

PROPOSED MESSAGE FROM THE SEMENCES PAYSANNES (Farmers' seeds) NETWORKS
TO MEMBER GOVERNMENTS OF THE GOVERNING BODY
OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES (IT PGRFA)

Meeting in Rome 5-9 October 2015

We want to tell you that you are in the process of destroying the treaty. It is organising the theft of our seeds and our knowledge. We can no longer continue to give them to researchers and other prospectors that come and collect them in our fields, to then put them in the gene banks under the auspices of the Treaty. **As long as you do not ban all bio-pirated patents, as long as farmers do not have a right to keep, use, exchange and sell seeds from their own harvests, then we will not collaborate with research and gene banks that serve the multinational seed companies.**

The grains kept in gene banks run under the auspices of the multilateral system of the International Seed Treaty (IT PGRFA) are our seeds: they are our inheritance from many centuries of farmers selection, and they have been collected in our fields.

However we are often refused access to seeds of peasant varieties because we are not researchers. Sometimes we obtain some seeds on the condition that we do not use them for agricultural production: they can only be used for research purposes. We have stated that their conservation in cold stores is not appropriate and that they need several years of new selection before being able to give acceptable harvests in current growing conditions. However those of us who undertake the collection and safeguarding of genetic resources are forbidden to exchange or sell them to other farmers, it is usually restrained by seed laws and regulations in the majority of the countries which have signed up to the Treaty.

The treaty promised equitable sharing of the profit created by the industry using our seeds for their own breeding processes. After 10 years we have not seen this, rather a shift in the opposite direction. Farmers have effectively given seeds to industry; industry never paid for them, and the little money that governments donated has not been given to peasant organisations, but has consolidated the programmes of international research centres that are useful to industry. We gave our seeds free of charge to the seed banks, and we accept that industry uses the useful varieties. But when we use these varieties, laws in the majority of signatory countries require us to pay royalties, or forbid us to use the seeds that have come from our own harvests, asserting that they are now property of the industry.

We inherited our seeds from our parents, we have looked after them carefully, selected and conserved them for future generations. We have given them in trust to protection of the Treaty along with our knowledge, as we have always been proud to share the results of our work. We thought that would protect them against their being appropriated by industrial property laws, such as plant breeders' rights and patents. But now you say that you are going to launch the Divseek programme, to scan the genetic sequences of the resources in the gene banks so as to publish them in electronic databases. This programme was not created for us, we do not grow

genetic sequences, or megabytes, and we do not need this information. But industry has already programmed the search engines and software to process all of the 'genetic information' and to identify in these databases all the "genetic information" that may subsequently be patented by associating them with any characteristics that might be useful for agriculture or the industrial processing of crops.. These patents on the 'functional units of heredity' are already legal in many countries and they will prevent us from keeping the opportunity to grow our seeds, the very seeds that we gave free of charge to the gene banks run under the auspices of the Treaty.

We had a period of dialogue with the Treaty. But despite the Governing Body's decisions in Bali in 2011 and in Oman in 2013, spaces for dialogue closed up, preventing us from participating in working groups or expert consultations in an efficient and formalized manner that respects our organisational autonomy. Peasants organisations that are working in their fields to implement articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty, on *in situ* on-farm conservation and the sustainable use of seeds, and those that fight for the implementation of article 9 on Farmers' Rights are always considered as 'observers', with the same status as academics or journalists, while they are the main actors and on the front line of managing the very plant genetic resources that the Treaty defends! Yet Industry is courted and imposes its own solutions.

As long as the Treaty is not reformed to fully apply articles 5, 6 and 9, we will continue to create our own multilateral exchange system between peasants. We are calling on governments to support our movement, based on the principles of food sovereignty.

2Nd October 2015

1) Signatories, farmers and gardeners organizations

1. African Centre for Biodiversity, Afrique du Sud et Tanzanie
2. AJAC LUKAAL, l'Association des Jeunes Agriculteurs de Casamance "Plantons", Sénégal
3. All Nepal Peasants' Federation (toutes les fédérations paysannes népalaises)
4. ANAFAE, Asociación Nacional de Fomento a la Agricultura Ecológica, Honduras
5. ANAMURI, Asociación Nacional l de Mujeres Rurales e Indígenas, Chili
6. ANMI, Asamblea Nacional de Mapuches de Izquierda, Chili
7. ARI, Associazione Rurale Italiana, Italie
8. Articulação Rosalino de Povos e Comunidades Tradicionais do Norte de Minas, Brésil
9. Association des Producteurs de Semences Paysannes, Sénégal
10. Australian Food Sovereignty, Australie
11. BEDE (Biodiversité : Echanges et Diffusion d'Expériences), France
12. Bio Burkina Faso, Burkina Faso.

