

<https://viacampesina.org/en/declaration-ngo-forum-fao-summit-rome5/>

Declaration NGO Forum FAO Summit Rome+5

13 June 2002 [Food Sovereignty](#)

This morning, Tuesday June 13 2002, during the conclusive day of the Fao World Food Summit, it has been delivered the final statement approved from the Plenary session of the Forum for Food Sovereignty at the presence of the Heads of State and the Governmental Delegations. The Forum for Food Sovereignty, that has gathered in Rome, at Palazzo dei Congressi from 8 to 13 June, more than 700 NGOs and CSOs as the result of an international consultation and interaction process lasted over two years, has appointed as spokesperson for the final statement Sarojeni Rengam (Malesia).

Here following the full text of the statement
2002 Rome NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty
June 8 – 13, 2002

NGO/CSO Forum for food sovereignty
Food Sovereignty: A Right For All Political Statement of the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty
The Failure Since 1996 and the New Official Declaration

The social movements, farmer, fisherfolk, pastoralists', indigenous peoples', environmentalist, women's organizations, trade unions, and NGOs gathered here in Rome, express our collective disappointment in, and rejection of, the official Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later. Far from analyzing and correcting the problems that have made it impossible to make progress over the past five years toward eliminating hunger, this new plan of action compounds the error of "more of the same failed medicine" with destructive prescriptions that will make the situation even worse.

The 1996 Plan of Action has not failed because of a lack of political will and resources, but rather it has failed because it supports policies that lead to hunger, policies that support economic liberalization for the South and cultural homogeneity, which are backed by military force if the first wave of prescriptive actions fail. Only fundamentally different policies, which are based on the dignity and livelihoods of communities can end hunger. We affirm our belief that this is possible and urgently needed.

Since 1996 governments and international institutions have presided over globalization and liberalization, intensifying the structural causes of hunger and malnutrition. These have forced markets open to dumping of agricultural products, privatization of basic social and economic support institutions, the privatization and commodification of communal and public land, water, fishing grounds and forests. Parallel to this, we witness the increasingly brutal repression of social movements resisting the New World Order.

This political will has also opened the doors to the unbridled monopolization and concentration of resources and productive processes in the hands of a few giant corporations. The imposition of intensive, externally dependent models of production has destroyed the environments and livelihoods of our communities. Furthermore, it has created food insecurity and has put the focus on short-term productivity gains using harmful technologies such as GMOs.

The results have been the displacements of peoples and massive migration, the loss of jobs that pay living wages, the destruction of the land and other resources that peoples depend on, an increase in polarization between rich and poor and within and between North and South, a deepening of poverty around the world, and an increase of hunger in the vast majority of nations.

There will be no progress toward the goal of eliminating hunger without a reversal of these policies and trends, but the current declaration offers no hope of such a reversal. It emphasizes trade liberalization, the greatest force undermining livelihoods around the world, has diluted the concept of the human right to food, proposes more enhanced neoliberal structural adjustment in the guise of HIPC programs, recommends more emphasis on biotechnology and genetic engineering, and fails to support strengthening of production by the poor themselves for local markets or the radical redistribution of access to productive resources that is fundamental to real change for the better. On the basis of this plan of action, no amount of political will or resources will lead to a major reduction in hunger or the poverty that underlies it.

Food Sovereignty: The Fundamental Approach

In contrast to the proposed International Alliance Against Hunger, which is worse than "more of the same medicine", we counterpose the unifying concept of Food Sovereignty as the umbrella under which we outline the actions and strategies that are needed to truly end hunger.

What is Food Sovereignty? Food Sovereignty is the RIGHT of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies.

Food Sovereignty requires:

- Placing priority on food production for domestic and local markets, based on peasant and family farmer diversified and agroecologically based production systems
- Ensuring fair prices for farmers, which means the power to protect internal markets from low-priced, dumped imports
- Access to land, water, forests, fishing areas and other productive resources through genuine redistribution, not by market forces and World Bank sponsored "market-assisted land reforms."
- Recognition and promotion of women's role in food production and equitable access and control over productive resources
- Community control over productive resources, as opposed to corporate ownership of land, water, and genetic and other resources
- Protecting seeds, the basis of food and life itself, for the free exchange and use of farmers, which means no patents on life and a moratorium on the genetically modified crops which lead to the genetic pollution of essential genetic diversity of plants and animals.
- Public investment in support for the productive activities of families, and communities, geared toward empowerment, local control and production of food for people and local markets.
- Food Sovereignty means the primacy of people's and community's rights to food and food production, over trade concerns. This entails the support and promotion of local markets and producers over production for export and food imports.

To achieve Food Sovereignty:

- We will strengthen our social movements, and develop the organizations of farmers, women, indigenous peoples, workers, fisherfolk and the urban poor in each of our countries
- We will advance regional and international solidarity and cooperation, and strengthen our common struggles
- We will struggle to realize genuine agrarian and fisheries reform, rangeland and forestry reform, and achieve comprehensive and integral redistribution of productive resources in favor of the poor and the landless
- We will fight for the strong guarantee of the rights of workers to organize, bargain collectively, have safe and dignified working conditions and living wages

- We will struggle for the equal access of women to productive resources and the end to patriarchal structures in agriculture and socio-economic and cultural aspects of food.
- We will fight for the right of Indigenous peoples to their cultures, domain, and productive resources.
- We call for an end to the neoliberal economic policies being imposed by the World Bank, WTO, the IMF and Northern countries and other multilateral and regional free trade agreements, such as the FTAA and NEPAD
- We demand the removal of agriculture from the WTO
- We will fight to stop genetic engineering and the patenting of life and demand an immediate ban of terminator and similar genetic use restriction technologies
- We demand an end to the passing off of GMO food in food aid
- We demand an immediate stop to the war on people and the land around the world and an end to the repression of peoples' movements, as well as an immediate end to the illegal occupation of Palestine, the embargoes of Cuba and Iraq and the use of food as an instrument of blackmail
- We demand support for the development and dissemination of agroecological systems of production
- We call for a Convention on Food Sovereignty in order to enshrine the principles of Food Sovereignty in international law and institute food sovereignty as the principal policy framework for addressing food and agriculture.

Finally, "one size fits all" policies like those emanating from the World Bank, WTO and IMF must be replaced with a vision of "one world with room for many worlds," where strength and human dignity are built through solidarity and respect for diversity, and all countries and peoples have the right to define their own policies. To that end, we resolve to build social awareness and our movements for the fight to defeat the WTO at Cancun in September of 2003.