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# **COMPENDIUM OF NEWS SHEETS**

## **March 2020**

Numbers 291 - 301

[291 - Dominican Republic is the fourth country in Latin America with the lowest crime rate, according to study](#)

[292 - Dominican Embassy in Canada celebrates Independence and concludes successful DGA's art exhibition](#)

[293 - Diplomats highlight progress in the fight against inequalities](#)

[294 - Danilo Medina awards Medal of Merit to 13 women for their contributions to society](#)

[295 - INFOTEP announces Dominican Republic will host WorldSkills Americas 2020](#)

[296 - Danilo: Dom. Rep. among 4 nations that has improved the most population's integral development](#)

[297 - Dominican Republic moves forward in comprehensive care for the elderly population](#)

[298 - Dominican economy grew 4.7% in January 2020](#)

[299 - The Dominican Government adopts additional measures for the prevention of the coronavirus disease](#)

[300 - Dominican Republic's progress in logistics and cargo transportation is highlighted](#)

[301 - Dominican Republic shuts borders, schools and non-essential businesses, and prohibits mass gatherings](#)



## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 291

### **Dominican Republic is the fourth country in Latin America with the lowest crime rate, according to study**

Santo Domingo.- The Dominican Republic is currently the fourth country in Latin America with the lowest crime rate, according to studies by the organization Insight Crime, which were presented by President Danilo Medina during his annual accountability speech to the nation.

The president said that “in 2012 the country had a rate of 23.4 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants, which has been reduced year after year nonstop. In 2017, it was reduced to 15.3 and today it is already at 9.6”.

The president attributed the results of this study “to the coordinated and reinforced work of our security forces.”

“We are no longer the country we were eight years ago,” the president added in his speech.

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## NEWS SHEET

### EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 292

## **Dominican Embassy in Canada celebrates Independence and concludes successful DGA's art exhibition**

Ottawa, Canada. - With a reception held on the occasion of the 176th anniversary of the National Independence, the Embassy of the Dominican Republic in Canada ended, in the same act, the art exhibition "Modernity and contemporaneity in Dominican art" of the Fundación Patrimonio Cultural of the General Directorate of Customs (DGA), in display in Ottawa from February 20 to March 3, organized by the Embassy and the Fundación Patrimonio Cultural, with the collaboration of the Ministry of Tourism through its Tourism Promotion Office in Montreal. The reception took place at the Ottawa City Hall.

On behalf of Global Affairs Canada, were present, among others, the Chief of Protocol, Stewart Wheeler, and the Director for Central America and the Caribbean, Sylvia Cesaratto, who in her speech highlighted the excellent bilateral relations that both nations have maintained since they were established in 1954.

In his speech, Ambassador Pedro Vergés listed some of the activities carried out by the Embassy during 2019, which included a business meeting with entrepreneurs from the province of Quebec, crafts exhibitions, a Dominican film festival, a gastronomic festival, a Dominican book exhibit, a seminar on the Elimination of Violence against Women held in coordination with the Senate of Canada, and agreements and events held with the Canadian universities Carleton, McGill and Concordia, as well as with the UNAM campus in Canada.

While highlighting the recognition, by international organizations, of the achievements made by the Dominican Republic, the Dominican ambassador cited the country's high economic growth, the increased investment in education and the eradication of illiteracy, in addition to the notable improvements in the health system and road infrastructure. Regarding the bilateral relations with Canada, the diplomat said "they are Extraordinary" while also mentioning a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding on trade and investment signed between the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs. "The Dominican government, like the Canadian counterpart, works always in the pursuit of improving the living conditions of our citizens and in the ever more intense promotion of the democratic system and respect for human rights," said Ambassador Vergés to those present at the event.

During the reception, the guests enjoyed a presentation of merengue and bachata dance, as well as the exquisite Dominican cuisine by tasting traditional dishes prepared by the Dominican restaurant Bistro Alegría, and national drinks thanks to the collaboration of the Dominican brands Oliver and Oliver, Barceló, Macorix, Cerveza Presidente and Canita Beer. Cortes Hermanos and Procigar also collaborated.

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 293

### **Diplomats highlight progress in the fight against inequalities**

Diplomatic representatives accredited in the country highlighted the achievements of the Dominican Republic with its programs to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and made emphasis in the progress made in such important sectors as education and health.

Mauricio Ramírez Villegas, Representative of the United Nations Organization (UN); Gianluca Grippa, Ambassador of the European Union, and Ghaleb Moussa Abdallah, Apostolic Nuncio of the Vatican, stressed that the panorama presented by the country coincides with the data handled by international organizations.

