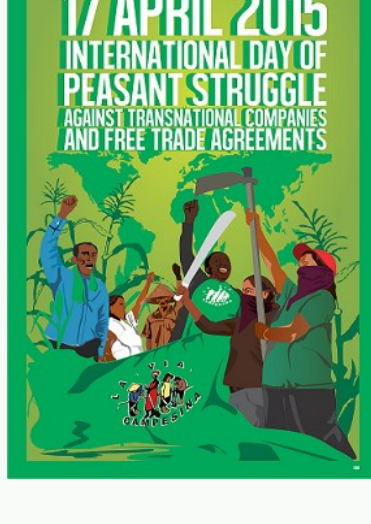




HIGHLIGHTED ARTICLE

April 17: Farmers mobilise around the world against Free Trade Agreements and for food sovereignty

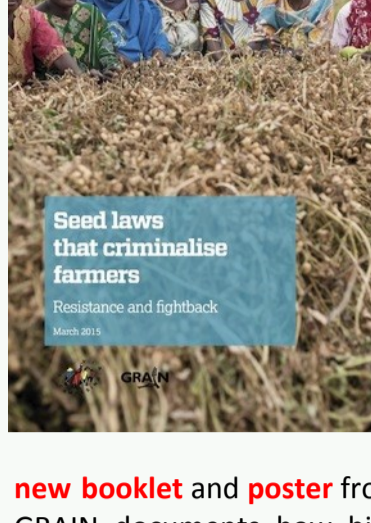


(Zimbabwe, Harare, April 17, 2015) Today thousands of women and men farmers of the international peasant movement La Via Campesina mobilize worldwide against Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) which affect peasant and small-scale agriculture and national food sovereignty. Since April 17, 1996 [1] La Via Campesina celebrates this day as a global day of action with allies and friends. Free Trade Agreements promote TNCs and a capitalist industrialised mode of production heavily reliant on agrochemicals. These have increased the displacement, expulsion, and disappearance of peasants. Free Trade Agreements put profit over all other rights and concerns. Currently, the most significant FTAs in history are being negotiated by the European Union, the United States, and Canada. These agreements, if finalised, will liberalize trade and investment markets in favour of transnational companies (see tv.viacampesina.org/April-17th). [Read more...](#)

ARTICLES FROM THE REGIONS

New publication - Seed laws that criminalise farmers: resistance and fightback

La Via Campesina/GRAIN Media release - 8 April 2015



Peasant seeds – the pillar of food production – are under attack everywhere. Under corporate pressure, laws in many countries increasingly limit what farmers can do with their seeds. Seed saving, which has been the basis of farming for thousands of years, is quickly being criminalised.

What can we do? A new booklet and poster from La Via Campesina and GRAIN documents how big business and governments are moving to stop farmers from saving and exchanging their seeds, and shows how farmers are fighting back.

Control over seeds must remain in peasants' hands. This is the principle, based in the production process that guarantees the food sovereignty of rural communities and urban populations against multinationals and their enormous profits. Over centuries, peasant farmers have created the thousands of varieties of crops that are the basis of the world's food supply and diversified diets, says La Via Campesina's Guy Kastler.

[Read more...](#)

Free trade agreements on the rise – Intense negotiations and growing resistance



Article by Solidarity Sweden – Latin America 2015 is a year of big—and perhaps irreversible—changes due to the multiple processes of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) around the world. These deals are being concretized without most people understanding what they imply and how they affect citizens all over the world. Therefore, as April 17th, marks the International Day of Peasants' Struggle, peasants themselves have dedicated the commemoration as a time to fight against FTAs and corporate power. We too, introduce the question of FTAs to encourage awareness about what is at stake. What is the origin of these agreements? What effects have they had where they are already implemented? Who wins and who loses? [Read more...](#)

Final declaration of the 6th Congress of CLOC Via Campesina

On the International Day of Peasant Struggles and after a march through Buenos Aires streets from the US Embassy, an imperialist symbol, to the Argentinean Rural Association, a symbol of agribusiness in the country, the organizers shared the final statement of the 6th Congress of the Latin American Coordination of Countryside Organizations (CLOC-Via Campesina) which you can read below. The document is a result of eight days of debates and was read by representatives of the Youth Assembly of CLOC.



"Each person shines with his or her own light. No two flames are alike. There are big flames and little flames, flames of every color. Some people's flames are so still they don't even flicker in the wind, while others have wild flames that fill the air with sparks. Some foolish flames neither burn nor shed light, but others blaze with life so fiercely that you can't look at them without blinking, and if you approach you shine in the fire". [Read more...](#)

Argentina: Peasants gather for food sovereignty



(Argentina, Buenos Aires, April 11, 2015) The IV Assembly of Youth marked the beginning of the VI Congress of the Latin American Coordination of Rural Organizations, the CLOC-Via Campesina in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The congress started on the 10th and will end on the 17th of April, and will close with a massive march in commemoration of the International Day of Peasant's Struggle. Over a thousand representatives of peasant movements from the Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe will attend this gathering, united by the slogan: **Against Capitalism for the sovereignty of our peoples: America is united and continues to struggle.** Diego Montón, representative of CLOC-VC's general secretariat said that **"The congress is arranged every four years in order to join forces in the struggle against systematic human rights violations to which our peasantry is exposed"**. [Read more...](#)

African farmers unite against Transnational Corporations

Caritas, Malhangalene, Maputo City Maputo, Mozambique, 20 February 2015 – We, more than 40 farmers and members of civil society, women and men, from Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Ivory Coast, met in Maputo, Mozambique, from 17 to 20 February 2015 to discuss the state of Transnational Corporations and how they harm our livelihoods as farmers and farm workers.

