La Via Campesina share this newsletter of March 2016, which is the collective effort of organizations that are part of our movement worldwide. Subscribe **HERE.**

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HIGHLIGHTED ARTICLE

April 17th, 2016: International Day of Peasants' and Farmers' Struggle

La Via Campesina Call for Mobilisation-For Life, Land, and Healthy Food: 20 Years of Resistance

20 years after the Eldorado dos Carajás massacre, the bloodshed continues. But our resistance as peasants and farmers is stronger than ever

(Harare, March 24th, 2016) This 20th anniversary of the International Day of Peasants' and Farmers' Struggle is taking place in the midst of a truly alarming situation with regard to the human rights of peasants and farmers.[24] Recently, there has been an increase in the repression suffered by peasants and farmers, both women and men, in their daily struggle for their rights.

At the beginning of March, Berta Caceres, the coordinator of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) was assassinated in her home. One week later, in Colombia, a member of the Peasant Association of Arauca (a member organisation of FENSUAGRO) was killed and three other peasant farmers, also members of an Association affiliated to FENSUAGRO, were taken prisoner. These four peasant farmers are part of a long list of Colombian human rights defenders and members of farmers' and indigenous peoples' organisations who have been threatened, imprisoned, or assassinated since the beginning of 2016. Tragically, every day and in every part of the world, very many farmers and defenders of peasant and small-scale agriculture are victims of such murderous attacks. Read more ...

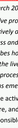
ARTICLES FROM THE REGIONS

When there is an advance in food sovereignty in one part of the world, our entire movement advances

(Harare, March 21st, 2016) Nearly ten years ago, a forum was held in the village of Nyéléni in Sélingué in Mali which brought together over 500 people from more than 80 countries representing organisations of: farmers and peasants; traditional fisherpeoples; native peoples; rural workers; migrants; landless people; pastoralists; forest communities; women; youth; and consumer, environmental, and urban movements. At the forum, they drafted the Nyéléni Declaration, which made a clear restatement of the principles of food sovereignty and highlighted the importance for everyone to work for a world where "food sovereignty is considered a basic human right, recognised and implemented by communities, peoples, states, and international bodies."

During the years since the Nyéléni Forum, there have been a number of efforts to have food sovereignty recognised at various levels. But it has been very difficult to ensure that the interpretations of food sovereignty in these official texts reflect its true meaning. Read more ...

Opinion: Women farm through knowledge sharing



First published in Farming Matters| 32.1 | March 2016

In an attempt to solve problems, people collectively ask questions and discuss and implement solutions. Elizabeth Mpofu describes how knowledge co-creation is commonplace in the lives of people and in agroecology. From these processes, social, political, and practical innovations emerge.

Learning is a lifetime activity. Nowhere is this clearer than in agriculture, and especially among women farmers. Being responsible for over 70% of agricultural production on our continent, we farm through knowledge sharing. In complex and closely knit social groups, starting in early childhood, knowledge is birthed, nurtured and passed on. This knowledge relates to a wide range of topics, such as seed selection and storage, farming methods, nutrition and traditional medicine. Read more ...

Federal Budget 2016 - The NFU's Recommendations

Media Notice

(Canada, March 17, 2016) - The Federal Budget will be tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016. The National Farmers Union (NFU) presented its recommendations to the House of Commons Finance Committee during its pre-budget consultation process. The NFU is calling for the budget to:

+ Rebuild agriculture institutions through return to prior funding levels (at least) and by renewing their commitment to the public interest.
+ Support farm incomes by supporting effective institutions that provide farmers with market power.
- Refocus agricultural programs and policy on the principles of food sovereignty. Read more ...

Landworkers' Alliance joins the Farming to London march

Press Release: March 17, 2016

The Landworkers' Alliance (LWA) is announcing official support for the 'Farming to London' march taking place on Wednesday 23rd March 2016. LWA members will be travelling to London from across the UK to take part in the demonstration and to show solidarity with the UK's wider farming community whose livelihoods have been undermined by policies of the Conservative government.

"We commend Farmers for Action (FFA) for calling this demonstration to highlight the inequality of the UK's agriculture industry" says LWA spokesperson Ed Hamer. "The Conservative government's drive for 'sustainable intensification' has focused public support on intensive technologies and markets, leading to commoditisation and price volatility and directly undermining the livelihoods of thousands of small, traditional and family farms across the country". Read more ...

