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« There is not one developed world and one underdeveloped world just one maldeveloped world »

EDITORIAL

The tariffs imposed by the USA across the world last year and its blocking of the WTO – free trade's flagship institution – led some to believe that the era of neoliberalism was over. Far from it. In fact, a free trade agreement between the European Union and Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) came into force 'on a provisional basis' on 1 May 2026.

The agreement provides for the creation of a free trade area between the two regions. On its website, the European Union trumpets the benefits of this agreement for European exports and jobs, yet it will adversely affect family farms on both sides of the Atlantic. The agreement provides for the export of European goods (cars, chemical products, wines, cheeses, etc.), in return for facilitating the import into Europe of numerous foodstuffs from South America (soya, sugar, meat, etc.).

There is no doubt that this agreement will intensify unfair competition between agribusiness and family farmers, not to mention, of course, other small-scale food producers (fishers, livestock farmers, etc.). As is only too well known, this unfair competition is based on wage, environmental and health dumping. In other words, the agreement will strengthen the agro-industrial system dominated by transnational corporations and big finance, to the detriment of family farmers in Europe and in the South American

countries concerned. The 'provisional' entry into force of this agreement, without ratification by the European Parliament, is a demonstration, if proof were needed, of the pressure exerted by transnational business circles, in their thirst for immediate profits, to secure its swift adoption. It also demonstrates that, where business is concerned, certain political leaders are prepared to ride roughshod over democracy, environmental and labour standards and human rights.

Small farmers in Europe and in the four South American countries involved are perfectly aware of this and have protested against the free trade agreement. At stake is nothing less than their very survival, but it is also a matter of defending food sovereignty throughout the world and maintaining a commitment to healthy food production that respects environmental, labour and human rights standards. Small farmers thus need broad support, for food concerns us all. This is a crucial sector, in economic, social and cultural terms. CETIM is working in solidarity with peasant farmers on both sides of the Atlantic to raise the question in UN bodies and ensure that the rights enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) are respected by the governments concerned. You will find in this issue, among other things, an article on our action.

PEASANT RIGHTS

THE CRIMINALISATION OF PEASANT MOBILISATIONS: UN HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS AS A FORM OF PROTECTION FOR PEASANTS

The criminalisation of peasant mobilisations constitutes a worrying trend observed in many countries. Criminal prosecutions, attempts at dissolution, arrests, threats, and any limitation on the right to protest are increasingly used to restrict the capacity of peasant organisations to defend their rights and participate in public debates on agricultural, trade, or environmental policies.

France is no exception to this dynamic. On January 14, 2026, during a peaceful mobilisation organised by the Confédération Paysanne (a member organisation of La Via Campesina) in front of the Ministry of Agriculture to denounce, among other things, the consequences of the European Union-Mercosur agreement (see the editorial), the management of Contagious Nodular Dermatitis (CND), and agricultural policies unfavourable to the peasantry, 52 peasants were detained and placed in police custody.

In response to this situation, the Confédération Paysanne and CETIM appealed to several Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council. This appeal highlighted violations of the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, expression, and trade union rights, while recalling the specific rights of peasants enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP).

A few days after the appeal, the UN mechanisms made [public a statement](#) expressing their deep concern regarding the growing criminalisation of peasant movements in France. They denounced the use of police custody and criminal proceedings against

union leaders engaged in non-violent actions, considering that this development threatens the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, association, and expression. The experts also recalled that authorities have an obligation to facilitate peaceful protests rather than repress them and announced they would engage in a dialogue with the French Government regarding these allegations.

This appeal illustrates the importance of international human rights protection mechanisms. When activated quickly and with proper documentation, Special Procedures not only allow for direct dialogue with the relevant authorities but also bring international recognition to violations and strengthen the protection of the individuals targeted. They also contribute to framing peasant mobilisations within the broader context of States' international human rights obligations.

This initiative demonstrates the relevance of the international advocacy strategy of social movements in responding to the criminalisation of struggles. Beyond the situation in France, this case reminds us that peasants' rights fall fully within the international human rights protection system and must be guaranteed by States.





