



Encuentro de Buenos Aires
De Organizaciones Sindicales del Sector Salud de las Américas
Del 8 al 12 de Noviembre de 2004, Bs. As. Argentina.
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STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES, DEMANDS AND ACTIONS

PRINCIPLES

All citizens within the hemisphere have a right to health as a fundamental human right and it is the duty of all governments to ensure the health of its citizens. Public health care shall be provided in accordance with the following principles:

- Universality - health care shall be available to one hundred percent of the population;
- Accessibility - there shall be no barriers of access to health care - health care shall be provided to all irrespective of race, gender, region, economic condition, religion, language,
- Comprehensiveness – health services shall be sufficient to ensure maximum quality of life and shall include: all medical, hospital and physician services, drugs, mental health, care for the frail elderly and disabled, and all aspects of social security. All medical, social and ancillary services are central to health, healing and recovery and are integral to the health system;
- Affordability of drugs – production of drugs shall be an integral part of the health care system governed by the principles adopted by the conference;
- Integration - all health services shall be integrated within a single system and such services shall be linked to social policies and programs designed to improve the social determinants of health (e.g., economic condition, education, housing, environment, employment, working conditions);
- Social security shall be fully integrated into the principles of public health care;

- Funding - health care shall be available to citizens at no cost with no user fees or extra charges. Governments shall be responsible for ensuring that the health care system is funded sufficiently to achieve maximum health outcomes;
- Health as a common social good - health services shall not be treated as market goods and shall be delivered by public sector workers in not for-profit facilities and settings. Health services shall not be provided by for-profit corporations;
- Free collective bargaining - all health care workers shall have the right to form unions and to bargain collective agreements freely, which will serve as tools to dignify our work.

DEMANDS

The delegates to this meeting demand:

- That all governments within the hemisphere guarantee health for their citizens and provide health care in accordance with the above principles;
- That health and health care services be excluded from all free trade agreements;

ACTIONS

Delegates to this meeting are in agreement with the following actions:

- Support and promote International Health Workers' Day on April 7 of each year with appropriate actions and campaigns in each country,
- Support and take action collectively across the hemisphere to protest the multilateral meeting of the FTAA in Argentina in November 2005. Actions may take place in Argentina or in each of our respective countries; Actions may take place in Argentina or in each of our respective countries;
- Continue to fight the privatization of health care in each of our countries and across the hemisphere;
- Fight for public pensions and workers' control over all pension plans;
- Condemn regimes everywhere (but especially in Colombia) that seek to repress popular support for unions and public services for citizens;

- Reassess our support for the Cuban People's struggle to preserve their self-determination and condemn the genocidal embargo that it has been subject to for more than 40 years;
- Express our solidarity and support for the Venezuelan people and the Bolivian Revolutionary Process;
- Establish a communications network, including a web site, to disseminate information and to strengthen our movement;
- Establish the conference of health care workers as the political movement in the hemisphere;
- Convene in Cuba in early 2006 for the next meeting of health care unions in the Americas.

To ensure political continuity of this work and the agreements reached, we propose to the organizations present to form the Conference of Health Unions of the Americas.

The mission of the Conference will include strengthening solidarity and strategic fights to provide an adequate response to repression against workers, facilitate the development and coordination of concrete action, follow-up on initiatives and support the communication networks. The Secretariat established in Niagara Falls, Canada, comprised of Canada, Cuba, El Salvador and Argentina will be in charge of planning, following up and strengthening the agreements reached here.