We have learned how Transnational Corporations are harmful to human dignity and how destructive they are to Mother Earth. We are aware of the intention that corporates have to eliminate the peasantry in Africa in favor of industrial agriculture that promotes intensive and monoculture-based agriculture to produce crops for export. [Read more...](#)

6th Congress of CLOC-Via Campesina: To guarantee the right to food



6th Congress of CLOC-Via Campesina An important achievement from the International Year of Family Farming which the UN declared in 2014, in the context of the food crisis, has been to amplify the debate between agribusiness and peasant agriculture, which the symbiosis between the former and big media had practically silenced.

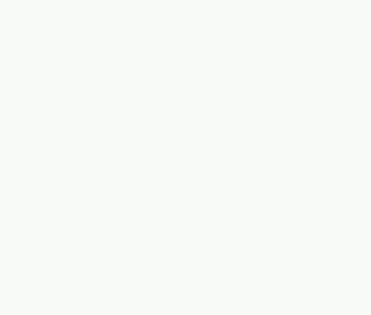
At the official level, for example, FAO General Director José Graziano da Silva, in his opening speech at the 24th session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in Rome (September), declared that policymakers should support a broad array of approaches to overhauling global food systems, making them healthier and more sustainable while acknowledging that "we cannot rely on an input intensive model to increase production and that the solutions of the past have shown their limits"... Calling for a "paradigm shift", he said that today's main challenges are to lower the use of agricultural inputs, especially water and chemicals, in order to put agriculture, forestry and fisheries on a more sustainable and productive long-term path. [1] [Read more...](#)

Major Earthquake in Nepal has Caused Great Suffering and Destruction

La Via Campesina solidarity message and call for support

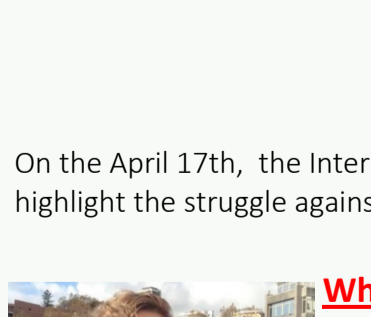
La Via Campesina wants to express its solidarity and support with the peasants and all people in Nepal after the terrible recent earthquake. Nepalese authorities estimate that almost 10.000 people may have died, and many more wounded. We are deeply saddened by this tragedy that has taken place as well as by the suffering of all the people that lost relatives, friends and their homes. We are especially aware that suffering is made worse in remote rural villages where the situation is critical. These areas cannot be reached by regular transport, making it difficult to organize support. [Read more...](#)

Why do we say NO-to-FTAs-TTIP?



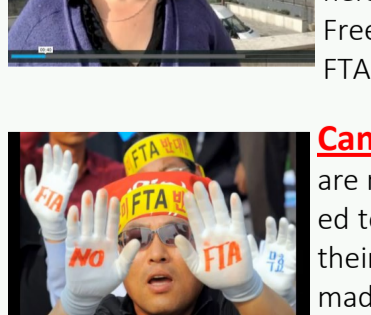
Via Campesina leaders from Europe, US and Canada explain how the new Free Trade Agreements affect Food Sovereignty. Trade agreements and partnerships such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Economic and Trade Agreement and the Transatlantic Free Trade Area represent a threat to local markets. Via Campesina says NO to these FTAs.

Campaigns-Against-Free-Trade:



These agreements – "bilateral", for short – are negotiated in secret, far from the reach of parliaments or people. They have tended to attract far less attention than World Trade Organization negotiations – and yet their provisions often go even further than existing trade liberalization commitments made at the WTO.

TTIP-Agriculture and Food Industry:



Hanny Van Geel, farmer and member of Via Campesina, explains in this interview how the implementation of TTIP affects European farmers and agriculture, the quality of the food we eat and how we live.

La Via Campesina extremely concerned about Yarmouk Palestinian Refugee Camp situation

La Via Campesina Release, April 7th, 2015

La Via Campesina has been watching recent reports of the invasion of the Palestinian refugee camp Yarmouk by extremist armed forces with great concern. It comes at a time when the camp is suffering from a two-year siege on it. We are extremely worried about the wellbeing of our friends and partners in the food sovereignty projects on the ground, who have been targeted by armed forces. The recent targeted execution of civil society activist Firas Al Najji—a founder of food sovereignty projects in Yarmouk (which aim to ease the suffering of a community living with severe malnutrition due to the siege), among other initiatives—is a dark example of the grave situation that civil society faces. We are also deeply concerned for the safety of Abdullah Al Khateeb and other human rights defenders targeted by militant groups. The threat against all of these active members of civil society is massive, and we do not want to stand quietly aside while they and their community are targeted. [Read more...](#)

La Via Campesina at the World Social Forum in order to promote Food Sovereignty

Harare, 15 March, 2015 - La Via Campesina, an International Peasant Movement, will be represented at the World Social Forum in Tunis as from March 24th up to 28th by a bunch of fifty delegates, made up of peasant (men and women), farming labors, from more than 20 countries of the global regions, with a particular focus of the Arabic world delegates.

