



VRIC MEDICAL DIPLOMACY

May 2021

The following is a summary of open-source media reporting on the VRIC's medical diplomacy in Latin America and the Caribbean in May 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.

- Maduro said 1.3 million vaccines from China had arrived in the South American country, which is poised to start a vaccination campaign in the coming days. - [U.S. News on 24-MAY](#)
- The New England Patriots' team plane has delivered 500,000 Chinese-made COVID vaccines to El Salvador — and in the process inadvertently inserted itself into a testy, geopolitical fight for influence in Latin America. - [NBC on 21-MAY](#)
- Brazil will receive ingredients from China to produce up to 25 million doses of the AstraZeneca and Sinovac COVID-19 vaccines early next week, Health Ministry and political officials said. - [Reuters on 17-MAY](#)
- A batch of 400,000 doses of the Russian Sputnik V COVID-19 jab has been delivered to Bolivia, the Telesur TV channel announced. - [TASS on 16-MAY](#)
- A new batch of 500,000 Sputnik V vaccines arrived in Argentina on May 13 on an Aerolíneas Argentinas flight from Moscow. The country has already received more than 12.6 million doses to immunize its population. - [Argentina's Ministry of Health on 13-MAY \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Maduro said the single-dose Russian Sputnik Light vaccine will soon arrive in Venezuela as the country struggles with rising cases of coronavirus. - [Reuters on 12-MAY](#)

- Russian authorities have been having so many problems producing second doses of their Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine that Russia probably will be unable to supply enough to people who already got the first dose, Mexican officials said. - [Associated Press on 11-MAY](#)
- Chinese pharmaceutical giant Sinopharm will jointly produce its COVID-19 vaccine jabs with Argentine companies, the Chinese Embassy in Argentina said. Chinese Ambassador to Argentina Zou Xiaoli said the two sides are discussing technical details of producing the vaccines and will start the process as soon as possible. - [CGTN on 04-MAY](#)
- As Bolivia struggled late last year to secure deals with large drug firms to supply COVID-19 vaccines, the incoming president, Luis Arce, turned to Russia for help. - [Reuters on 01-MAR](#)
- Uruguay has weathered the COVID-19 pandemic better than most of its Latin American neighbors. Uruguayan President Luis Lacalle Pou credits this to vaccines and responsible governance that distributed the doses. So far over 32 percent of Uruguayans have been fully inoculated. Many of the vaccines in Uruguay were the China-made Sinovac. - [CGTN on 29-APR](#)
- Ecuador's President-Elect Guillermo Lasso has sent a letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin, asking him to help the South American country purchase COVID-19 vaccines. - [Vestnik Kavkaza on 27-APR](#)
- The president of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, thanked his Cuban counterpart, Miguel Díaz-Canel, by phone, for sending a thousand health workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. - [14ymedio on 27-APR \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- An official from Brazil's National Health Surveillance Agency (Anvisa) said at a congressional hearing that approval of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine by other countries does not mean that it meets Brazilian regulatory requirements. Gustavo Mendes, Anvisa's drug manager, stated that the agency had not received enough data to approve the Sputnik V vaccine. - [Reuters on 27-APR \(content in Spanish\)](#)
- Iran started the third phase of the human trial of the Soberana-02 coronavirus vaccine, jointly developed with Cuba. Manufactured by Cuba's Finlay Vaccine Institute and Pasteur Institute of Iran, the vaccine is a conjugate vaccine with two injectable doses. It consists of the receptor-binding domain of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein conjugated chemically to tetanus toxoid, IRIB reported. - [Tehran Times on 26-APR](#)
- Iran-Cuba jointly manufactured COVID-19 vaccine will be mass-produced in June and will be supplied to the market under the Health Ministry, Head of Pasteur Institute of Iran Alireza Biglari said. - [Fars News on 26-APR](#)
- After months of silence about the COVID-19 vaccine procurement processes announced by the government in January, Nicaraguan Health Minister Martha Reyes said they have

purchased vaccines from the Russian Federation. - [Confidential on 21-APR \(content in Spanish\)](#)