

PROCLAMATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF PEASANT AGRICULTURE AND AGROECOLOGY IN AMERICA: Social Movements, Dialogue of Knowledges, and Public Policies; Mexico City, 31 of August to 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2015.

From this city, an emblematic center of Mesoamerican culture; from the original motherland of maize, we want to say our word. We met here, convened by the National Association of Rural Producers' Enterprises (ANEC- Mexico) on the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, together with the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) of Minneapolis, Seeds of Life, the Autonomous Metropolitan University- Xochimilco, the Autonomous University Chapingo and its Department of Agroecology. We are 310 women and men hailing from 16 countries and from 16 states of the Republic of Mexico who came to participate in this event. We are peasant farmers, indigenous peoples, researchers, academics, activists, communicators, students. We speak from our lands and territories—many of them captured by colonial exploitation, by domination according to class or by patriarchal oppression; but these lands are also those where we lovingly sow food, utopias, and hopes.

While the greatest economic and political powers come together to agree on new free trade agreements, to assault our lands and manipulate, at their leisure, the prices of what we produce, we have found ourselves here to share our visions about what threatens us, to communicate our strategies for resistance and our struggles, to sustain ourselves with our discoveries, our trainings, our knowledge, our feelings, our flavors.

We are aware that not only the capitalist economy but the entire model of civilization which has been imposed upon us is on the verge of collapse. It is an enormous monster that, fatally injured, lashes out and in so doing multiplies all types of violence. This violence causes unprecedented suffering, both to human beings, as well as to the entire community of living beings and our planet, our mother earth.

This colonial, patriarchal, classist model of civilization that is sees its expression in our fields and on our table is the industrial agricultural model of agribusiness. It is the continued accumulation of the plundering of public goods and in the disproportionate exploitation of labor. It further enriches those who were already becoming ever more rich, in which profit-making projects in energy, mining, tourism, and agri-exports, bring with it unheard of levels global privatization of the land, and exacts enormous violence against the land, natural resources, water, and ecosystems. And above all, it brings violence on human communities: expropriated of their belongings, expelled from their lands and exploited in their work, at times virtually to the level of slavery.

This is a model that destroys natural, productive, social, and cultural diversity in order to homogenize and elevate production at all costs; to convert food to merchandise while depriving thousands of people of basic foods and contradictorily provoking overconsumption, obesity, and multiple other diseases. A model that, in agriculture, bases itself on the privatization, outsourcing, concentration, and financialization of fertile land. At the same time, monopoly power, hoarding, and market speculation raise the prices of basic foods.

A model that, with the devastating mechanism of Free Trade Agreements, demolishes the food sovereignty of nations and communities. With the same centuries-old colonial cruelty, it appropriates thousands of hectares of land from poor countries for endless speculation or in order to produce *commodities*.

A model that, with patriarchal fury, violates lands, soils, forests, waters, ecosystems, and peoples to force them to produce more at any cost, and which has led us to the threshold of climactic disaster, of the point of no return in which the subsistence of human beings and the diversity of life forms in our beloved planet are at stake.

In the face of this way of production, consumption, and profiting, with its basis in “grabbing” lands, natural resources, knowledge, communities, and in the suppression of cultural diversity and holistic, non-linear ways of thinking belonging to the agricultural towns—we the peasants, indigenous, and the descendants of Africa offer what we have: an alternative paradigm; a way of producing, of thinking, and of living sustained by the diversity of the human and natural world, a coexistence in which it is not that some take care of others, but rather with a basis in the care of all for all. It is the model of peasant agroecology.

Ours is an open model, non-linear and very diverse. A model with deep roots in our past, like those of the trees in our dry ground, but with extended foliage, wide, inclusive, and which embrace all.

Its purpose is the care of all: of the nourishment and health of people and their communities, of the enormous biological diversity that we have received as inheritance, of the ecosystems and natural resources; of the very heterogeneous cultural expressions; of the ancestral knowledge and technologies built with collective reflection.

