LATEST CETIM PUBLICATIONS

Terre et liberté!

A la conquête de la souveraineté alimentaire

[Land and Liberty! In Pursuit of the Conquest of Food Sovereignty

Paul Nicholson, with the contributions of Xavier Montagut and Javiera Rulli

The purpose of this book is to clarify the political and strategic scope of the food sovereignty "action concept". It is the basis of another social model of production, of transformation and of consumption, and it lays down the principles of social and ecological agriculture in the North as well as in the South.

This book is built on a key article consisting of an interview conducted by **Paul Nicholson**, who played a major role within La Via Compesina. Through his clear and simple prose, the reader will grasp the magnitude of the concept of food sovereignty and what it implies: creating a transforming axis for the mainstream economic and social model.

An article by Xavier Montagut, a specialist in international trade, clarifies the stakes and the scope of fair trade as seen from the angle of food sovereignty. Finally, we are publishing extracts of a study by Javiera Rulli, a biologist, who explores the conditions of international cooperation that make it possible to contribute to the reinforcement of rural communities and to develop their autonomy in the face of "mainstream forces" (agribusiness, among others) and thus to take part in the conquest of food sovereignty.

Available only in French.

Price: CHF 12,50 / 10,50 €, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-2-88053-088-4, PubliCetim n°36, June 2012.

It can be ordered of CETIM.

JOINT "CENTRE EUROPE-**TIERS MONDE" ON FACEBOOK!**

Hold-up sur l'alimentation

Comment les sociétés transnationales contrôlent l'alimentation du monde, font main basse sur les terres et détraquent le climat

The Great Food Robbery: How Corporations Control Food, Grab Land and Destroy the Climatel GRAIN

This book a collection of articles produced by GRAIN in recent years. It emphasizes agribusiness' preponderant share of the responsibility for the climate crisis as well as the financial sector's promotion of the land grab, enabling it to make money from people's poverty. It also explains why the struggle for food sovereignty challenges these tendencies, identifying the stakeholders and presenting possible alternatives.

"For 20 years, GRAIN has fuelled anti-corporate campaigns with its groundbreaking research and biting analysis. Today, GRAIN is on the leading edge of the fight against land grabs, powered by its signature political clarity and deep roots in the social movements on the front lines. A must read."

Naomi Klein, Author of The Shock Doctrine

"This is vital reading for anybody interested in understanding the links between the climate, energy, financial and food crises - and how the questions of control over resources and power must be addressed if we want real solutions."

Prof. Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food

"We now live in a permanent war between peasant's agriculture, which is still feeding most people on earth, and corporate agribusiness which is taking control over territories, seeds, water and local knowledge. This book is a tool to help us regain control and chose our own food system."

Henry Saragih, General Coordinator of the international farmers movement La Vía Campesina and Secretary general of the Indonesian Peasant Union (SPI)

Available in Spanish, French and English Price: £14.95, 164 pages, ISBN: 978-0-85749-113-8, 2012. English version can be ordered of Fahamu Books and Pambazuka Press: http://fahamubooks.org/book/?GCOI=90638100007280 French version can be ordered of CETIM.

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EDITORIAL

Looking back over these last months, three words can summarize the CETIM's activities: denunciation, action and victory!

Guatemala was a target country for the CETIM, and last September we received a delegation of representatives from the communities and municipalities of San Andrés and La Libertad from the Department of Petén in Guatemala. These communities are victims of serious violations of their basic rights committed by the Perenco oil company, with the complicity and protection of local and national authorities. In collaboration with other Swiss and international NGOs. we relayed their grievances to the United Nations human rights bodies and organized several events to make known their situation to the Swiss public.

Aware that the struggle against human rights violations committed by transnational corporations should be carried out on multiple fronts, given their ramifications at the international level and the role of financial milieux in their destructive activities, the CE-TIM, in collaboration with a group of Swiss associations and trade unions, organized a demonstration in Geneva to denounce financial speculation in food products. This issue of the bulletin presents the common call which was launched on that occasion.