DEADLOCK AT THE WTO: TOWARDS A NEW TRADE FRAMEWORK THAT RESPECTS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

The 14th ministerial conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which was held in Yaoundé (Cameroon) from the 26th to the 29th of March, ended in a resounding failure, thereby substantiating the analyses and long-standing warnings issued by CETIM.

This foreseeable paralysis, characterised by a lack of a final declaration and the deferral of major issues to Geneva, highlights the structural obsolescence of an institution deeply beholden to the demands of the financial markets.

The model promoted by the WTO is underpinned by an asymmetrical architecture which stifles national economies and deepens the dependence of the countries in the Global South. The collapse of negotiations in Cameroon is not merely a diplomatic mishap, but rather a manifestation of the inherent failure of a paradigm that subordinates human rights to the imperatives of global trade liberalisation at any cost.

Once again, the negotiations on the agricultural sector have brought the deadlocks into sharp focus, demonstrating that agriculture represents the systemic breaking point of free trade. Treating food commodities as mere speculative commodities inevitably gives rise to hunger, structural poverty and a surge in inequality in rural communities. The pitting of peasant agriculture against transnational agribusiness under conditions of unfair competition destroys local productive systems, not to mention the impacts on biodiversity and the environment.

This ongoing crisis managed by the WTO demonstrates the absolute urgency of completely excluding agriculture from the rules of free trade and establishing a specific international legal framework for the trade of food products, which safeguards food sovereignty and therefore people's right to feed themselves.

Faced with the strictly trading logic of delegations that are quick to sacrifice local economies for the sole benefit of distribution and trade monopolies, CETIM supported its long-standing partner, La Via Campesina, as well as several local organisations in Cameroon and the region. During a week of work and building a counter-power on the sidelines of the ministerial conference, the Yaoundé Declaration took shape. This text, published on the 29th of March 2026, contrasts the deregulatory dogma with a rigorous and emancipatory vision of society grounded in food sovereignty.

This major political initiative calls for the establishment of a new global trade framework that upholds human rights and is grounded in the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP). The publication of the Yaoundé Declaration marks the launch of a long-term process that is intended to grow and bring people together. It lays the foundation for a conceptual framework aiming to place food sovereignty back at the centre of international law, thereby directly aligning with the Nyéléni global strategy¹. This emerging dynamic is characterised by a genuine desire for openness: it seeks to progressively bring together other groups of producers who are vital to rural life, such as peasants, pastoralists, nomads, small-scale fishers and agricultural workers.

The challenge in the coming months will be consolidating these local and regional alliances in order to transform this declaration of principles into an inclusive and structured force for multilateral advocacy.

¹The Nyéléni Forum is the leading global gathering of social movements fighting for food sovereignty, agroecology and social justice for peoples in the face of the agro-industrial model. See bulletin no. 72 of the CETIM

ARGENTINA: THE CRIMINALISATION OF THE MAPUCHE PEOPLE IS ESCALATING

In Argentina, the situation of indigenous peoples has worryingly deteriorated since the Milei government came to power. In Patagonia, the Mapuche communities are facing escalating repression, criminalisation of their territorial claims and expanding extractive projects on their ancestral lands, often without free, prior and informed consultation.

To address this situation, CETIM, in agreement with the affected communities, has submitted a complaint to several of the United Nations mechanisms for the protection of human rights in order to denounce the violations committed against the Mapuche people.

The complaint documents the following elements: the mass searches conducted in 2025 against several communities, attacks on freedom of worship, violations of children's rights and the judicial and media-driven criminalisation of defenders of human rights, traditional authorities and Mapuche ancestral medicine. They also proceeded to forcibly take DNA samples from several Indigenous leaders from the Lof Pillañ Mahuiza.

It also highlights the progressive dismantling of mechanisms for the protection of indigenous peoples and the progression of extractive projects undertaken by multinational companies, violating the Argentinian constitution, Convention No. 169 of the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP).