Peasant agroecology is a model that we have been building and cultivating. One part of it we received from our ancestors. The other, we preserve and strengthen in our resistance to the plundering and the commercialization of nature and of food. We have developed it in dialogues between different knowledges, different ways of knowing, but also by critical assimilation of new technologies. We have implemented it through action research: we have made farmers a bit more into researchers, and the researchers have become very much more like farmers. It is a model that has surged from the resistance to extractivism; from the defense of native seeds before transgenic ones; of the development of pest regulators and natural fertilizers against the invasion of agrichemicals; of many experiences of the markets and local consumption; of reclamation of the kitchen and the medicine of communities.

Because the model of peasant agroecology is an alternative paradigm, not only for agriculture, food, and climate change, but for of all life against the collapse of civilization in which we live, we consider it a duty of solidarity and an unavoidable political commitment to share it, to divulge it, to advance it for all of our America. Towards this, as a first result of this International Meeting of Peasant Agriculture and Agroecology in America, we commit to:

- Initiate a process in which we involve all to follow up on the agreements of this meeting; to build a space of convergence, of research and investigation in common, of dialogue of knowledge, of experimentation, of dialogue with other actors of society, to enrich and strengthen peasant agroecology.
- To launch the permanent process of building a movement of peasant agroecology, where rural organizations, academics, civil society organizations from all sectors will join together in the permanent struggle to boost up an alternative economic model and public policy focused in agroecology. In particular, the participating Mexican women and men agree to initiate, starting now, a path towards the construction of a wide-reaching, pluralistic, inclusive, and multi-sectoral national articulation of peasant agroecology.

- To generate networks between producers and consumers, and to revalue our foods, practices, and crops to contribute to good nutrition with food sovereignty for all.
- To push for gender equality at all levels: familial, organizational, societal and institutional, and to demand public policy and programs in all the countries that recognize the important role of rural women as producers and stewards of natural and cultural biodiversity, and all countries that support their initiatives.
- To fight for and demand opportunities to celebrate and promote the role of young boys and girls in rural areas through educational reforms that recognize multicultural and multiple identities, and that provide jobs and other opportunities to facilitate intergenerational relief in the countryside.
- To promote through all media the continuous interchange of both scientific and peasant knowledge and experiences as an actual agroecological alternative for the production of food and the betterment of the quality of life, health, and the environment.
- To work with the peasants, consumers, academics, and civil society organizations to articulate a proposal toward the transition to a system that is resilient and adaptable in the face of climate change, legally recognizing the collective rights of the indigenous and peasants, promoting the conservation of the richness of biocultural patrimony, and pushing for the development of agroecological lands.

We focus on, among others, the following lines of coordinated action in the short term:

1. To participate, from October 10 -17th, 2015, in the worldwide days of action against free trade agreements (TTIP, CETA, TPP, TISA, the “modernization” of TLCUEM, etc.) and impede the expansion of the economic model that benefits transnationals over the rights of our villages.
2. To participate in the activities of social movements in the face of the next meeting of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change COP 21 in Paris, with the objective to push for and incorporate the agenda for peasant agroecology to “cool down” global climate change.
3. To push for an agenda which favors of the change of the agri-food model to one that bases itself in peasants and agroecology in each country, in the face of the next FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, which will occur in March of 2016, with the presence of the Agriculture Ministers of the region and the Director General of the FAO. We propose to carry out a second international meeting of peasant economy and hemispheric agroecology prior to the aforementioned Conference.
4. To participate in the activities of social movements before and during the next 13 Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention for Biological Diversity (CDB) of the United Nations which will be carried out in Mexico in December of 2016.
5. To carry out a global day of action against corporate agriculture in favor of peasant agroecology.

We express our broad solidarity with the families of the victims of the forced disappearances, of torture, of those displaced from their land, of femicide in Mexico. We demand justice and proof of life of the 42 students from the teacher’s college in Ayotzinapa and an explanation for the crimes and punishment for those responsible for the massacres of Tlatayla, Tanhuato, Apatzingan, and the Colonia Navarte and of

all the assassinated journalists. We demand the immediate release of the leaders of the Yaqui community; as well as the immediate end of the criminalization of social protest. We express our deepest recognition of all the communities that fight to defend their territory, natural resources, water, and life; to all that collectively defend our maize from transgenic seeds.

To all communities and people that search for and fight for Buen Vivir, we embrace them with all the affection of sisters and brothers and we invite you to work arm in arm in this beautiful project that is peasant agroecology, the key to the hope of a new land for all.

Mexico City, September 2, 2015