer patients at risk.

The expert group's statement alludes to the strict application of sanctions on the state-owned oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), which impacts hundreds of critically ill cancer patients, whose only hope for treatment has been to travel abroad.

"The lives of Venezuelan patients who have undergone transplants and are stranded in foreign countries are threatened, as well as those who are waiting to travel to undergo operations without which they would not survive", states the communiqué.

This situation arose after Washington denied control of the U.S. company Citgo Petroleum Corporation to the Venezuelan Government, an entity which, through the Simón Bolívar Foundation, managed the program for the care of cancer patients on a charitable basis.

"Faced with such severe restrictions, banks and private companies from third countries, fearful of involuntarily violating such sanctions, modified their positions and acted with caution in their operations with Venezuela", adds the text. A situation that, according to the experts, is known to the U.S. administration, as well as to other nations and entities that accept the illegal measures.

As a consequence, it is impossible to transfer money out of Venezuela and some patients have been left stranded in unfavorable conditions in the countries they went to for treatment.

Data provided by the experts add that approximately 190 cancer patients are on a waiting list to receive treatment abroad. Meanwhile, some 14 children, three of them infants, died between 2017 and 2020, waiting for treatment under the program.

"States have an obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of any person affected by a direct international action, including those outside their jurisdiction or effective control, no matter what their original intention was," the statement sentences.

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