They agreed that the figures for macroeconomic growth and poverty reduction presented by President Danilo Medina in his accountability speech are real and show the good performance of the current government administration.

Ramírez Villegas considered that the figures presented by the President speak for themselves. "There have been some very important progress that we recognize from our organization regarding programs aimed at the eradication of poverty.

"There have been a number of actions in recent years that have improved human development indicators, the country's productive capacity," he said.

He said that "without a doubt there has been an economic growth shown by the country, the economic stability that allows us to continue moving forward in the path of sustainable development, which is mainly what we are supporting through the 2030 agenda of the Sustainable Development Objectives".

While Gianluca Grippa, Ambassador of the European Union, considered interesting and impressive everything that has been achieved during the almost eight years of President Danilo Medina.

"The president took us on a tour of everything his Government has done from 2012 to the present date, and everything that has been achieved with very specific data. He touched all the important issues, but it is the political forces that have to evaluate whether he should have touched other points," he said of Medina's accountability speech.

He also mentioned that there are challenges to consider, among others, climate change, migratory flows and others that he mentioned will be in the next government's agenda.

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## NEWS SHEET

### EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 294

## **Danilo Medina awards Medal of Merit to 13 women for their contributions to society**

Santo Domingo.- The President of the Dominican Republic, Danilo Medina, awarded the Medal of Merit to volleyball player Prisilla Rivera, to the judge of the Supreme Court of New York, Lourdes M. Ventura, and to 11 other Dominican women who have stood out in categories such as sports, politics, justice and arts. The thirteen medals of merit were awarded by the Decree 98-20, which grants them in recognition to their outstanding roles in Dominican society.

In the business category, Medina awarded the medal to Patricia de Moya, for her first product, Revista Mercado, a magazine that leads in the Dominican Republic's business publications segment. Mary Kasse was also recognized for her political work that has allowed her to occupy various positions until reaching a membership within the Central Committee of the PLD since 2000. In sports, Prisilla A. Rivera Brens, captain of the Queens of the Caribbean, was recognized for being part of the National Volleyball Team since 2001.

Within the legal profession, Mercedes Lora was honored, considered as one of the lawyers who are more knowledgeable of laws related to the protection of women's rights. As a professional in Sciences, Agripina Ramírez was chosen, who currently has the only PhD in the Dominican Republic in Biodiversity and Environmental Management. While Rhadys Iris Abreu Blondet, was selected within the legal profession for her performance as judge of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights from 2007 to 2012 and her diplomatic career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Colonel Ana Matos, first in charge of Gender at the Navy, received the merit as a military professional for contributing from that position in promoting the role of women in the Armed Forces and in the adaptation of military uniforms for women.

Tamarah Santana was chosen for her community work. Iluminada Virgen Concepción received the merit in the Rural Teacher category. In the philanthropic division, the medal was awarded to Gianni Paulino, who promotes an active and inclusive role for seniors. María Altagracia Tejada was chosen in the Rural Woman category due to her efforts pursuing the well-being of her community. She has participated in the creation of cultural venues such as Yokamba Academy, which impacts more than 300 children and adolescents with limited resources. Germana Quintana was recognized in Arts. Her career began more than 45 years ago, she has been a winner on several occasions of the Talía, El Dorado, Casandra and Soberano awards. As a leading professional in the diaspora, the award was presented to Lourdes M. Ventura, who on January 1, 2020 became the first descendant of Dominican emigrants to hold the position of Judge of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, in the 11th Judicial District-Queens County.

The event was led by the Dominican president, the first lady Cándida Montilla de Medina and the Vice President of the Dominican Republic Margarita Cedeño de Fernández.

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 295

### **INFOTEP announces Dominican Republic will host WorldSkills Americas 2020**

Santo Domingo.- The National Technical-Vocational Training Institute (INFOTEP) announced on Thursday that the Dominican Republic will host, for the first time in history, the WorldSkills Americas 2020 international competition, to be held from July 20 to 24 this year.

The competition will be attended by at least 200 representatives from 15 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including 12 participants from the National Technical-Vocational Training Institute (INFOTEP), said its General Director Rafael Ovalles.

He explained that the competitions, which are held every two years since 1950, will be held at the headquarters of the Regional Central, in Santo Domingo, and at the School of Hospitality, Gastronomy and Pastry of the institution, in Higüey, province of La Altagracia, in twelve lines of work.

