

### Could you introduce yourself in a few words?

I am a **Doctor in virology** graduated from Paris XII University in 1993. My professional career led me to study viruses at the Pasteur Institute of French Guyana, at Ohio State University in the United States and at Franceville International Center for Medical Research in Gabon. I then headed for 5 years the Pasteur Institute in Bangui in the Central African Republic. Since September 1, 2014, I have been the director of the Pasteur Institute in French Guyana.



### First of all, how are you Mirdad?

I am fine despite the serious concerns about the current health situation. The Pasteur Institute is very mobilized by this outbreak and our institute is currently the only one capable of conducting screening in French Guyana. I am in constant contact with the services of the Regional Health Agency (ARS), and the services of the Prefecture. For the rest, my closed ones are doing well, and they calmly live this unprecedented situation of confinement like a good part of humanity.

### What is the current situation in French Guyana?

As I speak to you (March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020), there were no reported casualties and no serious cases hospitalized in intensive care. Apart from imported cases, we have little secondary transmission and no native outbreak. Containment measures were taken very early on March 17<sup>th</sup> at the same time as mainland France, and a curfew is in effect from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. These measures should, I hope, contain the development of the crisis in French Guiana. We are keeping a very close eye on the risks of spread of the virus. Fears can also come from neighboring countries because the situation in Brazil is worrying. Bordering Guyana and with frequent exchanges (economic via Saint-Georges on the Oyapock river, but also through uncontrolled migrations), Brazil already has several thousand confirmed cases and more than one hundred deaths, 117 as of 29 March.