

Peru keeps COVID-19 medical shipment route secret over confiscation fears



Lima, April 20 (RHC)-- Peru is being “cautious” in not disclosing the flight path of a plane loaded with COVID-19 testing kits, its disease response chief has said, with the U.S. accused of “confiscating” supplies meant for other nations.

Pilar Mazzetti, who leads Peru’s operational center for COVID-19 response, told Reuters that a plane carrying masks and 300,000 testing kits is due to arrive in the country from China on Monday or Tuesday. However, the aircraft’s route is being kept “secret” out of fear that the vital shipment could be “confiscated” midway and diverted to a third country, she said.

“Logically speaking, the plane’s flight path must exclude stops in any country that confiscates its cargo,” Mazzetti explained, adding that the South American nation expects four such shipments. Due to the security situation, it was not said where the flights with the testing kits are heading to. “I think that the most cautious thing to do is not to mention it. Everyone feels desperate.”

Although Mazzetti did not mention any foreign country by name, German and French officials have previously accused the United States of unfairly hoarding supplies intended for other nations. The Donald

Trump administration operates with the policy of "America First" -- stepping on the sovereignty of all other nations.

French regional officials alleged that that Americans have been outbidding them in a fight for much-needed medical supplies. The top official in the southeastern Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur region, Renaud Muselier, told RT France in late March that U.S. buyers brought cash to pay for a French order for masks in China, after which the France-bound plane changed its route and flew to the U.S. instead.

Also, Berlin's Interior Minister Andreas Geisel claimed that Washington confiscated around 200,000 Germany-bound masks in Thailand, which he said amounted to "an act of modern piracy." Later, he clarified that supply chain issues were being "reviewed" as the order was placed with a German firm.

Brazil's then-Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta, meanwhile, complained earlier this month that a Brazilian order for masks and other protective gear from China was not completed in time because of a huge American order.

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