La Via Campesina considers this as an important space for mobilization opportunity around alternatives and proposals in favor of Food sovereignty as well as strengthening the solidarity with the allies and other social movements, mainly the Maghreb and Mashreq ones. [Read more...](#)

Global Justice Movements Converge on Revolutionary Ground

Salena Tramel

Collective adrenaline ran high as the World Social Forum opened on March 24 in Tunis. It had not yet been five years since a peaceful revolution brought a dictatorship long backed by Western political superpowers to its knees and ignited the fire of the Arab Spring that burns to this day. And it had not yet been a week since shooters stormed the Bardo Museum, killing 22, and retesting the resolve of a delicately budding democracy.

Tens of thousands of delegates from across the globe converged in Tunis not only to show support for Tunisian sovereignty, but also to share their own local struggles and solutions while advocating change in the face of interlinked systemic injustices. The opening march easily demonstrated the diversity of the constituency—bands of Tunisian students in perfect stride with Latin American labor organizers and Sub-Saharan African small-scale food producers, knit together by the unraveling food, climate, energy, and financial crises. [Read more...](#)

Declaration of the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles

Rights to Water and Land, a Common Struggle

Dakar to Tunis: Declaration of the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles (Tunis, 28 March 2015)

We, social movements, grassroots organizations and civil society organizations engaged in the defence of the rights to land and water, gathered in October 2014 in Dakar at the African Social Forum. We are fighting and protesting against natural resource grabbing, especially water and land grabbing of our Commons, and against the systematic violations of the associated human rights. Sharing our ideas led to acknowledgement of the essential linkage between our struggles, given the inextricable nature of land and water grabbing. We met again at the World Social Forum in Tunis in March 2015 to continue this dialogue with movements and organizations from all over the world in order to broaden this convergence. [Read more...](#)

La Via Campesina Declaration on Migration and Rural Workers

March 25, 2015 – World Social Forum Tunis 2015

The migration of peoples across arbitrary barriers is an integral part of human history. Rooted in the search for better living conditions, this movement of peoples from one place to another was later transformed into a social, economic, and political process that has largely served to benefit ruling elites – the slave traders of the past and the multinationals of the present. Today, as capital demands exceptional freedoms for itself – combined with greater restrictions on the poor – wars, social exclusion, economic injustice, and the global climate crisis are forcing millions of human beings to seek refuge across internationally imposed boundaries.

As financial capital and agribusiness concentrates its power and holdings – diminishing opportunities for diversified and sustainable smallholder farming – precarious livelihoods continue to aggressively push a growing number of rural people off their farms and into the city. [Read more...](#)

Declaration of the Social Movements Assembly – World Social Forum 2015

Tunisia, Tunis, 27 March 2015

The people, united, will never be defeated!

The Social Movements Assembly of the WSF 2015, Tunisia is the place where we come together through all our diversity, in order to forge a collective agenda to fight against capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy, racism and all forms of discrimination and oppression.

We have forged a common history and a common stream of work which led to some progress, with the hope to garner some amount of victory against the ruling system and to create several alternatives for a socially just development that respects nature. [Read more...](#)

In response to the criminalisation of the social struggle, La Via Campesina sends a message of solidarity

(Harare, March 27, 2015) La Via Campesina International expresses its condemnation of the following acts of criminalisation and persecution of social protest that have taken place very recently:

✦ The attempted murder of Gene Santos, a communications advisor for the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil. The incident took place in Tamboril, on the night of March 13th, when Mr. Santos was returning to his home in the settlement of "Monte Alegre". He was shot at several times by a single person, but was able to escape unharmed. [Read more...](#)

End of Milk quotas to affect many European dairy farms

Press Release 31 March 2015

The ECVC denounces the European milk industry and the end the milk quota system which threatens thousands of European dairy farmers with bankruptcy

"End of Milk quotas puts thousands of European dairy farms on the path to extinction"

The European Coordination Via Campesina denounces the end of the milk quota system, which will come into effect on April 1st 2015. This signifies the abandonment of small-scale European milk producers in favour of industrial-scale distributors. Without quotas, the dairy industry will have the power to choose the dates, the prices, the quality parameters and the collection areas for milk. This threatens the more equitable and resilient model of dairy production based on family farms distributed across rural areas. Without quotas the only farms that will be able to survive are a handful of industrial-scale producers who offer less employment, lower animal welfare, lower environmental sustainability and the widespread use of antibiotics. [Read more...](#)

New Videos!

On the April 17th, the International Day of Peasant Struggle, La Via Campesina shared the videos below to highlight the struggle against Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).

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