He explained that INFOTEP was selected as the headquarters of the WSA 2020 because it has all the characteristics required by the organization that promotes the event, including national and international prestige, physical and technological infrastructure with high degree of excellence, organizational structure with experience and knowledge in event planning.

Also, a teaching staff with the capacity to perform the role of evaluators and extensive experience of participation in previous competitions of the WorldSkills Americas.

The general director of INFOTEP said that the competition fosters the technical-pedagogical exchange between participants, teachers and competitors, and constitutes a favorable venue for alliances and cooperation.

Ovalles said this international competition provide process indicators that allow for a better evaluation of the conditions of technical professional training and generate information about the country's ranking in terms of the quality of its teachers and graduates.

Likewise, he said, they provide an ideal place for the promotion of the culture, customs and peculiarities of the host country, which, this time, is the Dominican Republic.

#### Areas of competition

Welding, Body Repair, Electronics, Automobile Paint, Refrigeration, Automobile Technology, Clothing Making, Restaurant Service, Pastry, Cooking, Hotel Reception and Barismo, are the competition areas of the participants in the international tournament, whose host is INFOTEP, and in which they will demonstrate "their technical mastery and work skills".

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 296

### **Danilo: Dom. Rep. among 4 nations that has improved the most population's integral development**

President Danilo Medina said that in seven and a half years of his two administrations poverty was reduced by half in the Dominican Republic.

He said that one million 800 thousand Dominicans managed to overcome the poverty line in seven and a half years and that the percentage of extreme poverty of 9.9% fell to 2.4%, which means that 700 thousand people came out of extreme poverty .

In his last accountability speech to the National Assembly, Medina said those figures are endorsed by ECLAC in its Latin America Economic Outlook 2019 report.

Medina said the country ranks 7 with the lowest poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean. "Reducing poverty by half in seven years, that is change, that is true change," he said.

He said that one of his proposals when he assumed the Government was that economic growth be equitable and that he has managed to reduce inequality.

"From 2012 to 2019, all this progress made the Dominican Republic rise eight positions in the Human Development Index classification. That means that the Dominican Republic is now among the four nations of the world, listen well, of the world! in which the integral development of the population improved the most in recent years," he said.

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## NEWS SHEET

### EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 297

## **Dominican Republic moves forward in comprehensive care for the elderly population**

Mexico.- The international expert on elderly population and a member of the Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Sandra Huenchuan, affirmed that the Dominican Republic is making progress at an enormous rate on the issue of comprehensive care to the senior population.

Huenchuan, an ECLAC specialist in the subject of aging: human rights, social services and public policies, said that in addition to being one of the countries that has improved the most and in the shortest time, in the capacity of care and attention to the elderly population, it has a marked growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the region.

The expert's statement was made in the framework of the course "Comprehensive Care for Seniors from the Perspective of Healthy Aging" held in Mexico, in which the National Council for Seniors (Conape) had an outstanding participation.

During her presentation, Dr. Hunchaun highlighted the progress made by the country in the implementation of public policies in favor of the elderly, which is reflected by the full enjoyment of human rights within the senior population of the Dominican Republic.

The activity was carried out in Mexico, under the sponsorship of the Secretariat of Social Inclusion and Welfare of Mexico City and the ECLAC subregional headquarters in that country, and it intended to optimize institutional practice and facilitate a positive change in attitudes and care given to the elderly, for which Dr. Sandra Huenchuan was emphatic, highlighting the Service, Training and Recreation (SECARE) model carried out by the Dominican Republic.

She also indicated that the elderly in this country have a person-centered attention, emphasizing the importance of a clear political will in favor of strengthening institutions in this area, as is the case of the Dominican Republic, where President Danilo Medina implements in his new management model a favorable system for the elderly population in its government goals.

On behalf of Nathali María, Director of Conape, attended Diana Mejía, who is in charge of Public Policies at the institution, and she spoke on the new concept of care for older adults, highlighting how the country establishes the National System of Integral Development for this population, whose mission is to achieve an active, productive, inclusive and protected aging, through the implementation of this management model.

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 298

### **Dominican economy grew 4.7% in January 2020**

The Central Bank (BCRD) indicated that the Monthly Economic Activity Indicator (IMAE) shows that the economy continues to record a favorable performance, exhibiting a year-on-year growth of 4.7% in the month of January 2020, through a press release.

The growth has occurred despite the adverse effects that have occurred in the international and domestic environment of high uncertainty and negative expectations, largely due to the coronavirus.

The economic activities with the greatest contribution to growth in January 2020 were: construction, financial services, health, energy and water, free zone manufacturing, commerce, agriculture, real estate and rental activities, among other services.

