



Reaffirming commitments for a comprehensive global agenda to assure “Health for All”

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“The theme of the 8th Brazilian Congress on Collective Health and the 11th World Congress on Public Health (World Federation of Public Health Associations-WFPHA & Brazilian Association on Collective Health-ABRASCO) - **Public Health in a Globalized World: breaking down social, economic, and political barriers** – worked as an invitation to build answers to the key challenges in the field of social development and the protection and promotion of health and life.

From August 21st to 25th 2006 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, these congresses joint together more than eleven thousands participants. A record number of 9.669 abstracts was submitted and 419 Brazilian and international members

of the Review Committee approved 671 (22.2% from the international community) for oral and 7.433 (5.0% from international authors) studies for poster presentation. This huge scientific production resulted in a program that included 5 main conferences; 16 main debates; 152 panels and lectures; 168 free themes communications and 7.433 posters presentations. The program also included: 24 workshops; 15 Business and Scientific Meetings, 3 assemblies, 3 international forums and symposium. The International Health Expo had 57 exhibitors – national and international, governmental, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and research and teaching centers.

The presence of Brazilian

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, at the Opening Ceremony highlighted the importance of the Congresses and, at his lecture he pointed out the Brazilian Government commitment with the social development and Health, and calls all the countries representatives for a joint effort against poverty and social inequities. During the Congresses Health Ministers, institutional representatives and delegates from 77 countries shared his visions, ideas and proposals for a better and healthier world for all. The congress main sessions interacted with the Congresses theme and its dimensions: the Global Actions on the Social Determinants of Health; Global Governance, Citizen Participation and the Right to Health; Strategies

to Promote Equitable Health Care Systems; New Frontiers in Science and Technology for Public Health [ethical aspects, global access to health innovative technology and drugs].

Dr. Paulo Buss’ Leavell Awarded Lecture on *Globalization, Poverty and Health* synthesizes the impacts of today’s global economic policies on the social inequities, poverty and Health. Analyzing critically the scenario on international aid for social development, he contrasted military investments with those for the MDG demonstrating the gaps between the discourse [of governments and international agencies] to social needs and policies. He also mentioned the ongoing experiences on the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization – GAVI; the Tobacco Control Framework; the WTO TRIPS agreement; the Tobin Tax initiative; the International Committee on Social Determinants on Health. These experi-



ences, as he pointed out, must be supported and may work as examples to the construction of solidarity and cooperative agenda between rich and poor nations towards the reduction of poverty and iniquities, pursuing the social development, rights, health and justice.

Sir Michael Marmot [Global Actions on the Social Determinants of Health] and Professor Giovanni Berlinguer [New

Frontiers in Science and Technology: what does it mean for Public Health?] conferences, together with the diversity and quality of the debates during the five day Congresses resulted on the construction of the Rio Declaration – a working position document, approved by all the Congresses participants, at the Closing Plenary Session. This Declaration is a call for global solidarity and responsibility to meet the

enormous challenges on the development of Health as a global right. It is an open-toll-box of values, principles and statements on Health, Social Development and Justice. In this sense the Congresses Organizers – WFPHA and Abrasco – and all members, partners, leaderships, health professionals, working and researching groups on Health and related areas, national and international, govern-

mental and non-governmental organizations, are invited to discuss, to make reference and to improve its contents. Our next steps must be to transform the Rio Declaration into a comprehensive agenda for global action to assure “that every human being can live their lives with respect and dignity, thereby creating a better future for the next generations”.

RIO DECLARATION

The main theme of the 11th World Congress of Public Health and the 8th Brazilian Congress of Collective Health was “Public Health in a Globalized World: Breaking Down Social, Economic and Political Barriers”. After five days of intensive work and productive debates involving local and international leaders, we have come to the conclusion that globalization, which has a potential to break down such barriers, has unfortunately produced a vicious cycle, where inequity between and within nations has increased, leading in turn to increased poverty and exclusion, worse living conditions and, finally, overall poor health. This places an increased burden on the underprivileged, furthering the inequities and repeating the whole cycle. In particular, this threatens the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals.

There are many paths that could lead to breaking this cycle and instating instead a new model of development, where the whole of humanity benefits from globalprosperity, including living in better health. Expressing the thinking and desires of the participants of this Congress, representing 26 nations, we reaffirm that:

- Access to effective health care is a fundamental human right and a precondition to social and economic development;
- All social inequalities in access to health care should be eliminated;
- Further research to better understand the "causes of the causes" of disease and the social determinants of health, and assess policy and interventions is needed;
- The results of research should be publicly available and taken into account the formulation of public policy and health interventions; those, in turn, should have health promotion as an integral part of their design;
- Stronger inter-sectoral links between health and other public policies and effective links with governmental, non-governmental and civil society initiatives are needed;
- The public health workforce has to be developed and strengthened;
- The development of health systems needs to be rooted in the communities, ensuring popular support and accountability to the people they serve;
- The United Nations agencies should have the necessary means and engage in better responsive actions;
- Global solidarity and responsibility are essential to meet the enormous challenge of assuring that every human being can live their lives with respect and dignity, thereby creating a better future for the next generations.

- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 21st-25th 2006