

Analysis and position of the FIMARC on Food Sovereignty & the Right to Food

In 1993, the economic, social and cultural rights were proclaimed universal and added to the civic rights of the 1948 Declaration. The right to food is one of the new rights, accepted by all States (except the USA). It can be defined as the "Right to have a regular, permanent and free access, directly or indirectly, to monetary buying means, to adequate and sufficient food in quantity and quality, corresponding to the cultural traditions of the population the consumer comes from and that ensures a psychic and physical, individual and collective life free of fears, satisfying and dignified".

Yet, the right to food is far from being implemented by all. Among the causes of the situation, the FIMARC underlines the damage caused by genetic manipulations, the subsidized exports of rich countries, the hindrances enacted by the WTO that destructure local economies in the North and in the South of the planet.

For the Movements of the FIMARC, food sovereignty is a component of the right to food, which is an integral part of the right to development. Food sovereignty is the right of all countries to maintain and develop their own capacity to produce basic food for people, respecting their productive and cultural diversity. It is the right of all countries, in dialogue with their populations, to define an agricultural policy to control the production, processing and marketing of food products. Which means that the right to food self-sufficiency is based on the right to produce or exploit one's own resources, on the right to a sustainable development of which all people are the first free and responsible actors.

To assert the right to food sovereignty involves the implementation of some conditions to achieve it: an agrarian reform to ensure for peasant families and people without land the use and control of the land they farm; the transmission to autochthonous people of their land; the preservation of natural resources, i.e. the sustainable care and use of land, water and seeds; the preservation of natural, balanced and diversified systems, peasant communities having the right to use freely and protect the different genetic resources, including the seeds these communities have been developing in the course of time.

Food sovereignty also implies the reorganization of the food trade, peasants' control over production and processing means; the food produced being a source of nutrition before a commercial product. Food sovereignty cannot exist without social peace and a democratic control.

By asserting the right to food sovereignty, the FIMARC also questions the current commercial practices, notably with the exports of subsidized agricultural products that directly compete with local agricultural products, to the detriment of local food crops.

The FIMARC strongly defends the concept of food sovereignty. The main concern is to develop the contents of the concept of food sovereignty, to measure its underlying economic, social and cultural implications and finally to defend it constantly so that it is recognized at the national and international levels as the expression of an essential right for people. Indeed, this right is rooted in an approach based on human rights that are economic, social and cultural rights.

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