

A DECENTRALIZED STRUCTURE

La Via Campesina is a grassroots mass movement whose vitality and legitimacy comes from peasants' organizations at the grassroots. The movement is based on the decentralization of power between all its regions. The international secretariat rotates according to the collective decision made every four years by the International Conference. It was first located in Belgium (1993-1996), then in Honduras (1997-2004), Indonesia (2005-2013), and since 2013 is based in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The International Conference, held every four years, is the movement's highest body for political discussion and decision-making, where future actions and agendas are defined. Since 1993 six such International conferences have been held.

Contributions from members, private donations, and financial support from some NGOs, foundations and public authorities make this work possible.



JOIN THE ACTIONS!

MARCH 8

International Women's Day

APRIL 17

International Day of Peasant's Struggle

SEPTEMBER 10

International day against WTO and Free Trade Agreements**

OCTOBER 16

International Day of Action for Peoples' Food Sovereignty and against TNCs

NOVEMBER 25

International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women

DECEMBER 3

Global Day of Action against Pesticides

=====

On all of the above dates direct actions, cultural activities, conferences, film screenings, community debates and rallies are organized by a wide variety of groups, communities or organizations, including but not limited to members of *La Via Campesina*.

***In memory of Mr. Lee Kyun Hae, a South Korean farmer who sacrificed himself during a mass protest against the WTO in Cancun, Mexico in 2003. He was holding a banner saying "WTO kills farmers".*

~~~~~

Visit [www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org) for more information, to subscribe to our news updates, and to make a donation.



197A Smuts Road Prospect, Waterfalls, Harare, Zimbabwe



[viacampesina@viacampesina.org](mailto:viacampesina@viacampesina.org)



+263 4576221



[facebook.com/ViaCampesinaOfficial](https://facebook.com/ViaCampesinaOfficial)



[@via\\_campesina](https://twitter.com/via_campesina)



[tv.viacampesina.org](http://tv.viacampesina.org)





# GLOBALIZING HOPE, GLOBALIZING THE STRUGGLE!

*La Via Campesina* is an international movement bringing together millions of peasants, small and medium size farmers, landless people, rural women and youth, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world. Built on a strong sense of unity, solidarity between these groups, it defends peasant agriculture for food sovereignty as a way to promote social justice and dignity and strongly opposes corporate driven agriculture that destroys social relations and nature.

Women play a crucial role in *La Via Campesina*. The movement defends their rights and gender equality. It struggles against all forms of violence against women. Young farmers play also a very important role as an inspiring force in the movement.

*La Via Campesina* comprises 164 local and national organisations in 73 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Altogether it represents about 200 million farmers. It is an autonomous, pluralist, multicultural movement, political in its demand for social justice while being independent from any political party, economic or other type of affiliation.

## A Movement Born in 1993

A group of farmers' representatives – women and men – from four continents founded *La Via Campesina* in 1993, in Mons, Belgium. At that time, agricultural

policies and agribusinesses were becoming globalized and small farmers needed to develop a common vision and struggle to defend it. Small scale farmers' organisations also wanted to have their voices heard and to participate directly in the decisions that were affecting their lives.

## OUR STRUGGLES

### 1. Defending Food Sovereignty, Struggle for Land and Agrarian Reforms

*La Via Campesina* launched its political vision of "Food Sovereignty" at the World Food Summit in 1996. Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It develops a model of small scale sustainable production benefiting communities and their environment. Food sovereignty prioritizes local food production and consumption, giving a country the right to protect its local producers from cheap imports and to control its production.

It includes the struggle for land and genuine agrarian reform that ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, territories, water, seeds, livestock, and biodiversity are in the hands of those who produce food and not of the corporate sector.

### 2. Promoting Agroecology and Defending Local Seeds

*La Via Campesina* promotes Agroecology as a key form of resistance to an economic system that puts profit before life. It recognizes that small farmers, including peasants, fisher folk, pastoralists, and indigenous people, who make up almost half the world's people, are capable of producing food for their communities and feeding the world in a sustainable and healthy way.

Seeds are an irreplaceable pillar of food production and the basis of productive, social and cultural reproduction. *La Via Campesina* promotes farmers' rights to use, develop and reproduce peasant's seeds and struggles against attempts by corporations to control our common heritage.

### 3. Promoting Peasant Rights And Struggle Against Criminalization Of Peasants

There is an increase in displacement, criminalization, and discrimination affecting peasants globally. Transnational corporations continue, with full impunity, to violate basic rights, while people struggling to defend the rights of their communities continue to be criminalized and at times even killed.

*La Via Campesina* promotes a UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas, which includes right to life and adequate standards of living, the right to land and territory, to seeds, information, justice and equality between women and men.

