

# *Latin American and Caribbean come together for good health*

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**At the VII CELAC Summit in Argentina, what they called the Latin American Medicines Agency seemed to gain shape.**

By Roberto Morejón

Convinced of the need to learn from the lessons left by the COVID-19 pandemic, Latin Americans and Caribbeans will create an aid mechanism to prevent another fatal contingency.

This can be seen in the agreements and proposals made at the seventh CELAC Summit in Argentina, where what was called the Latin American Medicines Agency seemed to be taking shape.

Mexico is the main promoter of the initiative, but more than a dozen countries are supporting it.

Considered by some governments as an interesting and useful project, it is based on the initial encouragement of Mexico, whose delegation at the CELAC meeting, headed by Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard, showed a work path.

The objectives are certain and even ambitious, as they are aimed at advancing health self-sufficiency and guaranteeing access to quality, safe and effective medicines.

With a foreseeable original meeting in February of Ebrard himself with interlocutors from the region, the offer is presented as a result of the Health Self-Sufficiency Plan prepared by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America.

ECLAC is based on the constitution of an alliance of solidarity between Latin American and Caribbean health agencies and industries.

There is the advantage that some of them have level 4 recognition, equivalent to the FDA, Food and Drug Administration of the United States.

Under this reality, the convergence of the referred entities and the outlining of a territorial homologation, now non-existent, would then remain.

This step would take place in an international context where the monolithic block of global pharmaceutical companies, based in the First World, is opposed to opening market access to foreign drugs.

If the Mexican proposal, supported by other countries, becomes a reality, Latin America and the Caribbean would benefit.

It would be at a time when Latin America and the Caribbean is the region in the world with the greatest reduction in life expectancy at birth as a result of the pandemic, with an average loss of 2.9 years in 2021, compared to 2019.

Nothing could be more timely than for CELAC member nations to reach agreements to provide each other with remedies, immunizers and other resources, for the good of the health of all.

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