



LA VIA CAMPESINA
International Peasant Movement

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Mozambique: "Agroecological farming came to stay in Marracuene" — says the farmers

(Mozambique, Maputo, July 11, 2014) – the agroecological farming methods are there to stay among the farmers in Marracuene, south Mozambique. The farmers from Alfredo Nhamitete's farming Association, a member of the National Farmers Union (União Nacional de Camponeses — UNAC) made this resolve during a knowledge exchange visit between the local farmers and the visiting members of Zimbabwe's Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF) and La Via Campesina, on July 9.

The 280 association members produce different food crops such as yam, carrot, cabbage, onion, kale, beans, lettuce, eggplant, among others. Part of the produce is sold at the local market, and the earnings are equally shared among the members. "With that money I can send my children to school, and buy them school supplies", said a woman farmer, and member of the association. UNAC provides technical support to this association, which enables them to practice sustainable, cheaper agroecological farming methods. It also runs a program to produce and conserve traditional seeds in partnership with the Movimento dos Pequenos Agricultores of Brazil. [Read more...](#)

A victory on our path to an international declaration on the rights of peasants

Press release - La Via Campesina

(Switzerland, Geneva, June 27, 2014) United Nations Human Rights Council Assembly passed a resolution authorising the continuation of the process of drafting an international declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas. Bolivia is in charge of starting up informal consultations between States and civil society as well as organising the second session of the Intergovernmental Open-Ended Working Group, which is scheduled to take place in November 2014.

The declaration project originated started by La Via Campesina, and it is the fruit of ten years of work on the part of this international movement, comprised of over 164 organisations in 73 countries. The Via Campesina set itself the task of categorising the forms of discrimination suffered by people working in rural areas (peasants, agricultural workers, nomads and pastoralists, fishers, indigenous peoples, landless workers, etc.) and, with the support of organisations such as FIAN-international and CETIM (the Europe-Third World Centre), of defining the specific human rights applicable to their situation. [Read more...](#)

The Statement of Assembly of the Poor

Stop Tyrant and Abusive Actions against the Poor in Buriram province by the Royal Thai Army 2nd Regional Command

The National Peace and Order Maintaining Council (NPOMC) issued the NPOMC Order No. 64/2557 entitled Suppression and stop the encroachment and destruction of forest resources and the NPOMC Order No. 66/2557 entitle addition of government agencies for suppression and stop the encroachment and destruction of forest resources and interim policies on practices in the current situation. Accordingly on 28 June 2014, a fully armed force comprising soldiers from the Royal Thai Army 2nd Regional Command, policemen and forest officers, approximately 50 persons, entered Kaobart Village, Nondindaeng District in Buriram province, covered by the Assembly of the Poor. This village has been in conflict over land and forest for a long time. The soldiers informed the villagers that the army wants to take the land back after the harvest and wants them to dismantle their houses and leave the village. And that if the villagers stay, the army will destroy their houses. On the same day the soldiers took and detained 10 leaders of the Siangsawan Village, Nondindaeng District in Buriram province, which is also a conflict area.

We, Assembly of the Poor, see that the operation of the soldiers in the Royal Thai Army 2nd Regional Command on the mentioned date happens as we anticipated after the issuance of the Order No. 64/2557 and we already opposed in our statement entitled "Stop abusing the poor". [Read more...](#) and The Assembly of the Poor sent an Open Letter ([click here to open](#)) inviting media, academic, human activists and justice minded people to observe and monitor the forced evictions.

The struggle for freedom and food sovereignty: a letter of solidarity to the farmers of Syria

The loss of control over processing agricultural goods, such as turning grains into flour, has made it easier for the regime to punish large regions with starvation, and will in the future make it easier for foreign powers to grab hold of Syria through its dependent state, writes Julia, a farmer and member of the international solidarity group- The 15th Garden.