Finally, our long standing commitment in support of the adoption by the United Nations of a declaration on the rights of peasants has paid off, and we entered a new and important phase in September. The Human Rights Council decided to set up a working group with a mandate to draft a new international instrument on peasants' rights, recognizing the legitimacy of La Vía Compesina's demand and the study by its own expert body (Advisory Committee) on this matter. The road ahead is long and certainly strewn with obstacles, but this is nonetheless a substantial initial victory.

For a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants!

Since it was set up in 1970, the CETIM has published research results and analyses on, among other subjects, agriculture, the role of the small-scale peasant farming family and, most recently, food sovereignty and the land grab (regarding this, see the presentation of our two most recent books, on the last page). We have established close ties with many peasant organizations throughout the world, in particular with the international movement of peasant families, La Via Compesina (LVC). Its objective is to defend family agriculture and the principle of food sovereignty to allow not only the fulfillment of the right to food for all but also sustainable development, respectful of the environment and of human beings.

In keeping with this, since 2001, the CETIM has encouraged and supported the participation of delegates from LVC in the work of the United Nations human rights bodies. It has advised and supported them in order to allow them to familiarize themselves with the United Nations mechanisms. This has afforded them the opportunity to make abundant contacts and to make known their grievances and demands. LVC has thus discovered that, even though the United Nations is a huge machine, it can be the forum and the relay point of progressive demands and a place of unique opportunities in sensitizing a maximum number of countries to the situation of small-scale family farmers.

Thus, the CETIM, working with other NGOs, supported the demand of the LVC for a declaration of the rights of peasants by the United Nations. The procedures that we began together in 2009 have resulted this year in the finalization of a study by the Advisory Committee (the Human Rights Council's expert body). This study, which deals with discrimination to which peasants are subjected, suggests the adoption of a new international instrument on the rights of peasants in order to afford better protection to this group, which has become extremely vulnerable over the past few decades faced with the monopoly of agribusiness transnational corporations and unfair international trade regulations.

On Thursday, 27 September 2012, at the initiative of South Africa, Bolivia, Cuba and Ecuador, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution with 23 votes in favor, 9 against and 15 abstentions (see the table below), thus setting up an open-ended intergovernmental working group with the mandate of negotiating, finalizing and submitting to the Human Rights Council a draft United Nations declaration on

the rights of peasants as suggested by the Advisory Committee.³

It is regrettable that the countries that voted against this resolution, while acknowledging the problems faced by peasant families, fell back on specious procedural arguments to justify their vote. Apparently, the Advisory Committee had gone beyond its mandate by dealing with this matter without giving member states the possibility of expressing their opinion. And the Council should have first opened discussion on the subject, in particular by organizing round tables and workshops etc. However, in 2009, the Human Rights Council (all 47 members unanimously) had mandated its expert body (the Advisory Committee) to carry out a study on the rights of peasants and other persons working in rural areas, while requesting it to make proposals to end human rights violations of which these persons are victims. The Advisory Committee, moreover, on two occasions, carried out consultations with member states and NGOs.

As we have already emphasized, with the setting up of this group, a great step forward has been made, but the process is not yet finished, and a crucial phase is beginning. Given the relatively large number of votes in regard to the resolution, and especially the power of the states concerned, and the abstentions, it is important and urgent to carry out an information and sensitizing campaign aimed at public opinion in these countries, especially among social movements. In so doing, there must be no North-South divide, least of all among peoples, considering that it is a matter of creating a protection tool for family producers faced with colossal and systematic human rights violations. It is also a matter of promoting participation in the discussion that will take place starting in 2013 within the working group so that all particular issues and different problems according to region, be taken into account in the final version of the future declaration.

Vote of the resolution 21/19

FOR: Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Uganda and Uruguay.

AGAINST: Austria, Belgium, Czech Rep., Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain and United States of America.

ABSTENTIONS: Botswana, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Qatar, Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Senegal and Switzerland.

