



## La Via Campesina welcomes the UN Human Rights Council move to challenge corporate impunity

La Via Campesina Press Release

(Switzerland, Geneva, June 27, 2014) La Via Campesina welcomes the resolution approved at the UN Human Rights Council to draw up a binding treaty to punish the crimes of transnational companies (TNC's). "This is a victory for peasants, who in most cases are unable to access legal systems to take actions against the impunity of TNCs. Also, looking at the current agricultural activities that have been captured by multinational companies, the instrument will be a great tool for the victims to file cases against land-grabbing by TNCs. We thank the initiating countries and the countries that voted in favour." said Themba Chauke from the South African Landless Peoples Movement, a member of La Via Campesina.

Violence, evictions, intimidation, the criminalisation of struggles as well as assassinations of farmers who are defending their livelihood, their land and their communities have become common practice used by agribusiness, TNCs, local elites and governments. This violence is linked to the privatization of nature, the concentration of land and the increased corporate control of the food chain. [Read more ...](#)

## La Via Campesina's position on the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) - 2014

Press Release - La Via Campesina

### A space for the promotion of concrete policies on peasant family farming

(Harare, 25 June 2014) La Via Campesina defines participation in the International Year of Family Farming, propelled by the UN in 2014, as the creation of a space for discussion and collective action to push Food Sovereignty that has peasants and small farmers as a basis. All throughout the world they continue to grow and distribute healthy, self-produced food in their towns, in stark contrast to the commercial food industry, whose priorities are profit and

speculation and whose strategy is to make agriculture increasingly dependent on agro-toxics, increasing their profits through the sale of herbicides, whilst damaging and contaminating natural resources.

We have witnessed a profound food crisis, which has brought attention to peasant based food production and the eradication of hunger within the UN's agenda. The UN has recognised the crucial role that male and female peasants play in this arduous task. It is imperative, during this IYFF, that critical steps be taken and that commitment be mobilised so that policies to protect and to strengthen peasant family farming might be implemented. La Via Campesina supports a model of food production which promotes Food Sovereignty. During the IYFF, La Via Campesina looks to offer political proposals within the framework of Food Sovereignty, constructed by small farmers, which will generate employment, provide healthy food, and respect natural resources. [Read more ...](#)

## Indonesia: SPI Condemns Violence towards Peasants, in Rembang, East Java

(Indonesia, JAKARTA, June 26, 2014). Indonesia has witnessed scenes of violence against peasants once again. This time it was connected with plans to build a cement factory on agricultural land. On the 16th June 2014 in the Kendeng Mountains near Rembang in Central Java, the police and military officers were brutal in their treatment of hundreds of villagers, mostly women. The villagers were considered to be disrupting or blocking the access road to a ceremony marking the start of the building of a cement factory by Semen Indonesia, which is planned to occupy 55 hectares of land in the Gunem sub-district of Rembang. This violence was clearly contrary to religious teachings, cultural values and human rights. Changing the land use from farmland to a quarry means the loss of food sources for people in general and also a loss source of livelihood for farmers. Moreover, such a change has negative environmental effects on water (both for drinking and agricultural use) and air, which will cause damaging effects on health. [Read more...](#)

## Joint Statement: Call for an international legally binding instrument on human rights, transnational corporations and other business enterprises

This joint statement endorsed by a wide alliance of international networks, organizations and social movements called for a further enhancement of international legal standards to address corporate infringements of human rights. It builds upon support by some States in the United Nations Human Rights Council, presented by Ecuador in the session of September 2013, to develop such an international treaty. The alliance is, however, concerned about the continuing global abuses and violations of human rights including criminalization which disproportionately impacts women who are the majority of workers in most vulnerable sectors, peasants, indigenous peoples, persons living in poverty, children among others, and the denial of access to justice for such people. The statement calls upon the States to elaborate an international treaty that monitors and regulates the TNCs operations and provides for legal liability for business enterprises for actions or omissions that infringe human rights. [Read more ...](#)

## Hungry for Land: Small farmers feed the world - with less than a quarter of all farmland

GRAIN/La Via Campesina media release

(29 May 2014) Governments and international agencies frequently boast that small farmers control the largest share of the world's agricultural land. When the FAO director general inaugurated 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming, besides exalting family farmers but didn't once mention the need for land reform. Instead, he announced that family farms already manage most of the world's farmland – a whopping 70%, according to his team. But a new review of the data carried out by GRAIN reveals that the opposite is true. Small farms, which produce most of the world's food, are currently squeezed onto less than a quarter of the world's farmland – or less than one fifth if one excludes China and India. This revelation places urgency on need to put land back in the hands of small farmers and make the struggle for genuine and comprehensive agrarian reform central to the fight for better food systems, which most peasant organisations and landless people's movements have long been fighting for. This report (<http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4929>) provides an in-depth review of the data on farm structures and food production worldwide and makes six central conclusions. [Read more ...](#)

