

## Rio de Janeiro Declaration

We, members of the International Network of Health Technicians Education (RETS), gathered in the city of Rio de Janeiro, on November 12, 13 and 14, 2018, to hold the 4th General Meeting of the Network, with the theme '40 years of Alma-Ata and the role of technical workers in health in the implementation of universal health systems',

### Whereas:

1. The International Network of Health Technicians Education (RETS) is an articulation between more than 100 institutions and organizations involved in the training and qualification of technical personnel in the health field in countries of the Americas, Africa, Portugal and East Timor;
2. The mission of RETS is to strengthen national health systems based on the assumption that the qualification of professionals is a fundamental dimension for the implementation of public health policies and the consolidation of national health systems that meet the needs of the population, which could be reaffirmed during the 4th General Meeting, through commitments assumed with the consolidation of Primary Health Care;
3. In the context of RETS, health technicians are all those who carry out technical-scientific activities in the sector, comprising activities executed by community and auxiliary workers, until those performed by technicians of higher graduation;
4. The health sector is characterized by the intensive use of the workforce and health technicians are key actors for the existence of the health services themselves;
5. Despite their relevance, technicians have historically been invisible in the formulation of public training policies, in professional recognition and in the valuation of work, as well as in the publications and documents of international organizations;
6. After 40 years of the Alma Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care as the basis of universal access and comprehensive care health systems, its principles remain in full force and should be pursued as a political action from the Astana Conference to achieve universal health and the Goals of Sustainable Development;
7. In order to advance the implementation of Primary Health Care and universal health systems, it is essential to consider the protagonism of health technicians, the need for them to be included in full and multiprofessional work teams, as well as to commit themselves to their training and professional enhancement;

8. There is a high inequality in the distribution of technicians between and within countries, aggravated by the migration of health personnel from the poorest countries to the central countries;
9. The articulation between institutions and organizations involved in the training and qualification of health technical personnel in the countries that integrate RETS is a relevant mechanism for cooperation based on principles of solidarity and contribution.

**We reaffirm the need to:**

1. Strengthen cooperation between our institutions and networking, uniting efforts to carry out joint activities in the field of teaching and knowledge production that are able to support the development of policies and the establishment of actions directed to training and working conditions improvement, aiming to consolidate Primary Health Care (PHC) at the countries and searching to achieve, on national and global levels, the objectives and goals of Agenda 2030;
2. Make national, regional and global health authorities as well as multilateral agencies of global governance, civil society and international development agencies aware of the relevant role health workers play at all levels of national health systems, at actions with promotion, prevention, health care and rehabilitation.

**And we ask:**

To the governments and national authorities, to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and other Regional Offices of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Africa, Asia and Europe, to prioritize, at the regional level, the issue of health technicians as key actors for the comprehensive implementation of the human resources action plan for universal access to health and universal health coverage 2018-2023 and other regional plans and strategies; and to make every effort to include this theme at the global health agenda, considering the future developments of the Global Conference on Primary Health Care (Astana Conference) and Agenda 2030.

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Carlos Einisman (AATMN) – Argentina

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Wilfredo Terrazas (ETSBJCA) – Bolivia

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Serafina Alves (MSSS) - Cabo Verde

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Jesele Martins (MSSS) - Cabo Verde

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Claudio Román (MS) – Chile

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