UAWC publication "Land Appeal" On the occasion of Land Day

(Ramallah, March 31, 2016) The Union of Agricultural Work Committees organized land day activities under the slogan "For the sake of the trust and the honor of our martyrs and detainees, end the catastrophic division." land Day is an annual day of commemoration for Palestinians of the events of that date in 1976. In response to the Israeli government's announcement of a plan to expropriate thousands of dunams of land for security and settlement purposes, a general strike and marches were organized in Arab towns from the Galilee to the Negev. In the ensuing confrontations with the Israeli army and police, six unarmed Arab citizens were killed, about one hundred were wounded, and hundreds of others arrested. A demonstration was launched from Al-Khader in Bethlehem Governorate, and the participants planted olive saplings in an area controlled by three Israeli Settlements. We are reviving it to demonstrate our commitment to right and ownership of our land.

Download below the UAWC's publication "Land Appeal" which reveals the truth of the Palestinian truth https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7MZGOTnu-sAaDAyeiRY0BTTa/view?pref=2&pli=1

One year after the end of milk quotas: assessing the destruction, accumulation non-where in sight

Press release: Brussels, 1 April 2016

In light of the anniversary of the removal of milk quotas

ECVC demands political responsibilities from those who decided and supported the removal of milk quotas because of the devastation, hardship and death it has brought upon thousands of farms in Europe.

A year after the elimination of the quota system, laid bare the lies and siren songs given to the European dairy sector, the situation cannot be bleaker. To this severe and unprecedented situation, not only suffered today by small and medium farms but large ones as well, we can add the ineffectiveness, procrastination and hypocrisy being used today by those policy makers responsible for eliminating the quota system, very well aware of the dire consequences they would bring to the dairy sector. Read more ...

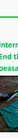
Local Struggles, global victory: Speech by Abdullah Aysu on the occasion of La Via Campesina's mid-term conference

Brussels, Friday 1 April 2016

Family farming is suffering because of neoliberal policies that have been implemented for years. Agricultural production is now controlled by corporations, and land is slipping away from the hands of peasants.

Small farmers cannot produce anymore, and they become seasonal agriculture workers. Others move to the city and are forced to work under hard circumstances. These seasonal agriculture workers are forced to work in unhealthy spaces and precarious conditions that resemble slavery. They get to work on tractors, truck haulages, or in minibuses, piled on top of each other. Hundreds of workers are killed on the road on their way to work. Read more ...

International Condemnation: Honduras - End the violence and death against the peasant-indigenous movement

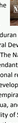


(Managua, 16 March 2016) La Via Campesina denounces the grave criminalization taking place in Honduras today in the form of protons, repression and the assassination of peasant and indigenous leaders. In the last few weeks the situation has worsened greatly with the proliferation of hired assassins aiming to take the lives of those who demand land to produce food, of those who struggle against extractivism, dams, and agribusiness.

Yesterday, March 15th, several regrettable events took place which we summarize below. All require the urgent attention and action of our organizations, allies and human rights entities:

1. Assassination attempt on Cristian Alegría, cousin of Rafael Alegría, lawmaker for the Libre Party and Coordinator of La Via Campesina Honduras. This attack occurred in front of La Via Campesina offices located at Colonia Alameda, Tegucigalpa. Read more ...

Position of the La Via Campesina in Honduras against the increasing criminalisation of the peasant and indigenous social struggle



(Comayagua, March 16th, 2016) We, the organisations belonging to La Via Campesina Honduras – The National Office of Rural Workers (CNTC); The National Association of Honduran Peasants (ANACH); The Council for the Integral Development of Women Peasants (CODIMCA); The National Peasant, Indigenous, and Afro-descendant Youth Front (FRENAJUC); and the regional representatives of the Association for the Development of Honduras (ADROH) from Gracias, Lempira; Opatoro and Marcala, La Paz; Colomoncagua, and Intibucá, meeting together in the municipality of Siguatepeque, Comayagua – responding to the very serious social and political crisis affecting women and peasants, indigenous people, the Garifuna people, and the popular movement throughout the country, strongly condemn:

1. The state policy of neglecting and fragmenting small-scale peasant production.

2. The extreme poverty in rural areas (more than 3 million peasants are suffering from hunger) with poverty levels as high as 70% of the population, of whom 54% are in extreme poverty. Read more ...