## In order to feed Humanity, small farmers reclaim their rights!

(Switzerland, Geneva, 18 June 2014) From June 11 to the 13<sup>th</sup>, a delegation of La Via Campesina participated in the 26<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva in order to pursue its advocacy for the drafting of an International Declaration on the Rights of peasants and people working in rural areas. La Via Campesina together with FIAN, CETIM has been working on this project for over a decade. Following this 26<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Council meeting, the member states will vote on a resolution calling for the renewal of the intergovernmental group's mandate to continue the drafting of this declaration, based on recommendations that will emerge from the first working group meeting and other consultative meetings to be held between June and November this year. [Read more ...](#)

## UAWC Launches a Solidarity Campaign: "Protecting Our Land and Supporting Our Farmers"

(Palestine, Ramallah- May 2, 2014) The Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) launched a solidarity campaign with the farmers in the West Bank under the slogan "*Protecting Our Land and Supporting Our Farmers*". The campaign seeks to strengthen the voluntary work values in Palestine and support the farmers' resilience on their land and rights within the project "*Defending Our Rights*" funded by the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). [Read more ...](#)

## UAWC: Urgent appeal

UAWC calls upon the international community to interfere to save the lives of the Palestinian administrative detainees

Administrative detainees have been on an open hunger strike in the Israeli prison since 24 April 2014, calling for ending administrative detention against them. Dozens of other prisoners joined the strike in solidarity with the administrative detainees. However, the Israeli prison authorities refuse to listen to the detainees' demands and have since imposed retributive measures against them, including transferring them to solitary confinement, depriving them of necessary health care in addition to beating them. [Read more ....](#)

## Open call: Join Week of Mobilization to Stop Corporate Crimes and Impunity at the UNHRC

(Switzerland, Geneva) In June 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) will discuss the adoption of a resolution to establish a legally binding instrument to enforce binding rules regarding human rights and Transnational Corporations (TNCs). As a result of ongoing violations of human rights by TNCs such as the 2013 Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh that killed 1,132 factory (mostly female) workers, the 2012 Marikana massacre of 34 miners in South Africa, the ongoing destruction caused by Shell in Nigeria's Ogoniland and by Chevron in the Ecuadorean Amazon as well as the human rights violations linked to the Cerrejon Coal mine in Colombia, along with countless others, the need for radical action to control the devastating violations by TNCs has never been more urgent. In order to push the UNHRC to adopt this type of binding Treaty, a coalition of social movements, networks and civil society organizations is organizing a full week of mobilization. [Read more ...](#)

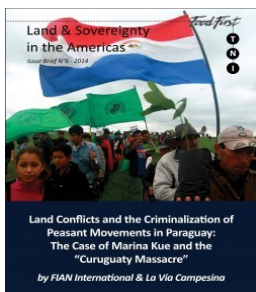
## Solidarity with Struggle for Land in Shimoga, Karnataka: "We will fight unto death!"

In the foothills of the Western Ghats, in the villages of Badanehaalu, Bandigudda, Belligere, and Udaynagara in Shimoga district, Karnataka, small farmer and pastoralist families constantly struggle for land against the Forest Department. These families have lived here for over 70 years, each farming small plots of 0.5 – 3 acres along with doing other wage labour to fill their stomach. Most families did not have document proof, and were labelled bagar hukum or "without permission" cultivators. One year ago, in March 2013, The Forest Department deployed JCB and Hitachi bulldozers to dig trenches, clear fields and remove all signs of cultivation. The bulldozers were confronted with a band of 25 women villagers, marching up to challenge them. When asked what motivated her to go fight the machines, one woman told me: "Seeing our farms being cleared, I had an image of poison running through the bodies of my children!" [Read more](#)

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## Publications

## Land Conflicts and the Criminalization of Peasant Movements in Paraguay: The Case of Marina Kue and the "Curuguaty Massacre"



(June, 2014) This report—authored by human rights advocacy organization FIAN International and international peasant movement La Via Campesina, is based on the findings of an international fact-finding investigation carried out in September 2012, after the June 15 "Curuguaty massacre" where seventeen people died in Curuguaty, Paraguay. These people were killed during eviction of the landless peasants who occupied land (Marina Kue) by police and prosecutors. It shows evidence of widespread human rights violations, legal irregularities and a state-sponsored campaign to criminalize peasant movements struggling to access land on which to grow food. The report is part of the Land & Sovereignty in the Americas publications series of Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy. [Click here to download the report](#)

## Creating knowledge for Food Sovereignty



The Nyeleni Newsletter, issue number 18 has been published and it's available online [Click here to download the english edition](#). This issue focuses on the movement in the many worlds that are creating knowledge for food sovereignty! Worlds that view the need to radically transform dominant knowledge and ways of organizing food sovereignty. The stories in this newsletter provide a glimpse into some of these worlds.

## New videos on Via Campesina TV



- **Feed Europe: Food Sovereignty and agro-ecology** [click here to watch](#)
- **The Jakarta Documentary** [click here to watch](#)
- **Corporations celebrate new scramble for Africa** [click here to watch](#)

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