Building on these efforts, we also intervened during the 61st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (Feb – Mar 2026) in order to bring the matter to the attention of the Special Rapporteur in relation on the right to food. We reiterated that the appropriation of ancestral lands directly violates the Mapuche community's right to food and we denounced the increasing number of extractive projects in Chubut province.

We underlined the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), which specifically recognises the right to land, protects against forced expulsion and requires States to guarantee free, prior and informed consent of the relevant communities before taking any decision that could affect their land and resources.

While human rights abuses on indigenous peoples continue to increase in Argentina, it is vital to remain mobilised so that the Argentinian State upholds its international obligations and puts an end to the criminalisation of communities defending their lands, culture and rights.



TRAINING FOR LEADERS OF SALVADORIAN AND NEPALESE PEASANTS' ORGANISATIONS ON THE DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS

Since the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, CETIM, in collaboration with La Via Campesina (LVC), has been developing training programs for leaders of peasant organisations.

The objective of this training is to make the Declaration known to rights-holders and to facilitate and encourage its popular appropriation, turning it into a political and legal lever to fuel struggles at the local, national, regional, and international levels. These trainings also aim to develop strategic advocacy plans targeting various government, judicial, and legislative bodies, with a view to the concrete implementation of the Declaration through the active participation of peasants.

EL SALVADOR

From June to December 2025, CETIM organised a training session on the Declaration for member organisations of LVC Salvador, with support from human rights defence organisation Mundubat. This training, aimed at peasant and feminist organisations, focused on the rights of rural women contained in Article 4 of the Declaration.

Participants were thus able to study the origin and drafting process of the 28 articles of the Declaration, particularly those concerning the right to land, natural resources, the environment, seeds, food, and food sovereignty. This was also an opportunity to examine, in light of the Declaration, the structural issues affecting Salvadoran peasant women and the specific cases presented by the participants.

In a political context particularly difficult for civil society organisations, whose very existence is threatened by the current government, a strategic plan was collectively developed during the training for the promotion and implementation of peasants' rights. Among the various initiatives included in this strategic plan is advocacy at the UN, particularly with Special Rapporteurs and the Working Group of Experts on the rights of peasants. The training process for the Salvadoran organisations was followed by a field mission.

A member of CETIM was able to visit various co-operatives and rural communities and continue the work of promoting and implementing the Declaration on the Rights of Peasants.



Visit and training in El Salvador, March 2026

NEPAL

Between February and June 2026, CETIM provided training for leaders of peasant organisations within the All Nepal Peasant Federation (ANPFa), a member of LVC, as well as activists, lawyers, and members of the World March of Women.

Participants were able to familiarise themselves with the content of the Declaration, particularly regarding the rights of rural women, the right to participation, social security, land and resources, seeds, an adequate standard of living, and the environment.

Subsequently, participants analysed, in light of the Declaration, the Nepalese law on food sovereignty and the current issues faced by peasants: lack of compensation for the impacts of climate change on harvests, forced displacements due to land grabbing and "development projects," absence of fair prices and informal labour, and the marginalisation of women, Dalits (the caste of "untouchables"), and indigenous communities in decision-making processes.

This training provided an opportunity to integrate the Declaration into the current struggles of peasant movements in Nepal and to develop an advocacy strategy at all levels: local, provincial, federal, and international.

Among the educational materials developed, the translation and layout of CETIM's fact sheets on peasants' rights into Nepali were carried out to allow the widest possible dissemination of the rights contained in the Declaration.

BEYOND THE G7: BUILDING A PEOPLES' MULTILATERALISM

Since last year, the new US government has multiplied its military interventions and support for wars waged by its allies. When not waging war directly or indirectly, it continues its imperialist interference through threats and blackmail, in flagrant violation of current international law. Moreover, this government is launching systematic attacks against the multilateral system, embodied by the UN, to impose the law of the strongest.