The behavior of the economy is explained by the lagged effect of the monetary stimulus measures adopted in the middle of last year, which consisted in a 100 points reduction in the monetary policy rate and the release of more than 34,000 million Dominican pesos from the legal reserve to be loaned to the productive sectors at a maximum fixed rate of 9.0% and for a term of six years, which contributed to the private sector's credit expansion of more than 128,000 million Dominican pesos at the end of 2019 .

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 299

### **The Dominican Government adopts additional measures for the prevention of the coronavirus disease**

Santo Domingo.- The Dominican Republic has announced the following measures to address the spread of the COVID-19 virus:

As of 6:00 a.m., 16 March 2020, all flights to and from Europe, China, South Korea, and Iran are suspended for one month.

All passengers arriving from other destinations who in the previous two weeks have been in one of the countries from which flights have been suspended will be quarantined.

All Dominican citizens who have been in a country with community spread of the virus must remain in self-isolation at home for 15 days after their return.

The arrival of all cruise ships at any port or coast of the Dominican Republic is suspended indefinitely.

The health protocol for access to the country has been placed under the command of medics from the Armed Forces and the Police, who will support the work of the Public Health Ministry to handle the health declarations of each passenger and the taking of temperatures at points of entry.

All Dominican students who return to the country due to the suspension in teaching abroad must remain in self-isolation at home for 15 days after their return.

All Dominican students who have visited a country with community spread of the virus must remain in self-isolation at home for 15 days after their return.

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 300

### **Dominican Republic's progress in logistics and cargo transportation is highlighted**

Santo Domingo.- Yesterday, the Executive Director of the Dominican Port Authority highlighted the progress made in logistics and cargo transportation, maritime connectivity, and port infrastructure of the national system, and stated that these achievements contribute to the development and growth of the economy, and to consolidate the country as a Caribbean HUB.

According to Víctor Gómez Casanova, the notable increase of 55.70 percent registered in the handling of transshipment and/or transit cargo in the last three years, as well as the growth of 19.12 percent experienced in metric tons of cargo through specialized ports and terminals, helps to strengthen the competitiveness of the Dominican economy.

In that sense, the head of Autoridad Portuaria explained that the movement of containers, represented in its unit of measurement "Teus", also registered a notable increase of 22.64% at the end of 2019, reflected in 1.8 million compared to 1.4 million from 2016.

"In general, the results show that our country exhibits a progressive upward trend in maritime connectivity, making us a more competitive economy in terms of trade facilitation," said Gómez Casanova while heading the port sector chapter of the Transport & Logistics Market Summit 2020, with a presentation titled "República Dominicana navegando viento en popa", which was sponsored by the business group Mercado Media Network. He said it has been shown that the country strengthens and optimizes its conditions more and more.

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## NEWS SHEET EMBASSY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN CANADA

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No. 301

### **Dominican Republic shuts borders, schools and non-essential businesses, and prohibits mass gatherings**

Santo Domingo.- In order to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, President Danilo Medina announced that tomorrow he will send a request to the National Congress to declare a state of national emergency.

Likewise, the indicated other measures that will come into force at 6 a.m. on Thursday 19, such as shutting the country's borders by land, sea and air, for the next 15 days, and the suspension of classes in all school and university centers, until Monday, April 13.

“From that moment, only the entry of ferry flights will be allowed for the departure of foreign citizens who want to return to their countries and the arrival of planes, cargo ships and fuel to guarantee supplies to the population,” said the head of state.

In the same way, following the protocols of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the practices underway in different countries, the Dominican government suspended events and mass gatherings of all kinds for 15 days.

“In the case of restaurants, only carry-out and home delivery of food will be allowed,” said the president. Flea markets throughout the national territory and binational markets in the border area were also suspended, also political campaigns rallies and caravans, as well as the government’s inaugurations events. In addition, commercial activities were suspended for the next 15 days, with the exception of those that are dedicated to basic needs for the population: supermarkets, grocery stores, fuel stations and pharmacies, among other establishments. “Public and private medical service centers and medical laboratories are also authorized to operate normally.”

Throughout the Public Administration, employees who are over 60 years of age and have any health condition such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular or respiratory diseases, must remain at home for the duration of the crisis. “The rest of the employees will alternate attendance at 50% per week, except for the heads of the institutions and those that are essential, unless someone with symptoms of the coronavirus is detected.”

The President of the Republic asked all productive sectors, in all cases where possible, to implement working from home for at least 15 days.

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