13. Biowatch Afrique du Sud.
14. Campaña Semillas de Identidad, Colombie.
15. CCPA, Cadre de Concertation des Producteurs d'Arachides du Sénégal.
16. CENESTA, Centre for Sustainable Development and Environment, Iran
17. COASP, Comité ouest africain des Semences Paysannes et l'ensemble de ses membres.
18. CODECEX, Comissão em Defesa dos Direitos das Comunidades Extrativistas, Brésil
19. Commons for EcoJustice, Malawi
20. CONAMURI, Cordinacion nacional de Mujeres rurales e indigenas, Paraguay.
21. CONAPROCH, Confederación Nacional de Pequeños Productores, Chili
22. Confédération Paysanne, France
23. COPACO-PRP, Confédération Paysanne du Congo, République Démocratique du Congo
24. Copagen, Coalition Ouest Africaine pour les Semences paysannes, Sénégal
25. Crocevia, Italie
26. Deccan Development Society, Pastapur, Telangana, Inde
27. ECVC, Coordination européenne Via Campesina
28. Fahamu Africa et le mouvement des femmes " Nous sommes la solution", Afrique de l'Ouest
29. Family Farm Defenders, USA
30. Farmworker Association of Florida, USA.
31. Ferme école Agroécologique Benkadibugu, Mali
32. FITA, Farmers inter trade association, Gambie
33. FOOL AVOINE, pour une biodiversité sans OGM ni brevet, France
34. GIPA (Groupement Inter villageois des Producteurs d'Arachides des Communes de Thiombly/Gandiaye), membre CCPA, Sénégal
35. International Indian Treaty Council (Conseil international du traité indien, ajoutant çï la mention des peuples et semences indigènes)
36. Grupo Semillas, Colombie
37. Jardín Botánico de Medellín, Equipo de Agricultura Urbana, Colombie
38. La Via campesina International
39. Landworkers' Alliance , Royaume-Uni
40. MAB, Movimiento de Afectados por Reprezas, Brésil
41. MABD, Mouvement de l'Agriculture Biodynamique, France
42. MAELA, Movimiento Agroecologico de Latino America y Caribe, Mouvement agroécologique de l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes

43. MMC, Movimiento de Mujeres Camponesas, Brésil
44. Millet Network of India, MINI, Hyderabad, India
45. MONLAR, Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Sri Lanka
46. Movimento Geraizeiro, Brésil
47. MPA, Movimento dos pequenos agricultores, Brésil
48. MST, Movimiento Sin Tierra, Brésil
49. National Fishworkers' Forum, Forum national des pêcheurs, Inde.
50. National Movement for Protection of Seed Rights, Sri Lanka.
51. Organización Boricúa, Porto Rico
52. Ranquil, Confederación Nacional Campesina y de Pueblos originarios, Chili
53. RECAB ANTIOQUIA, red Colombiana de Agricultura Biológica, Colombie
54. Red Nacional de Semillas Nativas y Criollas (réseau national des semences natives et créoles), Uruguay
55. Red de Semillas Campesinas, Argentine
56. Rede de Agrobiodiversidade do Semiárido Mineiro, Brésil
57. Redes de semillas campesinas (RSC), Colombie
58. Red de Semillas Libres, Colombie
59. Red de Semillas "Resembrando e Intercambiando", Espagne
60. RESACIFROAT, Réseau d'Appui à la Citoyenneté des Femmes Rurales d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Tchad
61. Réseau Maghrébin d'Association de Développement Local en milieu Rural, "REMADEL"
62. Réseau Semences Paysannes (RSP), France
63. Rete Semi Rurali, Italie
64. SEED, Som fir d'Erhalen an d' Entwécklung vun der Diversitéit, Luxembourg
65. Stop OGM Pacifique, Nouvelle Calédonie
66. TORBA, association d'agroécologie, Algérie
67. Union Paysanne, Canada.
68. Urgenci International Community Supported Agriculture network
69. US Food Sovereignty Alliance, USA
70. Vazanteiros em Movimento, Brésil
71. World Forum of Fisher Peoples
72. Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum, Zimbabwe.