It was in this context and as part of the G7 counter-summit in Geneva that CETIM co-organised with CUAE (June 2026) a conference on the importance of multilateralism. The objectives of this conference were multiple: to take stock of the crisis of multilateralism; to discuss the necessity for social movements and peoples to reclaim international multilateral institutions; and to highlight the diversity of existing initiatives.

In his introduction, Melik Özden, director of CETIM, emphasised that it would be a mistake for peoples and citizens to leave diplomacy and international law to the exclusive management of States. According to him, the current crisis could be an opportunity if peoples and citizens mobilise massively in favour of a more democratic multilateral system, allowing the participation of peoples and social movements in decision-making.

Nury Martinez, representative of FENSUAGRO (Colombia) and of La Via Campesina presented the paradigm of food sovereignty defended by the peasant movement, showing how it articulates with other fronts of struggle carried by peoples and social movements, notably for climate justice, workers' rights, public health, and women's rights. From this perspective, La Via Campesina contributed to the organisation of the third Nyéléni Forum (see note, p.3), which aims to strengthen the convergence of social struggles between different sectors to promote a radical and structural change of the dominant unequal system. A transformation that also passes through a struggle for the democratisation of multilateral bodies.

Mr. Roberto Velazquez, representing Mr. Rodolfo Benitez, Ambassador of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Geneva, for his part, analysed the crisis of multilateralism, while emphasising the importance of defending the multilateral system, designed to

debate and make decisions democratically on global challenges concerning economic, social, and environmental fields alike. To this end, Cuba, along with other States, created the group "Friends of the UN Charter" to defend not only the multilateral system but also to reform the international financial and trade architecture, while combating the arms race.

Dr. Kamel Mohanna, founder of Amel Association International and the Movement for People's Health first drew up a damning assessment of the Israeli army's attacks on Lebanon since 2023. While denouncing the dominant system, based on the power of finance and the grip of transnational corporations, Mr. Mohanna advocated for a peoples-centered multilateralism that would allow rejecting war as a political tool, preventing attempts at genocide or other crimes. He also claimed for the defence of fundamental rights (to health, education, land, water, self-determination) over the interests of the powerful.

For Mrs. Shalmali Guttal, president of the UN Experts Working Group on peasant rights, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas is a unique and eloquent example of how international law can be developed from the grassroots within responsive multilateral bodies, through consultations, dialogue, and constructive partnerships between rights-holder organisations, governments, researchers, and experts. She issued a call to States, social movements, academics, and the business world to work together to revitalise a multilateralism based on participatory democracy, peace, human rights, equality, and solidarity.

In conclusion, all the speakers were unanimous in their support for a democratic, inclusive multilateralism based on the sovereignty of peoples.

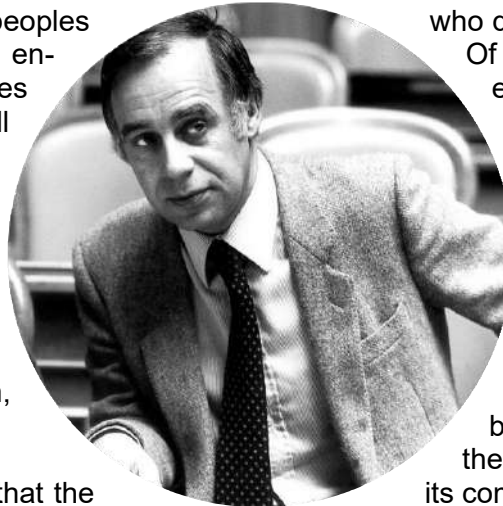


TRIBUTE TO JEAN ZIEGLER AT THE G7 COUNTER-SUMMIT

On the occasion of the opening of the G7 Counter-Summit in Geneva on June 12, 2026, Melik Özden, director of CETIM, payed tribute to Jean Ziegler:

"Dear comrades, our friend and comrade, the tireless militant for international solidarity Jean Ziegler, passed away on June 10, 2026. It is not easy to present all his reflections and all his struggles alongside oppressed peoples, so immense is his legacy and so unwavering his commitment.