CETIM ADVISES YOU THE FOLLOWING READINGS

Le "printemps arabe": un premier bilan

[The "Arab spring": A Preliminary Assessment] Joint publication. Edit by Bichara Khader

Revolts or revolutions, the peoples uprisings that appeared in the Arab world in 2011 have overthrown and continue to defy the authoritarian regimes and their delegitimized autocrats. Movements of social, political and identity affirmation, borne aloft on the demands of freedom and equality, recognition and redistribution, they have swept aside the fiction of the "Arab exception" and opened wide the perspective of what is possible in the Maghreb and the Middle Near East. But for what transitions, toward what horizons? Destabilization of the region, tensing of the actors, democratization of structures, recovery of aspirations, radicalization of option, explosion of conflicts, emancipation of peoples...? Beyond the characteristics all contemporary Arab societies have in common, the scenarios vary from one country to another. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia... they are all concerned, directly or indirectly, by the episodes that are more or less repressive, more or less bloody. What initial broad assessments can be made of these uprisings? What promises do they contain, and what risks are there for their results? Laying out of the genesis of the "Arab spring", of its local, national and international socio-political actors., of its cultural, demographic and economic factors, as well as the roles played by Europe and the United States, all helps to interpret a reality particularly complex and, further, to evaluate the liberating potential of the dynamics of social change and self-determination.

Available only in French.

Price: CHF 20 / 13 €, 180 pages, ISBN: 978-2-84950-346-1, Ed. CETRI/Syllepse, June 2012. It can be ordered of CETIM.

Emprise et empreinte de l'agrobusiness

Points de vue du Sud

[The Stranglehold and Imprint of Agribusiness] Joint publication

Agribusiness corporations, who are the architects and primary beneficiaries of trade liberalization in agriculture, continue to reinforce their stranglehold on the world's food and agriculture system. Heavyweights in the fields of economic and political influence, favored by a battery of international norms tailored to their needs, they pursue their concentration strategies on a planetary scale, taking an ever greater share of the value added all along the productive chain. Boosted by the rise in agricultural prices and the boom in agrofuels, they "gain ground" in the South through the acquisition of huge tracts of fertile land or by taking control of local operators, imposing "their" development model: productivist, export oriented, socially exclusive and environmentally destructive. The willingness of governments and international bodies to believe the talk of the great corporations about the "food scarcity to come" never fails to amaze. Bolstered by Promethean virtues conferred upon them by their technological advances, these are the only bodies that might be able to invigorate traditional "non-productive" traditional agricultural sectors, with a view to feeding the world. The peasants movements denounce this lie, which hides the structural causes of hunger. In the name of food sovereignty and agricultural diversity, they are opposed to a model that signals the end of peasant agriculture and marginalizes hundreds of millions of people who live from it.

Available only in French.

Price: CHF 20 / 13 €, 186 pages, ISBN: 978-2-84950-357-7, Ed. CETRI/Syllepse, September 2012. It can be ordered of CFTIM

WHO ARE WE?

Through its publications and its work with the UN, the CETIM denounces the maldevelopment in general, ecological as much as economic and social, and promotes an exchange of critical views from both Southern and Northern societies. The CETIM is focuses in particular on respect for, implementation and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights, as well as issues related to the right to development.

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WHICH IMPUNITY IN GUATEMALA?

Along with the indigenous and peasant organizations of the South, the CETIM has been struggling for more than 40 years to denounce the violence that they are subjected to and the impunity of their aggressors. Each year, the CETIM receives some dozen militants whom it hears out and counsels. As far as possible, it organizes conferences, film, meetings with the press and written and oral statements within the framework of the United Nations human rights mechanisms. The CETIM also coordinates encounters between United Nations experts and activists.

Last September, within the framework of a European tour through Switzerland and France organized by the Collectif Guatemala France, the CETIM played host to a delegation including Hilda Ventura and Mario Ramos, representatives of the communities San Andrés and La Libertad (from the Department of Petén), and supported the lawyer, Ramón Cadena, the Latin America director of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ).

These two indigenous representatives came to testify to the catastrophic situation that the San Andrés and La Libertad communities are living in: they simultaneously victims of extractive activities by the Perenco oil company, forced displacement, militarization and mega tourist projects.

