

Speech by Zainal Arifin Fuat, La Via Campesina

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**How Can the Human Rights Council Strengthen the Rights of Those Who Feed the World in Times of Multiple Crises: The new resolution on the implementation of UNDROP in the Human Rights Council.**

Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Zainal Arifin Fuat, a peasant from Indonesia. I am a member of La Via Campesina, the international peasant movement.

**As a small-scale farmer, as part of humanity, we always envision a better life. In La Via Campesina, we have our slogan some time ago "We feed the world, we build our movement, to change the world."**

I remember in 2008, food crisis happened - along with the financial crash the world had suffered. But at that time, we still see the light. We tried to find a solution to change the world in crisis. We worked with international community, with you the member states, with UN bodies, hand in hand. At the time of food crisis, humanity began to think about a new instrument to tackle crisis - and one of them was to recognize and further protect the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas: the people who produce food. That was the early phase of the journey of the adoption of the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working rural areas (UNDROP).

**Now, the world has changed.** We are faced with multi-dimension of crisis, especially linking to the impact of Pandemic. António Guterres in his speech in the ASEAN Summit in Jakarta in the beginning of September 2023 – said our world is stretched to the breaking point by a cascade of crisis: from the worsening climate emergency and escalating wars and conflicts to growing poverty and widening inequalities.

The worsening climate emergency with long drought season influence and decrease the number of food production. This fuels the high price of both food price and agricultural inputs. In light of this, the state of the food security and nutrition in the world (SOFI) 2023 said that between 691 and 783 million people in the world faced hunger and nearly 2.4 billion people in the world lacked regular access food in 2022. Healthy diet is out of reach for more than 3.1 billion people.

**We are in that time again, when we need to think of a solution to these crises.**

But we don't falter. As peasant, as part of community, as part of movement, as part of humanity, we always envision a better life. We want to find a solution, especially in this space – the UN Human Rights Council: where human rights should prevail.

Therefore, as peasants, as right holders of the UNDROP, we think that it is high time that States systematically protect, promote and respect the rights enshrined in the UNDROP. Translate the rights to public policies to make sure that peasants can be guaranteed to produce healthy and nutritious food.

**It is also high time that the UNDROP must also be promoted at the international level. To this end, the creation of a UN special procedure, is required as a prior condition.**

This special procedure will ensure implementation of UNDROP; identify and promote good practices and lessons learned on the implementation of UNDROP; and work with relevant

instances to ensure cooperation and technical capacity needed for the efforts to implement the UNDROP.

**This is our appeal, as peasant, as right holders, as small food producers.** And we appeal to Member States and relevant instances in the UN Human Rights Council, who have the role to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe, and making recommendations to address violations of human rights. We hope the resolution proposed in this matter will be adopted – to help strengthen our rights; and to be better equipped in times of multiple crises.

**We see a better world.** And we want to work with you all, with the international communities, to realize the better life for peasants and other people working in rural areas. A better life for all.

I thank you.