

XVIII CONGRESO LATINOAMERICANO
DE MEDICINA SOCIAL Y SALUD COLECTIVA

XVIII CONGRESSO LATINO-AMERICANO
DE MEDICINA SOCIAL E SAÚDE COLETIVA

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE 18TH LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS ON SOCIAL MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

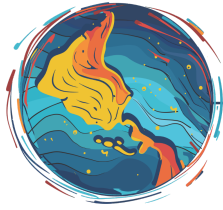
This year, 2025, marks the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Latin American Association of Social Medicine (ALAMES). Founded in the city of Ouro Preto, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, ALAMES was a milestone in the formulation and dissemination of critical thinking in health. Based on the notion of the social determination of health, critical thinking removed health from its strictly biomedical conception and recognized it as a process linked to the social conditions and historical and political development of our societies. Critical thinking in health spread throughout the region and became consolidated in the defense of transforming the social conditions that generate disease and in the construction of just and egalitarian nations. This continues to be the motto of ALAMES.

The XVIII Latin American Congress of Social Medicine and Collective Health, *“For democracy, social rights, and health, returning to the path of social determination and the sovereignty of the people,”* held in the city of Rio de Janeiro from August 5 to 8, 2025, brought together 2,566 congress participants, with 1,322 papers and 912 posters approved.

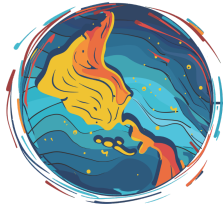
There were 68 oral communication sessions, 21 thematic round tables, 4 major debates, and 3 major conferences.

As a result of the work, we, the congress participants, affirm:

1. Our unconditional and non-negotiable defense of human life, peace, and the sovereignty of peoples.
2. Our solidarity with the Palestinian people. We condemn the genocide perpetrated by Israel, the dehumanization and starvation as weapons of war, with the clear objective of ethnic cleansing and final occupation of their territory. We demand self-determination for the Palestinian people. Free Palestine!
3. We call on the countries of our region to join the Hague Group in organizing an international health mission in support of the people of Gaza.
4. Our solidarity with our Cuban brothers and sisters, hostages of the longest blockade in history, imposed by the United States, a country with a territory 100 times larger and a GDP approximately 300 times that of Cuba. This imperialist aggression has the sole objective of punishing the Cuban people for the path they have sovereignly chosen.
5. We condemn the expulsions of Latin American citizens from the United States and, in particular, the complicity of the government of El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele, who is using his prisons to detain people seeking better living conditions, in violation of all international norms.



6. We repudiate the commercial, diplomatic, and political attack by the United States against the sovereignty of numerous Latin American countries, as is currently happening with Brazil and Mexico.
7. We condemn the decisions of the Argentine government that threaten the health, education, and rights of citizens.
8. We express our commitment to the expansion and coordination of struggles and resistance at the global level and in our Latin America to halt the advance of the extreme right in the world, with its authoritarian practices that threaten our democracies and our sovereignty through the spread of hatred, lies, and dissent, which favor discontent and disenchantment among our youth, stimulating individualism and violence.
9. The increase in inequalities in the world is unjustifiable and unacceptable, since humanity already has all the conditions to guarantee a dignified life for all people. That is why we do not accept that 700 million people still go hungry in the world while nearly 3,000 billionaires concentrate more wealth than 60% of the world's population.
10. Instead of generating buen vivir and a dignified life, capitalism is becoming radicalized in the exploitation of labor, the destruction of nature, the weakening of social ties, the vulnerability of bodies, racial and ethnic discrimination, and xenophobia. It proposes minimal states for the people, demanding austerity and fiscal control over public resources, with a reduction in social rights. But it demands and practices large states for capital, at the cost of ever-increasing debt payments to rentiers, tax incentives of all kinds, and the handing over of public assets and services to the private sector.
11. The consequence of this predatory capitalism is the environmental crisis that threatens our present and future lives. Collective health recognizes its effects on people's health, but does not accept acting only to mitigate them. The environmental crisis, which affects the health of all, stems from the predatory model of use of our lands and natural resources, which have been turned into commodities for quick profits for only a few, threatening our peoples and indigenous communities and their ways of life. A new model requires equal access to land and investment in sustainable production, with the participation of those who live and work on it.
12. We repudiate all forms of oppression and all practices of racism, sexism, LGBTphobia, ableism, and xenophobia. Our democracies, like our region, must be pluralistic, multicultural, and defend all people, without discrimination.
13. We will fight relentlessly against the advance of digital networks and technologies and artificial intelligence in the service of political and ideological control exercised by our elites to strengthen their patterns of accumulation and social control, reversing them in favor of our peoples.
14. We reject the impositions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for the adoption, in our countries, of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Essential Public Health Functions (EPHF), which limit access to services and encourage private participation in health care. We defend public and state provision of social and health policies and oppose their privatization and financialization.



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15. We believe in the power and transformative capacity of Latin America, already proven by its victories against colonizers and dictatorships. Today we fight against neoliberalism that feeds on misery, against the extreme right that undermines our democracies and our humanity, against the destruction of our land and our wealth. Collective health is critical and therefore positive; it builds and affirms dreams, because health is the center of life, the expression of our humanity, of our mutual care, and the space necessary for the realization of our desires. Thus, it is our responsibility to advance in the construction of the health system we believe in, to unify our struggles, and to bring everyone together around the common project of social justice and the common good.
16. We defend another social order, one that is peaceful, supportive, and oriented toward the defense of life and buen vivir. Our daily work, as Latin Americans dedicated to collective health, is the struggle for democracy, for social and health rights, guaranteed by universal, equitable, and quality public systems.

Long live Latin America, long live collective health! Forward and always!

Rio de Janeiro, August 8, 2025