To make known their situation, for lack of recognition at the national level, and to force the Guatemalan government to recognize their rights and to dialogue with the communities, the CETIM and Collectif Guatemala France, in partnership with the International Comission of Jurists-ICJ, Peace Watch Suisse, Km207, Communauté genevoise d'action syndicale-CGAS, International Network of Human Rights-RIDH and Filmar en América Latina organized two public conferences in the context of the U.N. Human Rights Council and in the City of Geneva (with the support of the Geneva Federation for Cooperation and Development-FGC). Gregory Lassalle's film, "Des dérives de l'art aux dérivés du pétrole", 1 which presents the situation of these communities, was shown. The CETIM gave the floor to Mario Ramos and Ramón Cadena during the time devoted to oral statements. These declarations are available on the CETIM internet site.²

From the Perenco Case to the Criminal Responsibility of the Corporations and their Affiliates in Guatemala³

Guatemala's economy is primarily based on exports, derived from intensive exploitation of its natural resources (mineral ore, petroleum, water, forests and land) and the monoculture of African palms (for agrofuels) and teak. Encouraged by the Guatemalan government, private national and transnational corporations play a leading role.

The Franco-British oil company Perenco has been present in Guatemala since 2001, the year when its subsidiary Perenco Guatemala Ltd bought the Xan wells originally developed by Basic Resources (present in Guatemala since 1985). These wells represent 90% of Guatemala's oil production and are mostly in the Department of Petén.

The presence of Perenco in the country has been particularly denounced since the renewal of its contract in 2010 by president Álvaro Colom. He guaranteed the continued exploitation of the wells for another 15 years and expansion of the concession even though since 1989 it has been located in a protected national area, the Laguna del Tigre national park, the largest wetland area of Central America, protected for this reason by international conventions.

In spite of irregularities and the opposition of a majority of the Petén communities, the new contract has not been canceled. The Constitutional Court, to which the ICJ took the case, refused to hear it.

Perenco is continuing its pumping in this protected area while cases of water and soil pollution have been reported. Further, this corporation has considerable power in Peten as it manages the ferries used to get to San Andrés and the military.

Communities caught in a vice

Petén is the biggest county of Guatemala (one third of its territory). In the last century there were several waves of internal immigration into this area. The intensification of the domestic armed conflict (1960-1996) and poverty drove many families to settle there to flee the massacres. Hilda Ventura and Mario Ramos are among those whose families arrived without resources, encouraged by the government to settle in Petén and farm its land.

Today, these communities are caught in the crossfire between Perenco's oil wells, drug running families and the Guatemalan government, which wants to develop tourism projects (on Mayan sites), several dam projects on the Usumacinta River and megaplantations of African palm and teak. Hilda Ventura and Mario Ramos, in their presentations, showed how precarious life is in these communities. They have no access to education, nor to health care, nor even to clean water. As the area is a proected zone, it is prohibited to dig wells and to own property, yet the Perenco Company can drill and pump its oil wells and the drug running families have title to their property.

To protect the Perenco oil wells and impose the tourism projects and monocultures on the communities, the government has remilitarized the region (under the pretext of fighting drug trafficking with Mexico) in violation of the 1996 peace accords. The San Andrés community is encircled by military checkpoints. The communities are completely abandoned by the government and constantly under threat of forced displacement.

In spite of major demonstrations in 2010 in Guatemala City, the situation of these communities is getting progressively worse. In 2011, two indigenous leaders were murdered. Ramon Cadena strongly denounced the total impunity of those responsible for these crimes. These communities wanted to bring their situation to the attention of the outside world.

The visit to Geneva allowed Hilda Ventura and Mario Ramos to report on their communities' situation and to force their government to assume its responsibilities in terms of protection of its population and their access to economic and social rights. It is important to bring to light all the exactions committed in the County of Petén and to guarantee to the communities access to justice as well as the protection of their rights. Hilda Ventura and Mario Ramos, who met with officials from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights during their stay, requested from the United Nations agency an active follow-up on their situation.

The CETIM is following this case and is in contact with the members of the delegation.

