

# **Civil Society Perspectives on Interim Statement of CSDH**

**IUHPE**

**Interim recommendations of the  
Commission on the Social  
Determinants of Health**

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**People's Health Movement**

## **A Global Movement**

- Civil Society supports the Commission's vision of a Global movement around the Commission's report
- People must see themselves in the report – see the story of their lives unfold in it
- Report must inspire people to be part of the movement
- CS would be fully supportive of such a movement around its concerns reflected in the report

## Values in the Interim Statement

- Welcome intent to locate recommendations in a framework of the values of equity, rights and empowerment
- Assertion that Health equity is a value in itself is a bold statement and shows Commission's willingness to take the difficult route and address the structural roots of equity – the causes of causes
- Support contention that Health is an outcome and not an input
- Believe that the ultimate goal, is not merely to look for health policies that favour the poor: rather we seek significant policies that directly address the social determinants of the inequitable distribution of resources

## Expand the Vision of Right to Health

- Suggest that the statement develop its concern on the right to health as a fundamental human right further and suggest measures to chart the progress of countries in this regard
- Locate rights violations in the analyses of power and social inequality
- View human rights framework as, not one that helps maintain the status quo, but one that questions by pointing out how it is structurally violative of human rights

## Explicit View on Neoliberalism

- The statement's endorsement of the relevance of the Alma Ata Declaration of 1978 and the Primary Health Care Approach is heartening
- Needs also to go beyond and explicitly underline the dominant cause for the failure and virtual abandonment of the vision in the Alma Ata Declaration and the Primary Health Care concept
- Need to accept that the attack on PHC was not accidental: that it was ideological, globally orchestrated and globally co-ordinated
- Need to clearly acknowledge that the neoliberal paradigm was responsible for the ideological onslaught

## Reversal and not Coping Mechanisms

- The statement should be explicit in making a distinction between Globalisation and the neoliberal paradigm
- True globalisation means a free flow of knowledge, resources and people
- The so called globalisation that neoliberalism promotes restricts ALL three and benefits of few countries, corporates and financial institutions
- The statement should make a case for the REVERSAL of this framework and not merely suggest COPING mechanisms

## Responsibilities Need to be Ascribed

- It is important to name the global institutions (even if some have partially changed trajectory) – including the IMF, the WB, the WTO – responsible for propagation of the neoliberal agenda and for the dismantling of welfare measures
- Important to examine the role of UN bodies such as the WHO and the UNICEF in playing a role in this process

## Explicit Positions on Some Issues

The statement would be strengthened if it reveals an explicit position on the following:

- The link between neoliberalism and militarism and war/conflicts; the rise of fundamentalism; and social exclusions -- multicultural values are anathema to the neoliberal framework
- Intellectual Property Rights, as propagated today, are morally unacceptable and scientifically invalid



## Explicit Positions on Some Issues

- The pattern of agriculture promoted in developing countries is unsustainable, undermines food security and sovereignty, promotes displacement and migration, leads to rural and urban poverty and has a profound impact on livelihoods
- The necessity to reverse commercialisation of Health Care and recognition that ALL the success stories of health systems have been in the public sector, viz. Sri Lanka, Costa Rica, Brazil, Cuba

## **A Constituency is Waiting**

- We realise that the final product of the document will be a “negotiated” document
- But if it is negotiated to please everybody – it will please nobody or say nothing
- Today countries and communities are starting to say “enough is enough” – the manufactured global compact is coming apart
- This is the constituency – comprising the majority of the global population that the Commission must address

## **An Idea Whose Time Has Come**

- The Commission's work has the potential to represent an idea whose time has come – an idea that can grip the imagination of people across the globe
- Civil Society welcomes the Statement's intent to involve it in the global campaign
- Civil Society believes that there are movements waiting to embrace the idea, and hopes that the Commission will be unhesitating in realising the full potential and dimensions of this idea