

Popular University of Social Movements Workshop: "Land, seeds, food, water, people and the climate in SADC - 15 years after the agrarian reform in Zimbabwe"

Harare (Zimbabwe), 12 -14 July 2016

FINAL STATEMENT

Preamble

Over the past 15 years, Zimbabwe's fast track land reform programme redressed colonial land inequalities and now provides lessons for its neighbours on how to democratise land ownership and broaden economic participation. From July 12-14 2016, various social movements and academics from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa, Ivory Coast, Spain and Portugal gathered in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare to discuss and debate the state of land, seeds, food, climate and people in Southern Africa. The event was being held under the banner/auspices of the Popular University of Social Movements, known by its Portuguese and Spanish acronym, UPMS.

The key outcomes of this meeting are as following:

We acknowledge that women are the main agricultural producers in the region. As such, women should be at the center of all agrarian reform, food sovereignty and self-determination initiatives.

We are a diverse group comprised of social movements, activists, peasants, and academics, women, men and youth gathered here in Harare to discuss on land, water, seeds and people in the SADC Region. **We believe that:**

- Communities should have autonomy in deciding the utilisation of resources and should be empowered to make decisions related to their development now and generations to come.
- There is need to share resources in order to protect peace and the integrity of farmers and the citizens of a country.
- Land remains central and plays multiple functions hence it is central to our livelihoods, thus we need to protect the democratisation of land ownership for food sovereignty.
- Building collective struggles to fight for the redress of social inequities and articulation of movements is crucial.
- Popular and academic knowledge to inform our struggles is key
- Privatisation of land should be denounced and stopped. As such land should be taken out of the markets for greater access by the citizens of a nation
- Social struggles should be mobilised between institutional and extra institutional spaces. These should be peaceful and in support of the advancement of people's rights.
- Capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy should be denounced and fought against. We acknowledge that the State is a contested terrain and that we need to work from within

and from outside the State. We acknowledge that some of the problems that we are currently facing are a manifestation of problems that have historical ties to colonialism. We see the effects of colonialism and the brutality it causes and how it cocoons people in poverty.

- People know what they want and as social movements we should contribute to the construction of post-colonial states in order to match the new realities and to break boundaries caused by class, race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, etc.
- We should delink ourselves from colonial ties and develop new home-grown frameworks to support the people of Africa in realising socio-economic, political and environmental rights.
- We need to re-enforce the importance of the peasantry that should be understood as a diverse group devoid of colonial Eurocentric definitions.
- In the formation of local agro industries owned and controlled by peasants and in the establishment of mechanisms that support peasants development.
- Some NGOs and peasant organisations are disconnected from the peasants on the ground and there is need to reconnect leadership with the grassroots.
- There is need to decolonise the mind and to recognise the value of indigenous knowledge systems, food and seeds. Currently, there is colonisation of culture and this impacts on foods and the choices that consumers make.
- We denounce the use of constitutions in some African countries to impede the redistribution of land to peasant farmers.

We demand:

Agriculture policies/agroecology

- Agricultural policies should support and promote agro-ecology for food sovereignty. As such, land use and access should be oriented towards agro-ecological practices for food sovereignty.
- In Zimbabwe, we call for the defense, democratization and deepening of the agrarian reform.
- In Mozambique, we call for immediate stopping of land grabbing and privatization of land.
- In South Africa, we call for a radical land redistribution and agrarian reform.

Mining

- Mining acts should not override agricultural activities. As such there is need to protect farmers and their livelihoods from victimisation and from capitalist interests.
- Land for agriculture should be protected against mining activities and where benefits are shared this should not be at the expense of the environment. There must be synergies

between sustainable mining and agriculture for the benefit of peasants to promote food sovereignty.

- Mining should not be given precedence over agricultural activities. As such legislation and policies on mining should not undermine agricultural activities of a nation.

Knowledge

- The use of academic knowledge for the service of popular struggles.
- African states should endeavour to mobilise internal resources to support demand driven African research that benefits its peoples This research should be self-determined across spheres.
- We call for our governments to support our farming and the development of our indigenous farming, seeds and knowledge systems.

Funding

- Public funds should not be abused by the State. As such, community participation should involve wide consultation and the participation of marginalised groups.

Regional Trade

- Member states should promote intra African trade agreements and ensure the establishment of local markets, as the SADC protocol on trade.

National/local markets

- There is need to protect local markets from the domination of markets by Multinational Corporations
- We call for the State to put in place infrastructure that supports peasants so that they have access and links to reliable markets that lead them to improved livelihoods now and generations to come.
- Governments should capacitate peasants and provide them with information infrastructures and link them to adequate markets.
- There is need to reconnect producers and consumers through public procurement policies.
- We need to reorient the focus of production towards home markets before satisfying international needs.

Harare, July 2016

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List of participants and organizations

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Nicolette Cupido	Food Sovereignty Campaign/LVC	South Africa
Craig Jonkers	Ithemba Farmers Association/FSC/LVC	South Africa
Easter Chigumira	Academic/University of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe
Vongai Nyawo	Academic/Researcher	Zimbabwe
Sandra Bhatasara	Academic/Researcher	Zimbabwe
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