

# Dr Roberto Morales Ojeda Minister of Public Health of Cuba

Minister of Public Health of Cuba, Roberto Morales Ojeda is presiding over the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly this week. He was designated President during the meeting's opening session.

The presidency of the World Health Assembly rotates annually among the 6 regions of WHO. This year, is the turn of the Region of the Americas. Morales Ojeda was proposed as a candidate and was accepted by WHO Member States during the opening plenary. It is the first time Cuba has occupied the position.

Morales Ojeda, who has been minister since 2010, said he would try to ensure the Health Assembly is able to complete its agenda, that discussions are thorough, and that the necessary consensus is reached to effectively address the public health challenges being addressed worldwide.

Echoing the central theme of this year's Health Assembly, Morales Ojeda said countries around the world—including his own--face health challenges as a result of climate change.

Noting Cuba's tradition of providing health cooperation abroad, Morales Ojeda confirmed that the country currently has some 50 000 health personnel—including 25 000 doctors--working in 65 countries around the world. He said other countries can learn from Cuba's efforts in the areas of human resources training and health systems strengthening.

He also noted Cuba's interest in continuing its collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and WHO in the development of research projects.

## **Background**

Born in the province of Cienfuegos, Cuba, Morales Ojeda holds a medical degree with a speciality in comprehensive and general medicine as well as a master's in Public Health and other courses in Health administration. Before becoming Minister of Public Health, he served as vice-minister of health, provincial director of health and municipal director of health. He has been a member of Cuba's National Assembly of Popular Power since 2008, along with other positions.

