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Venezuela: Update On Cholera

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On Aug. 12, following an outbreak of cholera which resulted in at least 20 deaths during the previous two weeks, Health Minister Rafael Orihuela said that "cholera will not be eradicated in a month or two, or even in a year or two. The epidemic will last between two and seven years. We will try to control it, but to say the epidemic can be eliminated rapidly would be lying." By mid-August, cholera had affected about 1,340 people and caused 50 deaths. The majority of the cases have been reported in the states of Zulia, where it has particularly affected the Guajiro indigenous community, and Amacuro, where 16 members of the Warao indigenous community have died from the disease during the last month. Orihuela added that the government recently received a $184 million loan from the World Bank for a program to combat endemic diseases, including cholera, malaria, yellow fever, tuberculosis, and leprosy. (Sources: Notimex, 08/04/92, 08/11/92; Agence France-Presse, 08/05/92, 08/07/92, 08/11/92, 08/13/92)

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