



Declaration of Havana Towards Equitable Access to Health Information

We, the participants in the [Second Regional Coordination Meeting of the Virtual Health Library](#) (VHL) and in the [V Regional Congress on Health Sciences Information](#) (CRICS V) in Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Havana, Cuba, from 23 to 27 April 2001;

CONSIDERING

that the scientific-technical information is a global public good essential for social development, and that their universal and equitable dissemination should be assured by national and international public policies;

that the unjust, unnecessary and avoidable inequalities in health conditions among individuals and groups of population is the result of differences in resources and opportunities, standing out among them the inequitable access to health information and knowledge;

that the overcome of inequities and poverty requires the strengthening of political and social participation of people excluded from these processes through their access to information and communication;

that the Virtual Health Library is a powerful tool to democratize information and knowledge;

REITERATE

Our commitment with the construction of the VHL, as a space of cooperation among countries, to strengthen their capability to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the new technologies of information and communication to promote equity in health;

URGE

The governments individually and collectively define public policies geared to equitable access to quality information in order to promote the attainment of basic social rights for all;

SUMMON

The public and private, national and international organizations, committed to attain the well-being and health of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean to join efforts in the construction of the Virtual Health Library, in order to facilitate to all citizens access to the information and knowledge necessary for constructing their

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individual and collective health.

(Wide dissemination of this Declaration is authorized and recommended)