Dear fellow farmers and peasants in Syria, dear people in Syria and those connected to its cause, – as food concerns us all, hunger and oppression feel the same to each and every person. When we were approached to write a public letter for you, I felt rather humbled and not knowing where to start. As a farmer and as someone who has encountered the gratitude and witnessed the Sumoud of the Syrian people, I am ashamed of the hardships you are in and ashamed, knowing your strength that you have been left to fight alone while the weakness of the world is just standing by. Who am I, or any of us out here, to write any lines to you other than those couched in deepest humility. I am a simple farmer from the worldwide movement of the farmers and peasants, La Via Campesina, which in translation means the path of the farmer. The struggle for food sovereignty begins at our doorstep: when I work the fields on my farm, I am actively engaged in the local movement against land grabbing of agricultural lands in my region and the use of poisons and pesticides. This work is not separate to my direct solidarity with Syrians, and is as necessary. Policies of land grabbing, theft, destruction and displacement happen in a 'globalized' setting, and such must be our resistance. [Read more...](#)

Korean peasants make a "three steps, one bow" pilgrimage against rice tariffication

On 28th June, Korean farmers from all around the country gathered to make a "three steps, one bow" pilgrimage to protect food sovereignty. Civil society organizations including Korean Peasants League (KPL) and Korean Women Peasants Association (KWPA) gathered in Chunggye Stream Square. They made a "three steps, one bow" pilgrimage for about two hours wearing T-shirts printed with the face of Jun Bong Jun, who led farmers' revolution in 1890. This people's rally was held to convey to the public a message that opening the rice market is a problem not only of farmers but also consumers and all citizens. Kim Youngho, president of KPL, said that "destroying food sovereignty means that our food jar will be in other countries like US and China. If our food jar will be in other countries, we cannot eat our food safely. [Read more...](#)

The government should design a seed policy specific for smallholder farmers, says the ZIMSOFF farmers

(Zimbabwe, Harare, July 21, 2014) on the 3rd of June, ZIMSOFF invited various stakeholders working on seeds in Zimbabwe to learn more and share its concerns about the proposed regional seed laws. The stakeholders included the government officials, private seed companies, African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO), Seed Trade Association, Agricultural Research Council, Seed Services Zimbabwe, Civil Society and Ministry of Agriculture. The meeting stimulated an interesting debate among the farmers, presenters and other participants. The farmers highlighted that the SADC and COMESA processes are closed systems with minimal participation of CSOs and smallholder farmers, and thus, most of their issues such as the protection of indigenous knowledge systems and farmers' rights, and the adoption of agro-ecology to achieve food sovereignty, have not been included in national and regional policies which affect their livelihoods. [Read more...](#)

Urgent Call to Action in Solidarity with the Palestinian People: We Condemn the Murder of Family Members of UAWC Leader and Call for Justice!

And to Demand an End to the War of Occupation in Gaza by the State of Israel and its Indiscriminate Targeting of Palestinian Civilians!

(Harare, July 24, 2014) On Sunday evening (July 20), the Israeli air force struck the house of Mr. Saad Ziada killing six members of his family (his mother, three brothers, a sister-in-law and a nephew). At the moment of the attack, Mr. Ziada was away from his home, which saved his life. Saad Ziada is a leader of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC), a member of La Via Campesina. This event occurred two days after La Via Campesina issued a solidarity call condemning the Israeli government's illegal war of occupation on Gaza and its targeting of Palestinian civilians which constitutes a war crime, violating international law. [Read more...](#)

Mozambique: civil society organizations decided to globalize the 'No to ProSavana' campaign and promise to give legal responsibility to 'perpetrators'

ISAURA SUZETE*

Civil society organizations from Mozambique, Japan and Brazil involved in the 'No to ProSavana campaign' intend to internationalize this campaign, activate legal mechanisms at national and United Nations level, to give greater responsibility to those operating the ProSavana program, for the damage they might cause to the peasants. This plan of action was revealed during a Press Conference on the second Triangular Conference of the Peoples (from Mozambique, Brazil and Japan), held on July the 24th, in Maputo. In Mozambique, several civil society organizations are involved, including the Mozambican National Farmers Union (UNAC– member of La Via Campesina) ,Liga dos Direitos Humanos (LDH), Associação de Apoio e Assistência Jurídica às Comunidades (AAAJC), Livangingo, Justiça Ambiental (JA), Acção Académica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (ADECRU), Fórum Mulher and Kulima. [Read more...](#)

Mozambique: Peasants report land grabbing in Nacala corridor

HILÁRIO AGOSTINHO*

Grabbing of land for the production of soy in Nacala corridor North of Mozambique has raised harsh criticism from the peasant organizations of Nampula, Zambezia and Niassa provinces. They say that the government initiated the ProSavana program as a mechanism through which to expropriate more peasants' land for agribusiness. According to Estevão Costa, the president of the Provincial Peasants Union of Nampula, during a panel discussion at the Triangular Conference of the Peoples about ProSavana in Maputo, peasants from Nampula have been losing lands to foreign companies for export production. [Read more ...](#)

