



POLITICAL DECLARATION

Land for Life, Livelihood and a Liveable Future for All

Cartagena, Colombia

23 February 2026

We, peasant organisations, Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant communities, fisher peoples, pastoralists, rural and urban workers, women, gender diverse, and youth, organized through the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty, gathered in Cartagena on February 22-23 ahead of the second International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD+20). We raise a collective voice for transformation in defence of territories, life, and dignity. We remind States gathered here that national sovereignty is inseparable from food sovereignty, and call on you to struggle alongside us against the imperial forces that seek to destroy our rights to both.

Financial imperialism — in its contemporary forms of asset managers, hedge funds, transnational corporations and extractive agribusiness — is intensifying the dispossession of the popular masses of the global South everywhere and of Indigenous Peoples and small-scale food producers in the global North. Land and territory concentration and hoarding is not an anomaly: it is the logical outcome of centuries of colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, racism, and patriarchy. 1% of farms control more than 70% of the world's arable land, while across peoples' waters, 'blue growth' policies expand privatised control over marine and freshwater spaces. Further, debt and IMF-imposed austerity creates a vicious cycle that locks countries into ecologically destructive export agriculture, while at the household level, predatory microfinance disproportionately targets and dispossesses women of land and livelihood. Top-down development models and colonial foreign aid have baked in the logic of dependency instead of supporting the autonomy of small-scale food producers across the South. This material reality is the starting point for any honest analysis and the basis for any demand for real change.

The offensive is not only geopolitical — it is a class war for land, water, forests, minerals, biodiversity and food systems. It consolidates corporate and elite control through dispossession, militarisation, indebtedness and sanctions, as well as the criminalisation of our defenders of territories. Land and her creatures are harmed by the relentless incursion of mining exploration and extraction, disrupting migratory fish, herds and birds, with devastating impacts on pastoralists and mobile Indigenous Peoples, some of the last defenders of the commons. The aggressive policy of the imperialist administration in Washington — deepening the blockade and criminal economic suffocation of Cuba, systematically destabilising Venezuela, pressuring Colombia when it asserts its sovereignty, launching trade wars and coercive sanctions against the peoples of Africa, Asia and the Levant — is not the policy of only a single government, and it is emboldened by global complacency.

In this overall picture, the Palestinian question stands out as the most brutal and obvious symbol of colonial-imperialist barbarism in our time. What is happening in Gaza and the West Bank is not an abstract ‘humanitarian crisis’ arising from a historical vacuum: it is the genocide of a people who have been resisting occupation for decades, perpetrated by a colonial state that serves as a military outpost for US imperialism in the region. We declare our unconditional internationalist solidarity with the Palestinian people and strongly reject any attempt to criminalise this solidarity. We demand an immediate end to the genocide, total withdrawal from the occupied territories, the right of return, food sovereignty and full self-determination for the Palestinian people.

The Latin American and Caribbean region is simultaneously experiencing significant popular advances and a reactionary counter-offensive organised, financed and ideologically supported by imperialism: institutional coups d'état, disinformation campaigns, lawfare against progressive governments, and direct violence against popular organisations. The rise of far-right forces on the continent reflects the class panic of the elites as popular movements grow — and their resort to barbarism when the usual mechanisms of domination are no longer sufficient. In the face of this, Venezuela and Cuba are resisting the imperial blockade and maintaining their sovereignty.

Holding ICARRD+20 in Colombia carries deep political meaning. This is a country marked by extreme land and wealth concentration, violence, and armed conflict linked to territorial control — but also by powerful agrarian struggles and organized mobilisation demanding redistribution, restitution, and recognition. This moment presents a historic opportunity for States to commit to comprehensive agrarian reform and rural development. We will not accept a merely commemorative or declarative conference. We come to transform.

The agrarian reform we are calling for is a process of transforming production and power relations, led by organised popular masses. Agrarian reform must be inclusive, emancipatory, and rooted in the diversity of rural life in all the regions of the world, including the global North. It must protect complex tenure and livelihood systems, traditional production systems, and native and indigenous seeds as the basis for the autonomy and sovereignty of peoples, as well as value local knowledge, practices and innovations, and avoid repeating exclusions of Indigenous Peoples, peasants, fisher peoples, nomadic pastoralists, Afro-descendant communities, women, and other marginalised groups. Agrarian reform must promote agroecology, social justice, solidarity, and coexistence of rights holders.

