



## VRIC MEDICAL DIPLOMACY

### February 2021

The following is a summary of open-source media reporting on the VRIC's medical diplomacy in Latin America and the Caribbean in February 2021. This is not a complete list of media reports on the VRIC's medical diplomacy in Latin America but are some of the most relevant articles and reports selected by SFS researchers and fellows. The monitor does source a limited amount of media reports from state-owned or -controlled media outlets, which are carefully selected and solely intended to report on news that is not reported on by other media and is relevant for understanding VRIC influence in the region. This report is produced as part of our VRIC Monitor published monthly by the Center for a Secure Free Society (SFS), a non-profit, national security think tank based in Washington D.C.

- The Government of Bolivia reported that it has reached an agreement with the Government of China for the acquisition of 500,000 covid-19 vaccines from the pharmaceutical company Sinopharm. - [CNN en Español on 11-FEB \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- The presidential candidate of Correísmo and winner of the first electoral round in Ecuador, Andrés Arauz, affirmed today that he is advancing in negotiations with Russia for an eventual agreement that allows his country to access "millions of doses" of the Sputnik V vaccine. In addition, he assured that he was also talking with other laboratories to advance towards access to immunizers and face the health crisis that Ecuador is experiencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. - [Grupo La Provincia on 09-FEB \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Iran launched a coronavirus inoculation campaign among healthcare professionals with recently delivered Russian Sputnik V vaccines as the country struggles to stem the worst outbreak of the pandemic in the Middle East with its death toll nearing 59,000. - [Associated Press on 09-FEB](#)
- Venezuela will receive the first 100,000 doses of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine this week, Nicolas Maduro said. - [Reuters on 09-FEB](#)
- Peru launched its COVID-19 vaccination campaign with newly arrived doses of China's Sinopharm vaccine, as the South American country struggles to control a fierce second wave of infections that has forced a lockdown in the capital, Lima. - [Reuters on 09-FEB](#)

- State media reports the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) is in talks with Turkey on the joint production of the Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine, Russian Ambassador to Ankara, Alexei Yerkhov told Sputnik in an interview. In late January, the RDIF, which promotes Sputnik V in international market, signed an agreement with a leading Turkish pharmaceuticals developer to produce the Russian vaccine in Turkey and started the transfer of technologies. - [Urdu Point on 08-FEB](#)
- Panama's government is seeking 3 million doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against COVID-19 for 1.5 million people, hoping to receive them by March, a letter of intent signed by the country's Health Ministry showed. - [Reuters on 04-FEB](#)
- Nicaragua's government said that it had approved Russia's Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use. - [Associated Press on 03-FEB](#)
- State media reports that the Head of Pasteur Institute of Iran declared that the start of third phase of double-blind clinical trial of Iranian-Cuban COVID-19 vaccine in future weeks. The joint vaccine is produced in both countries, Ali-Reza Biglari told reporters at a virtual meeting. First, the vaccine is transported from Cuba to Iran, second Iran tests its quality, then it will be presented to people as the time is possibly slated for June, Biglari said. - [IRNA on 03-FEB](#)
- Mexico has approved emergency use of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine after signing a contract for millions of doses of the product, Deputy Health Minister Hugo Lopez-Gatell said. - [Reuters on 02-FEB](#)
- Colombia is in talks with Russia's Gamaleya Institute about acquiring doses of the Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine, its health Minister said, but is not rushing a deal because of existing vaccine provision deals with pharmaceutical companies. - [Reuters on 01-FEB](#)
- Jamaica has started discussions with China, Cuba, and India about obtaining COVID-19 vaccines from those countries when they become available. Health Minister Dr. Christopher Tufton said the Government has met with the respective ambassadors and expressed interest in obtaining the vaccines as Jamaica looks outside of the COVAX facility for additional options. - [Jamaica Observer on 26-JAN](#)
- Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro, a longtime China skeptic, thanked Beijing for rapidly approving the export of active ingredients for local COVID-19 vaccine production, as his government scrambles to secure scarce shots. - [Reuters on 25-JAN](#)
- Russia will supply Mexico with 24 million doses of the Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine over the next two months, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said after a phone call with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin. - [Reuters on 25-JAN](#)
- Russia's sovereign wealth fund said that Paraguay had become the eighth country outside Russia to approve the Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine, developed by Moscow's Gamaleya Institute, for domestic use. The Russian Direct Investment Fund said the vaccine had

been granted emergency use authorization by Paraguay's regulators, with the decision based on clinical trial data provided by Moscow. - [Reuters on 15-JAN](#)

- Venezuela's health ministry has registered Russia's Sputnik V vaccine for use against COVID-19 under an emergency use authorization procedure, vaccine developers said. - [Reuters on 13-JAN](#)
- Bolivia's state agency for medicines and health technologies (AGEMED) has registered Russia's Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine under emergency use authorization. The approval was based on the results of Phase III clinical trials in Russia, without additional trials in Bolivia. - [Pharmafile on 07-JAN](#)