



ALIANZA POR LA  
SOBERANÍA ALIMENTARIA  
DE LOS PUEBLOS DE  
AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL  
CARIBE

## **DEMARACHU DECLARATION**

### **CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONSULTATION OF PEOPLES, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND NGOs ON FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PRIOR TO THE 35TH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

The Consultation was held in the Guna Yala district of Panama, from January 31 to February 3, 2018, with representatives of regional and sub-regional movements and social organizations of Indigenous Peoples, peasants, family farmers, artisanal fishermen, women, afro-descendants, young people, rural workers, consumers, environmentalists and human rights activists. Regional officers of the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture (FAO) were also invited to participate.

The Consultation allowed us to study the political and social context in Latin America and the Caribbean, and reflect on the progress and setbacks of the last decade in the fight against all forms of hunger and poverty. It also allowed us to analyse the documents from the Regional Initiatives and get organized to participate actively in other topics on the agenda of the 35th FAO Regional Conference.

We recognize the steps taken by the region in the past decade to protect the Human Right to Adequate Food and fight hunger, as well as to reduce poverty and malnutrition. As shown by the economic, social, organizational and institutional indicators, the region has advanced, although with important differences between countries.

However, we are extremely concerned that the recent political, social and economic changes in several countries are reversing the social achievements of the past decade, as shown by the results published by FAO in its 2017 reports "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" and "Panorama of Food and Nutritional Security in Latin America and the Caribbean".



We understand that the main challenges facing the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean to develop a region with social, environmental and gender justice are: the concentration of wealth and political, economic and communicational power in the hands of a few; the hegemonic system of the production, commercialization and consumption of food; the violation of Human Rights; the unsustainable and destructive use of Water, Land and Territories with their severe environmental and social impacts, as well as the threat these pose to the biocultural heritage of our peoples; the rising rates of criminalization and violence as instruments to contain social protest; the high rates of overweight and obesity that affect the health of our peoples and increase public spending on health; the absence of relevant participation of social organizations and movements throughout the public policy cycle; and the lack of public policies that promote and ensure sustainable production and access to healthy foods.

The above has an especially significant impact on the most vulnerable sectors of the population such as women, young people, indigenous peoples, afro-descendants, artisanal fishermen and impoverished rural and urban communities.

We believe in the importance of the State and public policies and investment for the development of just and sustainable societies. Therefore, we call on States in the region to respect, protect and promote our rights in an inter-sectoral and coordinated manner.

This 35th Regional Conference is an opportunity to reverse the setbacks mentioned above, and it is essential that actions taken in these areas be based on existing agreements, both in the region and globally.

In this regard, we believe the key agreements are: Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food; the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the ILO Convention 169; the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the FAO Policy on Indigenous Peoples; the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Land, Fisheries and Forests in



the framework of national food security and nutrition; and, the resolution of the 32nd FAO Regional Conference, which called on FAO to deepen the debate on Food Sovereignty.

Other on-going processes are also helping to strengthen existing agreements, such as those carried out by the Human Rights Council of the United Nations to: draft the declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; develop an international instrument to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and other companies in international human rights law; and, hold the High Level Forum "Empowerment of Indigenous Women for the eradication of hunger and malnutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean".

We consider the above processes essential to building successful and sustainable regional initiatives over time. In this regard, we, the participants in the Consultation, make the following declaration:

- We reject the use of violence and the criminalization of social protest, and demand an end to the murders of social activists, as well as of persecutions of social movements and organizations. In this regard, we demand that States urgently implement effective policies to protect the women and men working to protect human and land rights;
- We defend and promote the central role of family farming and artisanal fishing to end hunger and eradicate all forms of malnutrition, as well as sustainable rural development and climate resilience that will help to achieve Food Sovereignty and Security for our region and protect the biocultural heritage of our peoples. For this reason, we highlight the importance of the region's active and coordinated involvement in the implementation of the Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028), approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations.



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- We defend the right of indigenous peoples to Free Prior Informed Consent, and we promote the extension of this right to other traditional actors of the territories.
- We affirm, based on our experience and traditional knowledge and research already endorsed by the United Nations, that agroecology is the most suitable and practical model for food production and proper nutrition. The States that are truly committed to ensuring the right to food must support and promote agroecology to drive the necessary changes in the food production, marketing and consumption model;
- We demand that States prioritize public policies that recognize the role of women in both creating and caring for life, in order to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty that affects many women.
- We believe in the importance of inter-sectoral policies that facilitate the basic rights of historically and systematically vulnerable groups such as peasants, family farmers, indigenous peoples and other traditional groups, afro-descendants and impoverished rural and urban communities, guaranteeing their participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of these policies.
- We promote the implementation of adequate and relevant public policies to rescue and preserve biodiversity and protect the right of our peoples to enjoy its benefits.
- We value and emphasize the importance of maintaining and strengthening Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger, given their role in the struggle for the protection of the Right to Adequate Food. We remain committed to continue strengthening our dialogue with these initiatives.

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1 SCHUTTER, O. The transformative potential of the right to food. Resolution 22/9. Final report by the author on the right to food, presented to the 25th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, item 3 of the agenda, 2014.



- We reaffirm that communication and training continue to be important components in our fight for Food Sovereignty, especially given their role in driving change and building consensus, as well as in creating meanings and values that represent our political objectives and give visibility to the processes of resistance, while promoting the development of collaborative and complementary proposals.
- Finally, we acknowledge and recognize the leadership of FAO General Director, el Dr. José Graziano da Silva, in promoting greater participation of social movements and organizations within the FAO agenda such as the Regional Conferences among others, as well as the support in the reform of the World Food Security and the Civil Society Mechanism. That permitted recognizing that currently the CFS is the most participatory and inclusive space of the United Nations. Therefore:

It is important to effectively preserve this level of participation and ensure that there are no qualitative or quantitative setbacks.

We will continue to defend the realization of the Human Right to Adequate and Healthy Food while resisting privatization, commodification and the financierization of life. Water and food are not goods.

We hope that States and their governments are up to the challenges of the current regional and global context for the protection of Food Sovereignty and Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, and continue to keep their commitments assumed in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

**Consultation of Civil society  
Demarachu, Guna Yala district, Panama, February 3, 2018**

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