



## **VRIC MEDICAL DIPLOMACY**

**April 2021**

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

- Russia has been trying to get its coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V into Brazilian arms for months, and been repeatedly frustrated by legal, regulatory and possibly even diplomatic obstacles. That began to change as the South American nation played catch-up in the global race to snap up shots. - [AP News on 12-APR](#)
- Venezuela has paid \$64 million, half of the required amount, for doses it is set to receive through the global COVAX program, Vice President Delcy Rodriguez announced on state television. - [Reuters on 10-APR](#)
- Venezuela has the capacity to produce the experimental Cuban coronavirus vaccine candidate known as Abdala at a Caracas biomedical facility, Vice President Delcy Rodriguez said. - [Reuters on 08-APR](#)
- Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said he planned to visit Moscow and China as part of his government's efforts to ensure that its supply agreements for vaccines against COVID-19 are honored. - [Reuters on 06-APR](#)
- El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele said that China will donate 150,000 Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine doses to the Central American nation, on top of the 2 million Sinovac jabs his government already purchased. - [Reuters on 04-APR](#)

- State media reports the expectations to continue mass vaccination in Panama focus on Russia's Sputnik V vaccine, whose emergency use was approved by the Department of Pharmacies and Drugs at the Ministry of Health (MINSAs). - [Prensa Latina on 02-APR](#)
- The Chinese government helped Trinidad and Tobago in its COVID fight and has promised to donate 100,000 Sinopharm vaccines to this country. This promised donation followed a phone call from the President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping to Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley at the Diplomatic Centre on March 16. - [Trinidad & Tobago Guardian on 30-MAR](#)
- State media reports Antigua and Barbuda's health ministry has registered Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against the coronavirus, the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) said. - [Sputnik on 26-MAR](#)
- A new batch of vaccines developed by Chinese pharmaceutical companies Sinopharm and Sinovac was delivered on March 18th by China Eastern Airlines from Beijing to the Dominican Republic, according to the Shanghai-based airline. - [World Airline News on 25-MAR](#)
- Amid the ongoing race to dominate the COVID-19 vaccine uptake, Russia and China have been actively promoting their respective vaccines abroad through state-funded outlets and diplomatic accounts. The DFRLab found that, while Kremlin-funded Russian media outlets put forward negative narratives about Western vaccines in an attempt to undermine trust, Chinese state-backed media outlets have focused more on promoting the positive image of the country's own vaccines as well as its role as a benevolent leader combatting COVID-19 internationally. - [DFR Lab on 25-MAR](#)