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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
49th session of the Human Rights Council
28 February–1 April 2022
**Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the
Special Rapporteur on the right to food**

Oral statement

Mister President,

I am Zainal Arifin Fuat, member of the International Coordination Committee of La Via Campesina, the largest peasant movement in the world, speaking on behalf of CETIM.

We would like to commend the report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

We welcome the reference to the United Nations Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas (UNDROP) and the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). These Declarations center on the right to land, seeds, and biodiversity, as well as collective rights anchored in the principle of Food Sovereignty.

The role of women is also highlighted in the report. The diverse rural women have been linked, both in the past and still today, to selecting, cleaning, and saving seeds. La Via Campesina has been strengthening a Global Campaign entitled “Seeds: Heritage of the Peoples at the Service of Humanity” since 2003. A crucial experience of this campaign was that once seeds were given to men and women peasants for conservation, only women returned the seeds in the agreed timeline.

We echo the recommendation to base the national seed systems on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food (ITPGRFA), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UNDRIP and the UNDROP. In that sense, we strongly oppose the privatization of seeds, genetic manipulation, intellectual property, and all forms of appropriation of life. The collective efforts to flourish and protect seeds and biodiversity must be entrusted to the peasants, indigenous peoples, workers, and especially women and youth.

We encourage the Special Rapporteur to continue its work on the promotion of the rights to seeds. And finally, we urge this Council, all States and actors to foster the promotion and the implementation of the UNDROP.

Thank you for your attention.
Geneva, 11 March 2022