SUPPORT THE CETIM!

Together for Social Justice and Human Rights

So, you would like to become more involved in CETIM's activities? Nothing could be simpler. You can support CETIM in various different ways:

- as a member of our organisation. Your membership does not only represent a significant financial contribution, it also sends out a strong message to others in terms of maintaining and spreading our actions with regard to the promoting of human rights.
- as a volunteer. We regularly need help with preparing our bulletin and other publications for mailing and distribution; we need translators and interpreters (French, English, Spanish) to help at conferences; we also need volunteers for proofreading different kinds of documents and helping with maintaining our archive.
- by making a donation or a bequest. It is possible to make a donation at any time, either in support of CETIM's actions in general, or to support a specific area of action. CETIM is recognised as a non-profit-making organisation in the public interest. All donations and bequests which it receives are tax-deductible for residents in Switzerland.
- by becoming an intern. For those who are looking for work experience in the field of human rights, or for activists in social movements wishing to increase their understanding of the workings of human rights bodies within the United Nations, we do accept interns. The internship periods coincide with the sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Council (March-April, June and September) and those of the Advisory Committee (February and August).
- by taking part in the conferences, debates and campaigns that we organise, or by publicising them in your own organisations.
- by buying or distributing our books.

If you would like to know more about our conferences or publications, you can either visit our website www.cetim.ch , follow us on Facebook, or contact us by email at contact@cetim.ch to join our mailing list.

¹This film, which we recommend, is available for sale. It can be ordered from the Collectif Guatemala, 21ter, rue Voltaire, 75011 Paris, France, or by e-mail: collectifguatemala@gmail.com ²These statements are in Spanish and are available at: http://www.cetim.ch/en/interventions_onu.php ³This article is based on the presentations of the various members of the delegation at two conferences as well as on the report: "Perenco: exploiter le pétrole coûte que coûte. Rapport sur les conséquences sociales et environnementales des activités de l'entreprise Perenco Guatemala Limited", published by the Collectif Guatemala, October 2011: http://www.collectifguatemala.org/

This electronic critical report was produced in collaboration with Francine Mestrum. Ph.D. in social sciences and coordinator of Global Social Justice. This association is currently working on a plan for universal social protection based on the protection needs of everybody everywhere in the world and on the necessity of breaking down the neo-liberal wall and pre-

This publication is available for free in French. English and Spanish on our website: http://www.cetim.ch/en/publications_cahiers.php

paring a systematic change (www.globalsocialjustice.

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Conclusion

THIS BULLETIN IS ALSO AVAILABLE **IN FRENCH AND IN SPANISH**



You will find below the press release that we published jointly with Uniterre (a member of LVC) and La

¹Cf. LVC website: http://www.viacampesina.org/dl/click.

Council resolution.

Vía Campesina, following the vote on Human Rights

Stop the Complicity of the Swiss Financial in **Food Speculation!**

In Switzerland and especially in Geneva, a significant portion of financial speculation in agricultural products and food stuffs is carried on (30% of the world market), which contributes to the aggravation of the precariousness of the peoples of the South in particular. This is the worst form of financial speculation because it endangers the lives of millions of persons. The peasants of the two hemispheres are the direct victims of it, for they do not benefit from any increases in price. These increases fill the pockets of intermediaries who have never seen or handled a grain of wheat or rice but who make fat profits from multiple (up to 30) virtual exchanges. Some 30 transnational corporations have taken control of almost the entire world's commercial production: controlling stocks, fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, fodder, agricultural machinery, animal and vegetable genetics, veterinary products... The small-scale farmers are hostages of this system.

In Switzerland, we owe it to ourselves to act. for a major part of this market is handled here:

- by denouncing the presence of international summits held on our territory;
- by signing the federal popular initiative "Stop the Speculation" launched recently by the Swiss Socialist Youth (Jeunesse socialiste suisse), supported by various political parties, peasant organizations and NGOs;
- by questioning our pension funds about the investments that they make.

To denounce the 10th GLOBAL GRAIN GE-NEVA (13-15 November), the CETIM and a dozen Swiss organizations and trade unions. organized a demonstration on 13 November in Geneva.