ZIMSOFF farmers review the implications of the proposed regional seed laws

(Zimbabwe, Harare, July 18, 2014) ZIMSOFF organized a preparatory meeting on the 2nd of June to discuss the implications of the new regional seed policies, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Africa Regional Intellectual Organisation (ARIPO) namely the seed policy harmonization and Plant Variety Protection (PVP), on the smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe. Sixteen ZIMSOFF Council members (who also are farmers) and representatives from the African Centre for Biosafety (ACB) and Third World Network (TWN) participated in the discussions aimed at building the capacity of the smallholder farmers to understand and defend their seed rights nationally. The proposed regional seed policies, if adopted, will negatively impact on indigenous seeds which ZIMSOFF and La via Campesina promote. The COMESA seed protocol will open national borders through easing market and regulatory requirements on registered commercial seeds; while the SADC and ARIPO will promote the "commercial breeders' rights" through Plant Variety Protection based on "DUS" (Distinctiveness, Uniformity, Stability). In general, the former, will flood both the regional and local markets with hybrid commercial modified (GM) seeds and thus push out their latter, the latter, recognize and promotes commercial breeders and criminalize traditional breeders, who are peasant farmers. The ZIMSOFF Chairperson and La Via Campesina General Coordinator, Elizabeth Mpofo, in her opening remarks, urged the farmers to take these new developments seriously and hold the government accountable. [Read more...](#)

La Via Campesina: Solidarity call with the people of Palestine

La Via Campesina International -representing around 200 million farmers from 73 different countries around the world- condemns the Israeli war on Gaza and the crimes against the Palestinians that violate the international and humanitarian laws. Since July 7th 2014, 214 Palestinians have been killed, including at least 164 civilians of which 44 were children and 29 women. Of the 1,585 Palestinians injured, 435 are children and 282 women. 1,660 homes have been destroyed or severely damaged in Gaza displacing 9,900 persons and over 22, people have sought shelter at UNRWA schools. 900,000 people are without water supply due to inability to repair and operate infrastructure. [Read more...](#)

Brazil and Japan: The Mozambican government invited us to participate in the ProSavana program

HILARIO AGOSTINHO*

After concerns were raised about the negative effects ProSavana poses to the Mozambican peasants, the governments of Brazil and Japan defended their participation in the program. They said that they are only part of the program at the request of the Mozambican government to develop agriculture in the North region of the country. The Brazilian government representative, Matheus de Carvalho, who spoke to more than 250 people at the Triangular Conference of the Peoples – July 24th, 2010 – defended his country's participation. He said that his country is participating in ProSavana to develop agriculture, particularly the research and technology fields, as well as the improvement of local seeds, as means of "helping Mozambique". [Read more...](#)

Mozambique: Women prevented from fetching firewood and other forest products in Nacala Corridor

ISAURA SUZETE*

Evidence of the effects of land grabbing in the region, where ProSavana is being implemented, on the peasants particularly women is beginning to show. In Nampula province, women are being prevented from passing in the areas where the foreign companies operate. They cannot access the firewood or gather wild foods. This reality was reported during a discussion panel on "Structural challenges to development of peasant agriculture in Mozambique: peoples' demands in regard to ProSavana", at the Second Triangular Conference of the Peoples, held on 24 July 2014, in Maputo. In this panel, many reports were made on the violation of the access rights to land of women in particular. In rural areas, women are the ones who work the land to provide for their families and fetch firewood to cook. [Read more...](#)

New videos on Via Campesina TV



- **The Jakarta Documentary** [click here to watch](#)
- **Land Rush- Why Poverty:** This documentary follows American sugar developer Mima Nedelcovych's Sosumar scheme – a \$600 million partnership between the Government of Mali to lease 200-square kilometers of prime agricultural land for a plantation and factory. [Click here to watch documentary](#)
- **Family Farming and Research:** Yudhvir Singh participated and presented at the International Encounters event on "Family Farming and Research" attended by 235 participants from 70 countries. [Click here to watch his presentation](#)

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