

# MONS DECLARATION



## La Via Campesina Follow-up to the Managua Declaration

We, representatives of peasant organisations from the Caribbean, North, Central and South America, Asia and Europe, gathered in Mons, Belgium, in order to follow up on the Managua Declaration of April 1992 and define concrete actions, both the original and more recent signatories reaffirm its spirit and content.

### A worsening crisis amongst farmers and landworkers:

In the year since the signing of the Managua Declaration, we observe a deterioration in the overall situation of the rural world, expressed by deepening poverty across the whole planet and the massive exodus from the countryside, which is raising global unemployment levels and urbanising

huge rural populations, in turn provoking a worsening of the desertification process with serious human and ecological consequences.

Currently, hunger in a substantial part of the world is allowed to coexist with a situation of surpluses of all kinds of agricultural products. This contradiction can only be understood as a result of the neoliberal agricultural and development policy promoted by governments and international organisations. It is, at the same time, the main obstacle to peace and development for the peoples of the world.

The logic of production maximisation and agricultural exports promotion, both implicit in the neoliberal model, denies the majority of the Third World countries the opportunity to satisfy their basic food needs, and has led to an intensive industrialised agriculture in the developed countries which provokes the above-mentioned disappearance of small and medium-sized producers.

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Furthermore, we are witnesses to a generalisation of repression against the leaders of peasant, environmental and indigenous peoples' organisations with clear aim of suppressing traditional local cultures. On the other hand, international mechanisms and institutions continue to legitimate the payment of the totally unjust and arbitrary external debt, as well as to ratify the current profoundly unequal terms of international trade.

## Towards a sustainable agricultural policy:

As a response to the current irrational and irresponsible logic of production and to the political decisions which support it, we propose the following basic conditions in order bring about an agricultural development which is ecologically sustainable, socially just and which allows the producer real access to the wealth which s/he generates day in day out:

- 1.** The right of small farmers to a living countryside; this implies the full right of farmers to their own autonomous organisations and the recognition of their social importance in the definition and implementation of development in particular.
- 2.** The right to a diversified agriculture which guarantees, as a matter of priority, a supply of healthy, high quality food for all peoples of the world, based on a profound respect for the environment, for a balanced society and for effective access to land.
- 3.** The right of every country to define its own agricultural policy according to the nation's interest and in concertation with the peasant and indigenous organisations, guaranteeing their real participation.

## Instruments for change:

The Peasant Road is an autonomous peasant initiative set up to develop proposals that form an alternative for the neoliberal model, starting from the reality of each participating organisation and the political, economic, social and cultural situation it faces. The current participants, 55 organisations from 36 countries in four continents, propose that peasant and indigenous organisations not yet integrated in this effort urgently do so.

We have established in Moris the basic organisational conditions in secure effective compliance with our objectives. Therefore, a Coordination Committee was elected, with a representative of the MST (Brazil) for South America, a representative of ASOCODE (Central America) for that region and the Caribbean, who also attends North America, a representative of Farmers' Solidarity (Poland) for Eastern Europe, a representative of the KMP (Philippines) for Asia, a representative of the CPE (Europe) for Western Europe, who at the same time is the

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general co-ordinator of the committee, and a representative of the Paulo Freire Foundation (PFS) who will be in charge of the technical secretariat. The representation of Africa is vacant.

It was decided to strengthen the current processes of regional co-ordination, already initiated by organisations and movements, and through meetings, at the same time as similar processes will be stimulated and promoted in those parts of the world where they are now absent. Concretely, it was decided to support and promote the new efforts for organisation and integration of the unions of Africa and Asia, that are co-signatories of this declaration.

During the Mons meeting, we have set out objectives and measures for bringing about a truly sustainable agriculture. We decided to strengthen our efforts to share proposals, knowledge, statements and mutual experiences, in order to formulate peasant development strategies. We will continue, therefore, to generate these proposals and will integrate research capacity in order to support the different participatory processes in the participating organisations. In the same line, we will continue the current dynamics of meetings and exchanges amongst our organisations and extend the means of communication.

To attain our objectives and to secure the impact of our forthcoming proposals, direct

mechanisms for action and negotiation with the bodies that decide on agricultural, environmental and other policies, will be established. Pressure will be put on Governments to attain the political and economic democratisation and the genuine participation of peasant organisations in the elaboration and management of development programmes.

We will implement solidarity action to contribute answers to the situations that our organisations face. Therefore, we reject the blockade by the United States of the Cuban people, as well as its dilatory actions in the restoring of democracy in Haiti, reaffirming our position in favor of self-determination of the peoples.

We confirm our interest to promote a world-wide campaign to rescue and promote peasant-indigenous groups.

We call on the different social organisations to heed our proposals for the defence of the rural world, and to act in favour of them.

Finally, we also call upon our governments and the multilateral organisations to be responsible and to establish a new policy that effectively resolves this reality that is about to explode.

***Mons (Belgium),  
May 16, 1993***

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**Was signed by :**

Norges Bondelang (NB)..... Norway  
Kilusang Magbubukid ng Philippines (KMP)..... Philippines  
Federação Nacional das Cooperativas Agrícolas de Produção (FENCA)..... Portugal  
Movimento dos Trabalhadores sem terra (MST)..... Brazil  
National Farmers Union (NFU) . . . . . Canada  
Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo (ATC)..... Nicaragua  
Sindicato de Obreros del Campo de Andalucía (SOC)..... Spain  
Confederaeión Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB)..... Bolivia  
Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Econômico Rural  
da Região Centro-oeste (RURECO)..... Brazil  
Movimiento Agrario de la Región Pampeana..... Argentina  
Confederación Nacional e Indígena “El Surco” ..... Chili  
Confederación Nacional Agraria (CNA)..... Peru  
Tel Kole ti Peyizan Ayisye..... Haiti  
Mouvement Peyizan Papay..... Haiti  
Unión de Comunidades Indígenas de la Zona Norte del Istmo, A.C. (UCIZONI)..... Mexico  
Unión de Asociaciones Cooperativas de El Salvador (COÁCES)..... Salvador  
Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos (ANUC)..... Colombia  
Movimiento Agrario de Misiones (MAM)..... Argentina  
Zimbabwe Farmers’ Union (ZFU)..... Zimbabwe  
Coordinadora de Organizaciones de Agricultores y Ganaderos (COAG)..... Spain  
**Solidarnosc** . . . . . Poland  
Indian Federation of Toiling Peasants (IFTP)..... India  
Federación Nacional Sindical Unitaria Agropecuaria (FEN5UAGRO-CUT)..... Colombia  
Norwegian Farmers and Smallholders..... Norway  
Federación Nacional de Orgwizaciones Campesino-Indígenas (FBNOC-I)..... Ecuador  
Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesmas de Bolivia ‘Bartolina Sisa’ ..... Bolivia  
Unión Nacional de Agricultores y Ganaderos (UNAG)..... Nicaragua  
**WINFA** . . . . . Caribbean  
**CPE** . . . . . Europe  
**ASOCODE** . . . . . Central America