

Civil Society Common Declaration – Madrid Meeting

The right to food is a basic human right and should be the base for all policies trying to give an answer to the food crises. This includes the right for peasants, artisanal fisherfolk, pastoralists and indigenous people to produce food for their own local and domestic markets.

- The first step that has to be taken towards food sovereignty is the right of countries to implement policies to support domestic sustainable peasant-based food production.
- There is an urgent need for a paradigm shift away from the current dominant policies for food and agriculture, which have largely focused on promoting international trade and industrialization of agriculture. Rather than eradicate hunger these have caused and deepened the current food crisis, thrown farmers off the land, damaged the environment and have contributed to the climate crisis.
- We are especially concerned of these damaging policies on health and nutrition of many people in the world, especially women and children. This is an issue that merits special and urgent attention.
- The current dominant response to the food crisis has been to mobilize financial resources to get so-called ‘improved’ seeds, fertilizers and agrochemicals to smallholder farmers in the global South. This is a “more of the same” strategy, which will only worsen the crisis.
- Building and strengthening the UN institutions for food and agriculture is needed. A deep reform process which includes the bringing together of FAO, IFAD, WFP and CGIAR should radically improve their functioning and make them respond to their original mandates. Positive results of conferences such as ICARRD have to be implemented. The reform has to facilitate the full and decisive participation of organizations of peasant farmers, fisherfolk, pastoralists, indigenous peoples and other social movements and civil society organizations, and respond to the needs formulated by them. The governance structure for a UN space for food and agriculture has to be Rome-based and must include the representatives of all member countries. One country one vote, not one dollar one vote.
- We reject any attempt to establish a new “Global Partnership”, which gives multinational corporations and corporate foundations decision making powers, and any structure outside of the UN system.