



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

25th session of the Human Rights Council

Point 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

Oral Statement

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Mr Chairman,

The CETIM and the FIMARC (Fédération Internationale des Mouvements d'Adultes Ruraux Catholiques) would first like to pay tribute to Mr Olivier de Schutter for his contributions to the implementation of the right to food. During the six years of his mandate, Mr de Schutter has studied various aspects of the right to food, ranging from methods and conditions of production to marketing of food products, and has made significant recommendations that constitute a sort of road map for governments in the worldwide fight against hunger and malnutrition. He has also demonstrated the irreplaceable role of small-scale and family agriculture in the fulfillment of the right to food and has defended the necessity of adopting a Declaration on the rights of peasants. He further attracted the attention of governments and other actors on the dangers for the right to food and food supply arising from certain policies currently being implemented. In this regard, one can mention biofuel production, GMOs, the manipulation of the right to intellectual property by transnational seeds corporations and the wide-scale land grab.

In spite of the solemn commitment of states in favor of the right to food and in favor of biodiversity, we note, unfortunately, no fundamental change of agricultural policy, nor any in the area of food production. In fact, the agrarian reform, enshrined in the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* is still not on the agenda of most countries. On the contrary, we see, on a world-wide scale, the concentration of fertile land in the hands of a small minority. Transnational corporations' monopoly of the food chain is being more and more reinforced. Production of biofuels is being presented as an alternative fossil fuel energy whereas their damage to the environment and to the right to food need no further proof. The destruction and prohibition of traditional seed threatens the very survival of humanity. There is a crying lack of support for family producers while subsidies are granted to industrial entities that, owing to the way they produce, destroy not only the environment but also local markets. The forced displacement of peasants and working conditions, bordering on slavery, for agricultural workers are still current. Stock market speculation on food products continues and is becoming generalized. The list is long indeed.

Mr Chairman,

The CETIM and the FIMARC have long been engaged in the promotion and protection of the right to food. We are also engaged in the defense of peasant and family agriculture. Today, this peasantry is threatened with extinction, yet it feeds the world and guarantees the alternative and

sustainable development model. The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming. The Human Rights Council last year began negotiations on a draft *Declaration on the Rights of Peasants*. The adoption of this text is a significant step in the recognition of family peasants and constitutes a rampart against the human rights violations to which this extremely vulnerable group is subjected. Thus, we call upon all states to support this process.

Geneva, 10 March 2014