Agrarian reform must be feminist and intergenerational. Rural women safeguard seeds, ancestral knowledge, and local economies, yet they—along with rural youth and gender-diverse people—are often excluded from land control and inheritance, and decision making. Feminist economies confront abusive power relations and reject the productivist model that treats Mother Earth as a mere resource. They recognise territories as living spaces shared by diverse species, peoples, and generations working toward collective wellbeing. All ways of living and loving are valid. Without free bodies, there are no free territories. That is why we commit politically to creating safe, dignified spaces within our movements and communities. To defend territory is to defend the cycles of care and renewal that sustain life.

Agrarian reform must recognise and protect collective and customary rights, guarantee free, prior and informed consent, establish clear limits on concentration, apply progressive taxes on large properties, and redistribute land that does not fulfil its social and ecological function. It must reject green and blue grabbing, which are simply new forms of dispossession disguised as ‘nature-based solutions’.

It is undeniable that where rights are precarious and wealth concentrated, instability deepens. A just and sustainable rural transformation is not a distant ideal — it is the material condition for any real peace and long-term stability. Recognition of collective and customary tenure systems protects ecosystems and reduces conflict. Redistribution of land, water and decision-making power restores social cohesion and the resilience of local economies, but it must be supported by the strengthening of community-controlled processing and distribution infrastructure, alongside fair pricing mechanisms. Restitution and reparations to dispossessed communities, framed by rights-based mechanisms, rebuilds trust and repairs historical damage. Regulating land concentration—through property caps, progressive taxation, and participatory and gender-sensitive land-use planning—protects the commons from speculation, as well as native and peasant seeds from corporate control to be sure they remain in the hands of peasant communities, indigenous peoples, and pastoralists. Together, these transformations constitute the architecture of a society capable of weathering the climate crisis and growing inequalities without descending into violence and social disintegration.

This is not a utopian vision: it is the historical necessity of our time. Hunger in the world is not due to scarcity — we produce enough to feed twice the human population. It is due to speculation and concentration propped up by undemocratic governance. Without comprehensive popular agrarian reform, there will be no end to hunger. Without agrarian justice, there will be no peace.

No people can face imperialism alone. The response to a global offensive must be international solidarity and resistance. We call for the strengthening of the international articulation of peasant, indigenous, labour, feminist and youth movements — across the borders that imperialism seeks to make impassable. We call on the States participating in this Conference to assume their historical responsibility through concrete and binding commitments, not declarations of intent. Colonial powers and countries of the global North have the obligation to account for their historical and ongoing forms of land grabbing, violence, and oppression through land restitution and reparations. History does not judge good intentions — it judges real transformations. We are not gathered here to commemorate. We are gathered here to transform.

In order for the ICARRD+20 to be a decisive juncture, we expect States to live up to their responsibility and make concrete commitments. This includes developing and implementing

agrarian reform and rural development policies at country level with the autonomous and effective participation of rights-holders. These policies must integrate key sectors, including food, agriculture, fishing, health, mining, climate, energy, trade, and finance. In addition, we expect States to establish strong monitoring and accountability mechanisms at the international level, bringing the outcomes of the conference to the United Nations spaces, including the FAO, IFAD, the UN Human Rights System, the Rio Conventions, UNCTAD and UNDP, among others.

Every generation of leadership is judged by what it leaves behind. In our time hunger and malnutrition persist, the marine territories are rising to engulf precious land, leaving Indigenous Peoples and small-scale food producers from Fiji to Bangladesh without livelihood or justice. In this time of deepening inequality, defending concentrated privilege is not responsible leadership.

Ensuring that land, territories, forests, water, and biodiversity serve broad social and ecological wellbeing is not radical — it is the rights of peoples, an obligation of States, and necessary for shared stability and collective well-being. As social movements representing the billions of small-scale food producers around the world, we come here committed to raising our voices, expressing our solutions, and working with States for agrarian reform for live, livelihood, and a liveable planet for all.

Against imperialism — International solidarity!

Against genocide — Palestine will live!

Against extractivism — Food sovereignty and agroecology!

Against dispossession — Land to those who work and care for it!

Against fear — Organisation, struggle and victory for the peoples!