



HIGHLIGHTED ARTICLE

April 17: Farmers mobilise around the world against Free Trade Agreements and for food sovereignty

Press Release—La Via Campesina



(Zimbabwe, Harare, April 17, 2015) Today thousands of women and men farmers of the international peasant movement La Via Campesina mobilize worldwide against Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) which affect peasant and small-scale agriculture and national food sovereignty. Since April 17, 1996[1] La Via Campesina celebrates this day as a global day of action with allies and friends.

Free Trade Agreements promote TNCs and a capitalist industrialised mode of production heavily reliant on agrochemicals. These have increased the displacement, expulsion, and disappearance of peasants. Free Trade Agreements put profit over all other rights and concerns. Currently, the most significant FTAs in history are being negotiated by the European Union, the United States, and Canada. These agreements, if finalised, will liberalize trade and investment markets in favour of transnational companies (see tv.viacampesina.org/April-17th). [Read more...](#)

ARTICLES FROM THE REGIONS

New publication - Seed laws that criminalise farmers: resistance and fightback

La Via Campesina/GRAIN Media release - 8 April 2015



Peasant seeds – the pillar of food production – are under attack everywhere. Under corporate pressure, laws in many countries increasingly limit what farmers can do with their seeds. Seed saving, which has been the basis of farming for thousands of years, is quickly being criminalised.

What can we do? A new booklet and poster from La Via Campesina and GRAIN documents how big business and governments are moving to stop farmers from saving and exchanging their seeds, and shows how farmers are fighting back.

Control over seeds must remain in peasants' hands. This is the principle, based in the production process that guarantees the food sovereignty of rural communities and urban populations against multinationals and their enormous profits. Over centuries, peasant farmers have created the thousands of varieties of crops that are the basis of the world's food supply and diversified diets, says La Via Campesina's Guy Kastler.

[Read more...](#)



Free trade agreements on the rise – Intense negotiations and growing resistance

Article by Solidarity Sweden – Latin America 2015 is a year of big—and perhaps irreversible—changes due to the multiple processes of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) around the world. These deals are being concretized without most people understanding what they imply and how they affect citizens all over the world. Therefore, as April 17th, marks the International Day of Peasants' Struggle, peasants themselves have dedicated the commemoration as a time to fight against FTAs and corporate power. We too, introduce the question of FTAs to encourage awareness about what is at stake. What is the origin of these agreements? What effects have they had where they are already implemented? Who wins and who loses? [Read more...](#)

Final declaration of the 6th Congress of CLOC Via Campesina



On the International Day of Peasant Struggles and after a march through Buenos Aires streets from the US Embassy, an imperialistic symbol, to the Argentinean Rural Association, a symbol of agribusiness in the country, the organizers shared the final statement of the 6th Congress of the Latin American Coordination of Countryside Organizations (CLOC-Via Campesina) which you can read below. The document is a result of eight days of debates and was read by representatives of the Youth Assembly of CLOC. "Each person shines with his or her own light. No two flames are alike. There are big flames and little flames, flames of every color. Some people's flames are so still they don't even flicker in the wind, while others have wild flames that fill the air with sparks. Some foolish flames neither burn nor shed light, but others blaze with life so fiercely that you can't look at them without blinking, and if you approach you shine in the fire". [Read more...](#)

Argentina: Peasants gather for food sovereignty



(Argentina, Buenos Aires, April 11, 2015) The IV Assembly of Youth marked the beginning of the VI Congress of the Latin American Coordination of Rural Organizations, CLOC-Via Campesina in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The congress started on the 10th and will end on the 17th of April, and will close with a massive march in commemoration of the International Day of Peasant's Struggle. Over a thousand representatives of peasant movements from the Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe will attend this gathering, united by the slogan: **Against Capitalism for the sovereignty of our peoples: America is united and continues to struggle.** Diego Montón, representative of CLOC-VC's general secretariat said that **"The congress is arranged every four years in order to join forces in the struggle against systematic human rights violations to which our peasantry is exposed"**. [Read more...](#)

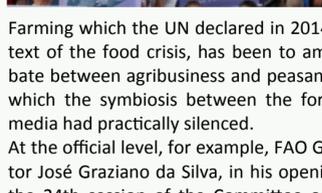
African farmers unite against Transnational Corporations

Caritas, Malhangalene, Maputo City Maputo, Mozambique, 20 February 2015 – We, more than 40 farmers and members of civil society, women and men, from Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Ivory Coast, met in Maputo, Mozambique, from 17 to 20 February 2015 to discuss the state of Transnational Corporations and how they harm our livelihoods as farmers and farm workers.

We have learned how Transnational Corporations are harmful to human dignity and how destructive they are to Mother Earth. We are aware of the intention that corporates have to eliminate the peasantry in Africa in favor of industrial agriculture that promotes intensive and monoculture-based agriculture to produce crops for export. [Read more...](#)

6th Congress of CLOC-Via Campesina: To guarantee the right to food

6th Congress of CLOC-Via Campesina



An important achievement from the International Year of Family

Farming which the UN declared in 2014, in the context of the food crisis, has been to amplify the debate between agribusiness and peasant agriculture, which the symbiosis between the former and big media had practically silenced. At the official level, for example, FAO General Director José Graziano da Silva, in his opening speech at the 24th session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in Rome (September), declared that policymakers should support a broad array of approaches to overhauling global food systems, making them healthier and more sustainable while acknowledging that "we cannot rely on an input intensive model to increase production and that the solutions of the past have shown their limits"... Calling for a "paradigm shift", he said that today's main challenges are to lower the use of agricultural inputs, especially water and chemicals, in order to put agriculture, forestry and fisheries on a more sustainable and productive long-term path.[i] [Read more...](#)

Major Earthquake in Nepal has Caused Great Suffering and Destruction

La Via Campesina solidarity message and call for support

La Via Campesina wants to express its solidarity and support with the peasants and all people in Nepal after the terrible recent earthquake. Nepalese authorities estimate that almost 10.000 people may have died, and many more wounded. We are deeply saddened by this tragedy that has taken place as well as by the suffering of all the people that lost relatives, friends and their homes. We are especially aware that suffering is made worse in remote rural villages where the situation is critical. These areas cannot be reached by regular transport, making it difficult to organize support. [Read more...](#)

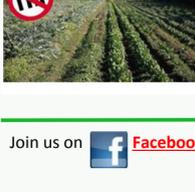
Why do we say NO-to-FTAs-TTIP?



Via Campesina leaders from Europe, US and Canada explain how the new Free Trade Agreements affect Food Sovereignty. Trade agreements and partnerships such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement and the Transatlantic Free Trade Area represent a threat to local markets. Via Campesina says NO to these FTAs.



Campaigns-Against-Free-Trade: These agreements — "bilateral", for short — are negotiated in secret, far from the reach of parliaments or people. They have tended to attract far less attention than World Trade Organization negotiations — and yet their provisions often go even further than existing trade liberalization commitments made at the WTO.



TTIP-Agriculture and Food Industry: Hanny Van Geel, farmer and member of Via Campesina, explains in this interview how the implementation of TTIP affects European farmers and agriculture, the quality of the food we eat and how we live.

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