2) Supports

1. AFRD - EUFRAS, Association for Farmers Rights Defense, Association pour la Défense des droits des Paysans, Georgie
2. ADAAE-ASE, France
3. AHCC, Alianza Hondureña de Cambio Climático, Honduras
4. Alkhalachofa, grupo de consumo responsable, Alcalá de Henares, Espagne
5. ALTERRATIVE project, Italie
6. Amigos de la Tierra, Argentine
7. Articulação Nacional de Agroecologia – ANA/Brésil
8. Assembleia Permanente de Entidades em Defesa do Meio Ambiente do Rio Grande do Sul- APEDEMA/Brésil
9. Associação Brasileira de Agroecologia-ABA/Brésil
10. Associação Brasileira de Estudantes de Engenharia Florestal-ABEEF/Brésil
11. Associação Gaúcha de proteção ao Ambiente Natural-AGAPAN/Brésil
12. Association pour le Développement Durable "ADD- Medenine", Tunisie
13. Association pour le Développement Global des Batwa, Rwanda
14. ATALC, Amigos de la Tierra América Latina y el Caribe
15. Burkinature, Burkina Faso
16. CEHPRODEC, Centro Hondureño de Promoción al Desarrollo Comunitario, Honduras
17. CEIBA-Amigos de la Tierra Guatemala
18. CENSAT-Amigos de la Tierra, Colombie
19. CESTA-Amigos de la Tierra, Salvador
20. Centro Ecológico/Brésil
21. Chile Sustentable, Chili
22. CMI, Conselho Missionário Indigenista, Brésil
23. COECOCEIBA-Amigos de la Tierra, Costa Rica
24. Comissão Pastoral da Terra-CPT/Brésil
25. Community Alliance for Global Justice, Seattle WA, USA
26. CONROA, Coalición nacional de Redes y organizaciones Ambientales, Honduras
27. Detroit Black Community Food Security Network, USA
28. Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, Fiji
29. Doman chalosse vivante, France.
30. Enda Pronat, Sénégal
31. EsAFF SWAZILAND-CIEAS.

32. Esvit-ONG, Espoir et vie pour Tous, République Démocratique du Congo
33. Federação de Órgãos para Assistência Social e Educacional- FASE/Brésil
34. Federação dos Estudantes de Agronomia do Brasil-FEAB/Brésil
35. FIAN, Colombie
36. FIMARC,Fédération Internationale des Mouvements d'Adultes Ruraux Catholiques
37. Food First, USA
38. Foodwatch Western Australia
39. Foro Ambiental Santiagueño, Argentine
40. Friends of the Earth International
41. Fundação Luterana de Diaconia – FLD/Brésil
42. Gene Ethics, Australie
43. GM-Free Australia Alliance, Australie
44. Instituto Gaúcho de Estudos Ambientais – Ingá/ Brésil
45. IRPAD/Afrique, Institut de Recherche et de Promotion des Alternatives en Développement, siège Mali.
46. JINUKUN : Réseau national pour une gestion durable des ressources génétiques , Point focal de la COPAGEN, Bénin
47. MADGE, Australie
48. MADRE TIERRA-Amigos de la Tierra, Honduras
49. Núcleo de Cultura e Extensão PTECA da ESALQ/Universidade de São Paulo- Brésil
50. NAT-Amigos de la Tierra, Brésil
51. Núcleo Interdisciplinar de Agroecologia em Rede/Agrorede-UFBA/Brésil
52. OTROS MUNDOS-Chiapas/Amigos de la Tierra, Mexique
53. Pacific Partnerships on Gender, Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Coalition régionale Pacifique
54. REDES-Amigos de la Tierra, Uruguay
55. SOBREVIVENCIA-Amigos de la Tierra, Paraguay
56. Sociedade Brasileira de Etnobiologia e Etnoecologia – SBEE/Brésil
57. SOLIDARITÉ, France
58. Southern Action on Genetic Engineering, Hyderabad, Inde
59. Terra de Direitos/Brasil
60. Terra Nuova ONLUS, Italie
61. UK Food Group, Royaume-Uni
62. Vía Orgánica, Mexique
63. Voices for Earth Justice, USA

