



"Land, Territory and Dignity" Forum, Porto Alegre, March 6-9, 2006

For a New Agrarian Reform based on Food Sovereignty!

Political Statement

I am Tui Aroha Warmenhoven my heritage is Maori, the people indigenous to New Zealand.

I will voice here the feelings and aspirations of the organizations of peasants, family farmers, indigenous peoples, landless peoples, artisanal fisherfolk, rural workers, migrants, pastoralists, forest communities, rural women, rural youth, and defenders of human rights, rural development, the environment, and others.

I will present a summary of the final declaration of the Forum "Land, Territory and Dignity" which we formally submitted yesterday to the Presidency of this conference.

Food Sovereignty and Agrarian Reform

The new agrarian reform must recognize the socio-environmental function of land, the sea, and natural resources, in the context of food sovereignty. We understand that food sovereignty implies policies of redistribution, equitable access and control over natural and productive resources. Rural development policies based on agroecological strategies centered on peasant and family agricultural and artisanal fishing; trade policies against dumping and in favor of peasant and indigenous production for local, regional and national markets; and complementary public sector policies like health care, education and infrastructure for the countryside.

The use of natural resources should primarily be for food production.

The new agrarian reform must be a high priority on the public agenda.

In the context of food sovereignty, agrarian reform benefits all society, providing healthy, accessible and culturally appropriate food, and social justice.

Food sovereignty is based on the human right to food, to self-determination, on indigenous rights to territory, and on the rights of rural peoples to produce food for local and national markets. Food sovereignty defends agriculture *with* farmers, fisheries *with* artisanal fishing families, forestry *with* forest communities, and steppes *with* nomadic pastoralists. Agrarian reform should assure the creation of the spaces where we can maintain our cultures, so that our communities can develop their full diversity and so we can construct a citizenship on the basis of our relationship to the land, the sea, the forests....

Role of the State

The State must play a strong role in policies of agrarian reform and food production. The State must apply policies that recognize rights and democratize access to land, to coastal areas, forests and so on, specifically in cases where access to these resources are concentrated in the hands of a few. Furthermore, the State should guarantee community control over natural resources by peasants, fisherfolk, pastoralists, forest communities, and indigenous peoples, so that they can continue to live and work in the countryside and on the coasts maintaining their collective and community rights.

Agrarian reform should create productive occupations, jobs with dignity that strengthen the rights of rural workers. States have the obligation to define, without external influences such as WTO, their own agrarian, agricultural, fishing and food policies in such a way as to guarantee the right to food and other economic, social and cultural rights for the entire population.

Territory

We believe that the new agrarian reform must include a cosmovision of the territories of communities of peasants, the landless, indigenous peoples, rural workers, fisherfolk, nomadic pastoralists, tribes, afrodescendents, ethnic minorities, and displaced peoples, who base their work on the production of food and who maintain a relationship of respect and harmony with Mother Earth including the oceans.

All communities, whether in the North or in the South, have the right to possess, develop, control, use and reconstruct their social structures; to politically and socially administer their lands and territories. This implies the recognition of their laws, traditions, customs, tenure systems, and institutions, as well as the

recognition of territorial borders and the cultures of peoples. This all constitutes the recognition of the self-determination and autonomy of peoples.

Women and future generations

We recognize the fundamental role of women in agriculture and fishing and in the use and management of natural resources. There can be no genuine agrarian reform without gender equity. Therefore we demand and we commit ourselves to ensuring that women receive full equality of opportunities and rights to land and natural resources that recognize their diversity. We also believe that without young people who stay in the countryside there is no future for our societies. The new agrarian reform must give priority both to women's rights and to guaranteeing a future with dignity for today's rural youth.

We demand that governments honor their commitments and obligations that they assumed in various international conferences such as the Beijing Conference and the World Conference on Racism. Their commitments to gender equality and racial diversity that are upheld in the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Peasant Charta that was adopted in the World Conference On Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

No to the Privatization of Water, the oceans and the Land and No the Dominant Model of Production and Development

Together with the privatization of land and coastal areas we are seeing the privation of biodiversity.

Life is not a commodity.

We will continue to **resist** the neoliberal policies implemented by our governments and imposed by the World Bank, WTO and other actors. We reject the approach to privatizing agrarian reform. We consider that it is illegitimate. It is the people and not the World Bank who should decide agrarian, fishing, and food policies.

We strongly oppose the introduction of transgenic seeds and the suicide or "terminator" seed technology that expropriates the control over seeds from our rural communities and transfers it to a handful of transnational corporations.

By the same token, we will continue to resist the dominant model of production and development, with its processes of neoliberal globalization and recolonization, the transformation and insertion of farming, fishing and forestry into the production chains of transnational corporations, industrial agriculture, forestry and current fisheries practices. Investments in mining, agro-exports, mega-projects, biopiracy, and green neoliberalism will destroy our territories, our agriculture native forests fishing.

Criminalization and repression of social movements.

We repudiate and condemn the repression that we face, that any person who fights for agrarian reform faces, in almost all countries—in the Americas, the Pacific, Asia, Europe, and in Africa. We denounce the militarization and military occupation that displaces our peoples from their territories.

We demand that the States establish mechanisms for protection of life and security of persons who struggle to protect their land, water and natural resources. States must guarantee effective legal mechanisms for punishing those who are guilty of such crimes.

Social mobilization as a strategy of struggle and construction of proposals.

For us Food Sovereignty is not just a vision but a common struggle that allows to grow unity in our diversity. We believe that access and control over natural resources, food production, and the increase of decision-making power are three main themes that bring us together.

Our demands to the governments

Agrarian reforms must in no case be subjected to or restrained by international free trade agreements. Agrarian reforms imply human rights obligations. The Human Rights Treaties have legal primacy over any free trade agreement. Therefore we demand our governments comply with their human rights obligations and autonomously define agrarian reform policies. We find it unacceptable that governments subject agrarian reform to WTO conditions.

Social movements and the civil society organizations are vital. We demand that the dialogue on an equal footing between governments and civil society organizations. This is a fundamental practice which should be adopted for the future.

We ask the governments and FAO to prioritize agrarian reform in their agendas. This a new beginning for a new agrarian reform process. We condemn those powerful countries have not acknowledged the importance of this conference.

We ask the governments to take responsibility ensuring that FAO has meaningful conditions within which to carry out its work. FAO can not fulfill its mandate in the current situation.

We recommend to the governments willing to implement agrarian reform programmes to establish a “Special Programme for Agrarian Reform” which should support agrarian reform programmes at the national level.

The new agrarian reform must recognize as vital actors the peasants, family farmers, indigenous peoples, landless peoples, artisanal fisherfolks, rural workers, migrants, pastoralists, forest communities, rural women and youth.

We respect and thank the country of Brazil and the FAO for providing this space to us.

**Land, sea, and territory to affirm our dignity.
Land, sea, and territory for dreams.
Land, sea, and territory for LIFE**

For more information please contact: lo@foodsovereignty.org