

Kathmandu Declaration
International Conference on Food Sovereignty and Peasants Rights
March 10-12, 2019, Kathmandu, Nepal
Organized by National Farmers' Commission

We, 350 representatives of peasants, landless peasants and agricultural workers, small producers of food and different agricultural commodities & agro-forestry, youth and women peasants, fisher folks, livestock holders and pastoralists, agricultural co-operatives, organic producers, Dalits and Adivasis, agricultural experts, peasants' organizations and coalitions, community based organizations, civil society organisations, farmers' commission, government representatives of different ministries of Nepal and international delegates from Bangladesh, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri-Lanka, across Asia gathered in the 'International Conference on Food Sovereignty and Peasants' Rights' here in Kathmandu from March 10-12, 2019 to call upon our governments, international agencies, inter-governmental organizations and concerned authorities to ensure food sovereignty and peasants rights.

This conference is organized by National Farmers Commission (NFC), Nepal. NFC is a government institution of Nepal to promote and defend peasants' rights. The objective of the conference is to promote the exchange of knowledge, expertise and national experiences on farmers' issues, in particular Peasants' Rights and Food Sovereignty in different countries, seeking potentialities for future co-operation, struggles and policy intervention.

Asia is the home to majority of the world's peasants & landless agricultural workers. The peasantry in Asia is facing a deeper and more severe crisis than ever, in terms of food, energy, water, economy, and climate, created by the global neoliberal policies. We are aware of the prevailing deep rooted hunger, poverty & malnutrition in the continent and we are also aware of its structural causes. We are alarmed by the agricultural crisis, land & water-bodies grabbing, corporate agriculture, mono-cropping, chemical farming and use of GMOs, fragmentation and loss of farm land, liberalization of market, services and investments in agrarian sector. We are concerned with the reduction of subsidies and domestic support to agriculture which are proven detrimental to farmers. Restricted access to natural and productive resources including land, water, forest, seed etc and poor access to agri-market, finance, peasant friendly technologies remains key challenges for the agrarian transformation and well-being of peasantry. We are also concerned about the hazardous use of chemicals in agriculture which is harmful for human health and ecosystem.

In this grave situation there is an urgent need to build a stronger resistance of peasants by upholding food sovereignty and peasants' rights. We reaffirm that food sovereignty is the fundamental right of all peoples and societies to control food and agricultural systems and policies, ensuring everyone adequate, affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food. Not only the indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices in farming have been seriously destroyed by the prevailing farming practices, but also it has taken away the seeds and many other resources in the hands of few companies and elites. Therefore, we defend agro-ecology to conserve biodiversity, cool the planet and protect our soils and seeds. The biodiversity based agro-

ecological model is also the way to stop the advance of the climate crisis through local production in harmony with our forests and waterways, enhancing bio-diversity and returning organic matter to natural cycles.

We would fight for peasant's rights where peasants and farmers can live in dignity from small scale farming and can prosper. UN Declaration on Rights of the Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) and the fundamental rights of food sovereignty; are the tool to achieve food sovereignty.

We expressed support and solidarity with the effort of the people and agricultural workers of the DPR Korea to build an independent and prosperous socialist power based on the principles of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. We expressed our concern against the sanctions and blockade challenging the right to food and other facilities of people in many countries including DPR Korea, Venezuela and Cuba. The self-reliant model of these countries can be an example for building socialist economy to achieve food sovereignty in many countries.

For the full realisation of food sovereignty and peasant's rights we demand:

1. We learned that National Farmers Commission (NFC) in Nepal is playing vital role to liaison the government and farmers of Nepal. NFC particularly stands for protecting the rights of peasants, farmers and agricultural workers towards ensuring food sovereignty. We call upon all the governments of the world to establish powerful and executive constitutional such commissions in various countries.
2. Genuine Agrarian Reforms including scientific land reforms should be implemented in all countries for ensuring right of the

tillers, peasants and food producers in all the natural and productive resources. This means ensuring full access over land, recognizing indigenous peoples' legal rights to their territories, guaranteeing fishing communities' access and control of fishing areas and ecosystems. We know that only such reform ensures a future for rural youth and reduce the rapid migration of youth from rural areas.

3. Draft and implement the peasants' rights act to ensure small and marginal farmer's rights. Land should be recognized as the productive resource and tillers of the land should be provided to the farmers who will genuinely carry out farming. Absentee landlordism should be discouraged.
4. Promote cooperative and collective model in agriculture production, processing and distribution so that all agriculture lands could be brought under cultivation in order to increase the food production and productivity and improve the livelihood of the peasants. Enabling policy environment and necessary supports are needed to promote such model.
5. Encourage locally produced organic foods to ensure our agriculture as our way of life, good health, our culture, our food, and our way of relating with the nature. Ensure chemical fertilisers and pesticides are discouraged.
6. Ensure justice and equality for women, which require the transformation of social and economic arrangements, including equal access to land, credit, education, social benefits and power.
7. Stop Multi National Corporations and Foreign Direct Investment to dominate market and production. State should regulate production, price and market.

8. Subsidised inputs to individual farmers and guarantee crop and livestock insurance should be assured. Establish peasant welfare and relief funds and include the rights to compensation for all those who participate in food production and care of natural resources – fisher-folk, indigenous peoples, landless workers, pastoralists and forest dwellers.
9. Ensure Minimum Support Prices for small farmers and fisher folks. Increase the state budget allocation in agriculture. State must purchase the product of peasants at appropriate price.
10. Apply ILO convention on agricultural workers across the region and recognise them as workers and frame national labour laws. Implement equal wages for equal work for men and women and the prohibition of child labour in hazardous occupation.
11. Agro-ecology and agro-forestry should be integrated in the agricultural development policy. Peasants' production should be protected from all threats including calamities, wild animals, international markets and dumping.
12. WTO should be kept out of agriculture. Farmers should be protected economically from the foreign and outside market.
13. Pension based on the peasants' contribution should be implemented.
14. Each country should draft and implement peasant right's law based on UNDROP.
15. Stop criminalization of peasants including fisher folks and peasants movements. Stop upper handing of fishers in South Asia.
16. There are various provisions in different countries. There are good practices and successful examples. It's important to learn from each other and recommend such model for policy reforms. Nepal has already enshrined food sovereignty in the constitution

and the pro-people government has taken proactive steps to formulate policies for full realisation of food sovereignty. Thus we have a good opportunity to learn from Nepal and further strengthen our struggle for food sovereignty in our respective countries. We call upon our governments to comply with national and international standards safeguarding rights of small holders and we assure our sincere cooperation with all such initiatives of the states.

Long live peasants unity !

Long live global solidarity !!

Long live peasants struggles !!!

Thank You.

March 11, 2019. Kathmandu Nepal.