Honduras: Interview with Rafael Alegría, MP and leader of Via Campesina

Real World Radio

The MP and peasant leader made reference to the violence against organizations with the complicity of the State and reaffirmed the call to solidarity and international dissemination – Organizations create Popular Honduran Articulation Berta Cáceres

(Honduras, March 17, 2016) After the assassination on March 3rd of Honduran Lenca leader Berta Caceres, the restriction of Gustavo Castro's movements in Honduras (of Otros Mundos – Friends of the Earth Mexico), and upon the arrival to Honduras of an International Mission made up of several European and Latin American MPs to verify the humanitarian situation in Honduras, on Wednesday we learned about the murder of another COPINH member, Nelson Noé Garcia, as well as the attack against the member of Via Campesina Honduras, Cristian Mauricio Alegría Turcios.

In an interview with Real World Radio on Wednesday, the leader of Via Campesina, Rafael Alegría, referred to the attack against his nephew, Cristian Mauricio Alegría Turcios, of Via Campesina Honduras, as a "plan to repress" the organization. Read more ...

"We are under an institutional dictatorship in Honduras"

Real World Radio: Interview with COPINH leader in light of another murder of a member of the organization

The situation in Honduras is of a complete alert. The autocracy and still unpunished murder of Berta Cáceres seems to have intensified the violence and persecution against social activists, indigenous people and peasants in a country whose people continues to be under attack since the Coup d'Etat of 2009. Yesterday, after a violent incursion in Rio Chiquito municipality, Cortés department, the member of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) Nelson García was shot and murdered when returning to the place where he was staying.

(March 16, 2016) Through an excessive use of force including Police officers, the Army, the Anti-Riot Police and the Intelligence and Security Special Response Group (Tigres-TIGRES), 150 peasant and indigenous families were evicted from the lands they were inhabiting and cultivating their food on for over 10 years. "During the eviction they destroyed bean, maize, yucca, banana crops, as well as their houses", said Tomas Gomez, member of COPINH. We also said that the families have been left "totally unprotected". Read more ...

In union with refugees and migrants: Denunciation of the EU's and European government's inhuman policies

Brussels, 18 March 2016

The General Assembly of the European Coordination Via Campesina stands in solidarity with the thousands of refugees that fleeing wars come to Europe to save and rebuild their lives.

Correspondingly, we strongly condemn the policy of the European Union and European governments - ratified by the measures taken in this last EU Council of Ministers this 18th of March. Rather than assuming their international responsibilities to human rights and global justice, EU member states have responded with more barriers, repression and media manipulation, condemning migrants to suffering, humiliation and death, with the sole purpose of defending their interests and profits above all humanity. The signing of agreements with third countries where money and favors are exchanged for human beings shows us on such levels of moral deprivation and institutional crime that it's impossible to remain unsettled. Read more ...

Urgent: Campaign for remission of Andrés Bódalo's sentence

Against the criminalisation and repression of social protest

From the SOC-SAT (Union of Agricultural Workers-Union of Andalusian Workers) we ask for urgent collaboration in our campaign to collect signatures for the plea for remission of Andrés Bódalo's sentence. He has been jailed for his participation in an act of social and trade union protest.

Andrés Bódalo has a long history as a social activist. Added to his dedication as a trade union leader, participating in innumerable actions in defence of labour and social rights, is his political vocation. He is councillor for Jaén in Comoin, a group for change, and headed the list in Jaén for Podemos in the general elections. Andrés was convicted in a farcical trial where documentary evidence (videos) and testimonies (statements from the Guardia Civil), which prove his innocence, were not admitted by the judge. Read more...

Corporate governance of food systems

The new edition of the Nyéléni Newsletter is now online!

From our oceans and seashores, crossing our lands and reaching deep into the minerals of our earth, there is a dangerous trend dominating our current political and economic relations around the world: the so-called private corporate capture of policy-making public spaces.

For decades, civil society and social movements have been struggling to democratically strengthen these spaces in order to achieve the so needed peoples' food sovereignty. But this process is under a severe threat these days...

Click here to download the English edition or read it directly in the website at www.nyeleni.org!

VIACAMPESINA TV

New Videos!

The Tree of Eternity: The Yirca Resistance"

This documentary is about how a handful farmers, women, children and men at Yirca in Turkey successfully defended their olive groves against being taken over for coal power plant expansion. Its a struggle of life and death. Click here to watch this video

Agroecology: Voices From Social Movements (Long Version)

This video explores the different perspectives of food providers on agroecology and the calls from social movements to embed agroecology in the struggle for food sovereignty. It focuses on the International Declaration for Food Sovereignty which has been advanced by social movements to claim agroecology as a bottom up practice, science and movement and the most important pathway towards a most just, sustainable and viable food and agriculture system. Click here to watch this video

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