

# 2018: a year that left indelible marks in Brazilian society

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DOI: 10.1590/0103-1104201811900

**IN 2018, AT THE SAME TIME AS WE CELEBRATED THE 30 YEARS** of the Citizen Constitution and of the Unified Health System (SUS), we experienced moments of profound insecurity and the consequences of the rupture of the national pact established with the end of the military dictatorship, which allowed significant advances in field of social rights.

From 2016 on, with the parliamentary-judicial-mediatic coup, an agenda of setbacks was instituted, such as the EC-95 (Amendment of the expenditure ceiling), the labor, social security, and cultural counter-reforms, that try to bar racial-ethnic and gender historical achievements, with the old discourse that social rights do not fit into the budget.

The consequences of that agenda are already being felt: the return of Brazil to the hunger map, the increase of inequality, the return of measles, the reversal of the fall in the infant mortality rate, and the displacement of health insurances towards the SUS in function the precariousness of work and unemployment.

Moreover, the unacceptable epidemic of violence, a true genocide, with more than 160 thousand homicides between 2015 and 2017, mostly young black people. Violence against women, against the LGBT population (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transvestite, Transsexual or Transgender), the execution of human rights defenders, the poison in our diet. The extermination of our population is the most radical expression of our inequalities.

Brazil is experiencing a civilizational dispute with global repercussions for its strategic role in international geopolitics. The onslaught of financial capitalism, associated with an oligarchic, enslaver elite, has global dimensions and manifests itself in three strategic dimensions: the affront to national sovereignty, to social rights, and to democracy.

Eight billionaires have as much wealth as 3.6 billion people on the planet. The richest 1% has more wealth than the other 99%<sup>1</sup>. Coping with ancestral inequalities is our strategic agenda for its devastating effects. Inequality must be tackled not only in terms of the social, cultural, and ethical aspects involved, but also because it produces disruptive results for the economy, for democracy, and for the environment.

In times like this, we must look for examples from our history. The Brazilian Sanitary Reform Movement (MRSB) is certainly an exemplary experience of democratic/participatory construction, of social rights and creation of a field of knowledge – collective health – that explained the social determination of the health/disease process. The VIII National Health Conference, with more than 5 thousand delegates, meant a truly popular health constituent, with more than 140 work groups and a final plenary session that lasted more than 24 hours, with a true spirit of public happiness. The right to health, as stated in our Constitution, takes back to that spirit of collective construction, which we need to reincarnate, the Spirit of 1988.

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In order to resist and advance, we must, inspired by the spirit of 1988, intensify our organization from the bases to the mobilization fronts (Popular Brazil and People without Fear), as well as other movements for the defense of citizenship and rights.

for the purpose of face this moment, in which the Country we want is at stake, we must meet the Brazilian people who, in the face of their historical responsibility, will know how, at other times, to affirm their active presence in defense of a sovereign Country with social rights of citizenship and democracy.

The accomplishment of the social rights of the constitution, health in particular, is the materialization of a project that faces the antipopular pact of the less than 1% of well-offs. We must defeat the ancestral inequalities and organize the intransigent defense of the social rights of citizenship and the universal right to health. Rossi and Dweck<sup>2</sup> show that social spending reduces the Gini Index of income concentration.

There is no individual way out, and that strengthens the social basis of a public and universal health system. The SUS is a patrimony of the Brazilian people and should be treated as such. A system that has a capillarity in society, which makes everyone, rich or poor, use it, even without realizing it. It is necessary to be intransigent in the defense of the constitutional SUS, of democracy and of sovereignty.

The Brazilian Center for Health Studies (Cebes) reaffirms its commitment to the defense of the 1988 Constitution and to the accomplishment of the XVI National Health Conference, which has the motto Democracy and Health

A year of struggle, solidarity and unity.

No one lets go of anyone's hand!

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## References

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