CETIM PRESS RELEASE

It is with immense satisfaction that the small-scale farmers' union Uniterre, representing in Switzerland the international peasants movement La Via Compesina, and its partners in this undertaking, the CETIM and FIAN Switzerland, announce that the Human Rights Council has deemed it necessary to better protect the rights of small-scale farmers throughout the world. Switzerland abstained from voting.

After many long years of work, civil society, supporting the initiative of the union of peasant families, La Via Compesina, has succeeded in convincing the majority of member states of the Human Rights Council, of the absolute necessity of a new international legal instrument that will take the form of a United Nations declaration. It will have as its objective bringing together in a single document the specific rights of peasants, including new rights such as the right to land, to seeds, to means of production and to information relating to agriculture.

The Human Rights Council (...) has come to the conclusion that they deserve particular attention. By committing itself to protecting their basic and specific rights, it intends to contribute to reducing hunger in the world.

The Human Rights Council has thus decided to set up an intergovernmental working group mandated to draft a declaration on the rights of peasants and other persons living in rural areas. The working group will build on the project presented by the Advisory Committee in March 2012. The first working group meetings will take place starting in 2013, and they will be carried out over a period of several years before the final text is adopted by the Human Rights Council then by the United Nations General Assembly. Civil society and representatives of peasant families are called upon to participate actively in this process, an additional highly positive point.

Uniterre, the CETIM and FIAN Switzerland profoundly regret the abstention of Switzerland on an issue of such importance, which ought to have had the full support of a country that has made human rights a basic element of its foreign policy.

Uniterre, the CETIM and FIAN Switzerland deplore, further, the negative vote of a certain number of European Union states as well as the United States, which opposed specific protection for peasant farmers. (...)

Please see our latest press releases on: http://www.cetim.ch/en/multimedia_communique.php





RIGHTS

could be prevented...

poverty?

LATEST CETIM REPORT:

THE FIGHT AGAINST

POVERTY AND HUMAN

If one refers to the data of the World Bank, there are

currently almost a billion and a half persons living in

extreme poverty throughout the world, living on less

than US\$ 1.25 per day, and another billion persons

living on less than US\$ 2 per day – which corresponds

to almost half of the human race. Although the World

Bank's method of measuring poverty is questionable,

the fact nonetheless remains that, according to the

United Nations specialized agencies, today, some

one billion persons suffer from famine and malnutri-

tion; just as many lack drinking water, and 2.5 billion

have no access to sewerage systems and sanita-

tion; scores of millions of persons lack housing, and

more than a billion are inadequately housed; there are

some 200 million unemployed and 900 million work-

ing poors; nearly 800 million adults are illiterate; each

year 6 million children under five die of illnesses that

For nearly a quarter of a century, the theme of pov-

erty has occupied a prominent place on the interna-

tional community's political agenda, and the fight

against poverty has become the official priority of

cooperation and development programs. It has also

become a priority for the European Union and several

governments. Such focus and effort are reassuring,

yes, obviously, because poverty ought not exist in our

world, a world that is so rich. At the same time, one

must ask why poverty suddenly emerged as a priority

theme. Why was it absent from the political agenda

before 1990? And why are we still waiting to see any

success for the strategies adopted in the fight against

Although there is a consensus on the need for pov-

erty reduction, poverty definitions vary according to

time, actors and place. This is why it has seemed

useful for us, in the present critical report, to analyze

the concept of poverty according to periods of his-

tory and the powers in place as well as the strategies

planned and developed to fight poverty. It will be seen

that the quantification of poverty (in figures some-

times) mask many realities. This is also the case for

contemporary strategies of the fight against poverty

that not only disregard inequality but are bound to fail.

The treatment of the subject from the angle of human

rights opens unexplored perspectives and constitutes

certainly the best strategy in the fight not only against

poverty, but also against inequality, and a movement

toward universal social protection.

² Cf. Advisory Committee report, A/HRC/19/75, 24 February 2012.

³Cf. Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/RES/21/19.