

18 April 2020

**DECLARATION OF INTERCIENCIA ASSOCIATION ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN
LATINAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Pandemics do not respect borders. The boundaries between nation states are, however, the places where very different approaches are used to deal with the serious crises, such as COVID-19. *Interciencia Association*, which reunites associations for the advancement of science of different countries of the Americas, was founded precisely to focus on the importance of carrying out coordinated scientific actions in the region, on the basis that science and technology are very valuable tools for contributing toward the well-being and quality of life of people in all countries of the region.

Decades of efforts have been made so that in the region decisions are made based on science and technology. This motto is especially important in current situation where we see that different countries are adopting different strategies to confront this pandemic which oppose the rapid expansion of the virus and increase in risk which may affect negatively the economy.

In this context, we emphatically state that the best roadmap in decision making to be taken into account is to consider seriously and consistently the authorized opinion of international organizations such as World Health Organization and scientific experts in public health, epidemiology and virology, as well as economics and social sciences. The measures of isolation and social distancing, diagnostic tests in sufficient numbers, strengthening of health systems, and adequate working conditions are important steps in this direction. On the contrary, decisions based on simplistic ideas, such as recommending drugs of unproven efficacy and safety without appropriate controls and in unapproved clinical trials by the competent drug regulatory authorities., which do not consider associated risk, will worsen significantly the tragic outcome of this pandemic.

It is important and urgent that the countries adopt measures of social protection, which guarantee employment, income, and survival of the inhabitants, especially the most marginalized and poor. The pandemic poses serious economic consequences for the society and depends upon the leaders and authorities of the different countries, with the collaboration of all sectors of the society, the mission of finding the solutions to confront the grave crisis.

These difficult times emphasize the importance of public funds for health, epidemiological control, and scientific research on Sars-Cov2 and similar epidemics.

Similarly, the support for permanent quality scientific education and divulgation of science is essential so that the public understands the disease and its consequences as well as the mitigation measures.

We also reaffirm the need to coordinate policies and actions among all countries of the region. To this effect, the strong links already developed through scientific and technological cooperation provide a solid basis, available to every government. *Interciencia*

Association, in representation of the regional scientific community, commits its efforts to improve common well-being in this moment of sanitary, economic, social, and humanitarian crisis.

Finally, the regional cooperation in the Americas deserves a special mention. Even though this Declaration is focused on Latin America and the Caribbean, this pandemic affects severely Canada and the United States also. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Canadian Francophone Association for Science (ACFAS), which are members of *Interciencia Association*, have traditionally had strong relations with analogous scientific organizations, and this may serve as the basis for the use of science and technology globally in the region to confront this pandemic as well as in general use of science and technology for the benefit of the society.

INTERCIENCIA ASSOCIATION

Member associations:

American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

Asociación Argentina para el Progreso de la Ciencias (AAPC)

Asociación Boliviana para el Avance de la Ciencia (ABAC)

Asociación Colombiana para el Avance de la Ciencia (ACAC)

Asociación Panameña para el Avance de la Ciencia (APANAC)

Asociación Venezolana para el Avance de la Ciencia (ASOVAC)

Association Francophone pour le Savoir (ACFAS), Canadá

Consejo de Sociedades Científicas de Chile

Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONICIT), Costa Rica

Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT), México

Sociedade Brasileira para o Progresso da Ciência (SBPC)