An intransigent internationalist and an organic intellectual standing with peoples and social movements, Jean engaged tirelessly in the struggles against imperialism, against all forms of colonialism, and for social justice. He drew his reflections and analyses from his connection to popular struggles on the ground. As a professor, writer, politician, and UN Special Rapporteur, Jean travelled the world, from Chile to Vietnam, via Burkina Faso and Congo.



Jean understood quite early on that the dominant capitalist system, which he described as a 'cannibalistic order', was the source of exploitation, inequalities, and multiple forms of discrimination. This is why he fought throughout his life against the entities that are the spearhead of this system: banks and transnational corporations. In this fight, he did not hesitate to attack the authorities of his own country, which always hesitate to monitor the harmful activities of powerful banks and other transnational companies operating from Switzerland. His writings and political engagement have helped shape several generations of activists.

Jean also quickly understood the importance of investing in national and international institutions. He sat on the Swiss National Council for nearly three decades. Then, appointed as the very first UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, he crisscrossed the continents to raise awareness about the scandal of famine and malnutrition affecting more than a billion human beings. For him, every child who dies of hunger is murdered by the logic of the dominant system.

It was in the strength of social movements that Jean saw the possibilities for social transformation. This is why, when we solicited his support for the elaboration of a UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants, he did not hesitate to put his knowledge and institutional authority at the service of peasants and

family farming organisations like La Via Campesina, which initiated this process.

To my knowledge, Jean was also the first UN representative to qualify, in 2003, the regime in Israel towards the Palestinian people as 'Apartheid.' His report on the right to food in Palestine drew the wrath of Zionist hawks and their supporters, who did everything to try to discredit him. Of course, this report remains a reference in the annals of the UN and has been used by its bodies, such as the International Court of Justice.

A prolific intellectual, Jean honoured us with his profound commitment by joining the CETIM Advisory Committee and contributing to several books published by our organisation. He believed in the causes defended by CETIM and in its commitment to international solidarity.

Moreover, what does international solidarity mean today? What does militant commitment mean? We are mobilised, today and throughout this weekend, against the holding of the G7 meeting. Behind the facade of democratic governments lies in reality a grouping of predators. These predators possess armies, finances, and other levers of power. They are capable of sowing death to terrorise struggling peoples. However, despite their apparent power, they barricade themselves to elaborate their dark designs.

What are they afraid of?

They are afraid of our ideas; they are afraid of awakened, conscious peoples claiming their rights. They are afraid that peoples will hold them accountable for targeted assassinations, forced disappearances, massacres, genocides, and the destruction of their living environments. They are afraid of our proposals to build another world; a world free from exploitation, free from predators, free from famine, free from weapons of mass destruction and wars; a world respectful of peoples' rights, gender equality and environmental justice, a world respectful of all living beings, a world of solidarity.

Dear comrades,

The best way to pay tribute to our comrade Jean is to continue and intensify the struggle against the predators who want to destroy life on Earth."

PUBLICATION

N°7 of Lendemains Solidaires is out ! *Breaking with Maldéveloppement* !

For several decades, "development" has been part of political jargon and the subject of numerous debates regarding public policies. It is a highly political and politicised concept. What kind of development? Why? For whose benefit? By what means? With whom? These are some of the questions that must be asked beforehand. Moreover, the very notion of development has been trivialised. Indeed, "sustainable development" conceptualised a few decades ago, has been instrumentalised and stripped of its original meaning. This issue aims to contribute to the understanding and transcendence of the dominant concept of "development." As everyone knows, development is not limited to its economic aspect but also includes social, cultural, political, and environmental dimensions. Furthermore, there is no single concept of development, given that it has been forged by different peoples and civilisations over the centuries according to the conditions of their existence and their philosophies.

Read now on the website (in French): lendemainssolidaires.org



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- Make the voice of social movements and oppressed peoples heard at the UN
- Train and inform on human and peasants' rights
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