

**International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC): Terra Preta Forum  
“Now is the Time for Food Sovereignty”**

**Statement to the High Level Conference on World Food Security: the  
Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy – Rome, June 5, 2008**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Dear distinguished delegates and honoured Director General,

My name is Ben Powless of the Indigenous Environmental Network and the International Indian Treaty Council, from the Mohawk Nation in Canada. I am speaking on behalf of the Terra Preta Forum, representing millions of food producers from five continents, organized by the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty.

The serious and urgent food and climate crises are being used by political and economic elites as opportunities to entrench corporate control of world agriculture and the ecological commons. Actions by some governments and top UN leadership at the High Level Conference on World Food Security, Climate Change and Bio-Energy (the FAO Summit) constitute an assault on small scale food producers, among whom women and Indigenous Peoples are in the forefront, and the natural commons.

Since the food and energy crisis in 1974, food crises have been exploited by agribusiness companies, local and global elites to concentrate control over farming, fisheries, land and territory, water, forests, seeds, breeds, transportation, distribution and energy sources. The rapidly emerging and cumulative climate crisis is being exploited by the same elites through market transactions such as carbon trading and emission offsets, and profitable techno-fixes such as agro-fuels and patented technologies, including synthetic biology. Some multilateral agencies are creating policy conditions to enable corporate conglomerations across energy, agribusiness, bio-technology and automotive industries.

As it stands now, the UN High Level Task Force on the Food Crisis may facilitate further convergence of the most powerful actors from the private finance, technology and business sectors to extract profits in the name of crisis management.

We reject the corporate, industrial and energy-intensive model of production and consumption that is the basis of continuing crises. We affirm that the paradigm of Peoples' Food Sovereignty form the guiding framework for our future actions and the survival of humanity.

**We make the following requests to governments:**

1. Never compromise the Right to Food.
2. Establish small-holder agro-ecological farming, fishing and pastoralism as the foundation of food provision, soil carbon regeneration, restoration of natural and farm habitats for carbon sequestration and water security and management of the climate change emergency, in particular supporting certified and uncertified organic farming.
3. Promote adaptation and mitigation funds for low-carbon, sustainable small holder food production, and ensure that these funds do not contribute to violations of the right to food. In particular insist on government and multilateral financing for small-scale food providers.
4. Include agriculture that supports food sovereignty in the framework of future climate change negotiations, particularly the post-2012 Kyoto commitments.
5. Support comprehensive agrarian reform as a prerequisite to protecting our lands, territories, water, biodiversity and knowledge.

6. Resist the production and export of agro-fuels as promoted and controlled by the corporate sector and facilitated by some multilateral agencies.
7. Support policies that strengthen the right to food sovereignty and the right to adequate food, including educational work and support for international instruments like the voluntary guidelines on the Right to Food and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
8. Ensure justice for the victims of the food emergency, by bringing to account, through criminal proceedings, corporations and institutions whose profiteering from agricultural inputs and products has denied communities their right to food.
9. Set up a Commission on Food Sovereignty, under the auspices of the United Nations, constituted by representatives of governments and organisations of fisherfolk, peasant and small-scale farmers, pastoralists and Indigenous Peoples, to identify, document and advance collective strategies for solving the food and climate crises.

Small-scale food producers are feeding the planet and we demand respect and support to continue. Only Food Sovereignty can offer long-term, sustainable, equitable and just solutions to the urgent food and climate crises.

**THERE WILL BE NO SOLUTION TO THE CLIMATE AND FOOD CRISES WITHOUT US!**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.