

# Letter from the Director

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## More on the reform of higher education

During the last year we did some questions on the draft law on higher education which at that time, began its transition in the legislature. The debate at that time was the participation of private capital in public higher education and the contestants were only the Ministry and rectors: in this regard, the Ministry ended up yielding. By then the student participation in the debate is just beginning.

But who said fear: as soon rectors were pain in the mouth of the rector and Wasserman “was preferable to discuss this project in the Legislature and watching it improved over the discussions,” students erupted with force, leaving the classroom and filling the streets of major cities. Then, in our view, occurred the silent acquiescence of the university authorities.

In turn, the debate was changing arguments, from the onslaught against private capital in public universities - something already outdated in the Ministry-, reaching universal and free enrollment. It is almost impossible to deny that the echoes of the revolts of Chile reached the ears of the leaders of the student revolt in Colombia.

Given this assumption, it should be noted that the attitudes of the two governments were mixed, as Chile has faced down in popularity and street disorder with the argument that the Treasury is unable to bear the universal free college tuition. In Colombia, by contrast, yielded to the student crowd and partly that of some legislators fear and left it to the student “table”, the initiative of another project that should be discussed with the Ministry of Education.

The Minister of Education, in defending private capital participation in public higher education, argued, almost verbatim, that “the State does not have enough money to meet the aspirations and demands of public universities, despite annual increases will continue at least until 2019. Simply, that money does not exist. And therefore it is necessary that universities find alternative revenue sources, including private equity investment is a good solution. “By discarding the participation of private capital more firmly, can be seen the missing budget requests for public universities. And if we add the last argument of students’ enrollment that should be universal and free, then it poses “an old state of emergency budget.”

While we consider the public health is worse off than higher education. And the winds of reparation for victims-matter of political priority for the government Santos, requires a new trillion

national budget. So where will go the discussions between students and the Ministry of the costs of higher education universal and free? Dawn and see, but a-priori, we see a national budget can absorb such expenditures at a time. Therefore, it will be ensured that students do not return to the streets, leaving empty classrooms. And the precedent has been removed from the original plan of legislative deliberations, will not help solving the problem.