World Federation of Public Health Associations

To the government of Brazil

December 12th is the day of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The goal of UHC is to ensure that all people obtain the health services they need without suffering financial hardship when paying for them. Among the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - that all UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve - Universal Health Coverage is a goal that all countries worldwide should reach by 2030.

December 15th The Brazilian Senate voted a proposal of an amendment to the constitution (PEC55) that foresees a linear restriction to all public expenses until 2036. The public expenses will follow the annual inflation rate. This holds true for all sectors of the state budget.

The health and educational systems are fundamentals of our societies; that is why in Brazil the Sistema Unico de Saude (SUS) has been introduced in 1988 into the constitution. The SUS is meant to provide a UHC for all Brazilian citizens. If in a given situation, countries need to reduce public expenditure they should use a value-based approach. Putting health and education at the same level as other fields is not consistent with the wishes of the people and the needs of society.

The World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), the umbrella organization defending Public Health worldwide, together with ABRASCO, its Brazilian member, is urging the Government of Brazil to reconsider the PEC55 in regard to health and in particular to the consequences for the SUS. The approach foreseen in the amendment will have disastrous consequences for Brazil as a whole country.

Prof B Borisch     Dr M Moore
Executive Director     President
WFPHA      WFPHA