

September 2, 2009

Dear Minister,

We, 125 organizations from over 50 countries are writing to urge you to represent the interests of farmers, workers, consumers, women, and the environment, by rejecting the further liberalization of trade in food in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and instead, calling for policies which will achieve food security, rural development and safeguard farmers' livelihoods through Food Sovereignty.

We urge you to not use the Ministerial-level meeting on WTO negotiations which India will host the first week in September, to push for further liberalization of agriculture. We urge you, Ministers, to reject any attempt to push through a conclusion to the Doha Round of WTO negotiations, as the current proposals will exacerbate rather than resolve the crises affecting hunger, poverty and agricultural production globally. The WTO, along with bilateral and regional "free trade" agreements replicating the same neoliberal model in agriculture promoted for three decades by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, allow agribusiness exporters in rich countries to subsidize their products and then export them into developing country markets, disadvantaging small-scale family farmers. Specifically:

\*The deregulation of trade in agriculture has resulted in the abolition of commodities boards that helped manage supply, and instead replaced them with commodities markets. These highly deregulated, volatile markets expose farmers to enormous instability due to the dramatic shifts in price associated with the speculative behavior endemic to these markets, particularly in developing countries which have been pressured to sharply reduce their import tariffs.

\*The global agricultural system allows rich countries to massively subsidize their agribusiness exports. When these subsidized exports flood into developing country markets, they represent unfair competition for local farmers, destroy local livelihoods, and increase hunger and poverty. The limits that do exist are routinely violated by the United States and EU. The recent Farm Bill passed by the United States does not limit these subsidies to any significant degree. The Food and Agriculture Organization found that all 102 of the developing countries that were studied experienced import surges between 1980-2003; these import surges occurred more frequently after the implementation of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture.

\*The global trade system does not allow for governments to protect and support sustainable food production for domestic consumption nor to protect farmers from predatory corporate behavior. Many developing country governments are prohibited from increasing protective tariffs, providing fertilizer or other input subsidies, or protecting certain products from global trade, by the WTO, bilateral trade agreements, or IMF and World Bank policies.

These policies, taken together, have resulted in failed global agricultural system including extremely volatile commodities markets, a lack of global access to nutritious and affordable food, an increase in hunger, and the erosion of farmers' incomes. These policies have culminated in the global food crisis we face today, where about 30,000 people die every day of poverty-related causes, many due to malnutrition and hunger. The FAO estimates that over one billion people are now going hungry, with about 150 million more people experiencing hunger as a result of the current food crisis.

Unfortunately, proponents of further liberalization have sought to take advantage of the food crisis to actually expand, rather than reform, their failed policies. In the current agriculture negotiations in the WTO, the most powerful rich countries are demanding that developing countries further open up their markets, while refusing to reduce the subsidies they provide for agribusiness exports that wreak immense havoc on markets in developing countries.

At the same time, many developing countries are working towards protective policies including carving out farm products from tariff reductions, as well as allowing an increase in tariffs or quotas for products facing dumping – especially for certain products which are essential for food security, rural development, and farmers' livelihoods. In the WTO, these policies, called Special Products and Special Safeguard Mechanism (SP/SSM), are advocated for by a coalition of over 46 developing countries called the G33, and are supported in these demands by an even larger group totaling over 100 developing countries. Unity amongst the G33 for a strong position on Special Products and Special Safeguard Mechanism (SP/SSM) is an essential step towards improving the global agricultural system.

Based on the failure of the current system, many farmers, fisherfolks, other food producers, consumers, scholars, and other agricultural experts have developed alternative models for global agriculture, food sovereignty, that prioritizes the cultivation of local, safe, healthy food for human sustenance, ecological social sustainability. As a first step, governments should reject the Doha Round of WTO expansion and instead support:

1. Strong protections and support for food production for domestic consumption on the national level that must be allowed for within the global trading system. Developing countries must be allowed to exempt a sufficient number of products from global trade that are essential for food security, rural development, and farmers' livelihoods. They should also be able to maintain adequate tariff levels, and to use measures to stop or reduce imports that are having a negative impact on food security, rural development and farmers' livelihoods.
2. A global trading system that disciplines corporate behavior, and an end to dumping. All kinds of export subsidies – direct or indirect, including export credit, export credit guarantee and export insurance, non emergency food aid in kind and, above all, all domestic subsidies benefitting to exported products which are infinitely larger than the actual subsidies at the export level – for agricultural products from developed countries must be eliminated immediately. We

also specifically call for the ending rich country subsidies in cotton production that damage West African producers.

3. New regulations on the markets, such as disciplines on speculation in the commodities markets, as many African governments have proposed within the WTO. We call for a shift towards a global supply management system for those farm products that are traded internationally.

These policies, taken together, would truly start a strongly needed transformation of the global food system, and deliver important progress towards the achievement of Food Sovereignty and the reduction of global poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

Sincerely,

### ***International and Regional Networks***

1.	Action Aid International	International
2.	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)	Asia Pacific
	Asian Peasant Coalition	Bangladesh, India, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
3.	ATTAC	Argentina, Belgium, Finland, France, Japan, Norway, Spain
4.		Asia
5.	Committee for Asian Women (CAW)	
	Capitulo Centroamerica Alianza Social	Central America
6.	Continental	
	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)	International
7.		India, Thailand, Philippines
8.	Focus on the Global South	
9.	Food and Water Europe	International
	Grupo de Trabajo de Agricultura y Comercio de la Alianza Social Continental	Latin America
10.		Americas
11.	Hemispheric Social Alliance	
12.	International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN)	International
	International Grail Justice and Trade Agreements Network	International
13.		
14.	IUF	International
	International Presentation Association of Presentation Sisters	International
15.		

16.	Mesa Latinoamericana de Comercio Justo y Consumo Ético	Latin America
17.	Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo (PIDHDD)	Latin America
18.	Plate Forme des Acteurs Non Etatiques d'Afrique Centrale (PANEAC)	Latin America
19.	Red Intercontinental de Promoción de la Economía Solidaria - Latinoamérica y Caribe (RIPESS LAC)	Latin America and the Caribbean
20.	Red Latinoamericana Mujeres Transformando la Economía (REMTE)	Latin America
21.	Réseau Dynamique Africaine (Réseau des Organisations de la Société Civile Africaine)	Central Africa
22.	South Asian Network for Social & Agricultural Development (SANSAD)	South Asia
23.	Southeast Asian Council for Food Security & Fair Trade (SEACON)	South East Asia
24.	Third World Network Africa	Africa
25.	Women in Development Europe (WIDE)	Europe
26.	World March of Women	International

#### National and Sub regional networks and organizations

27.	Africa Centre for Biosafety (ACB)	South Africa
28.	Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union (APVVU)	India
29.	Alianza Social Continental Capítulo Perú	Peru
30.	All Nepal Peasants Federation	Nepal
31.	Alliance of Progressive Labour (APL)	Philippines
32.	Alliansi Gerakan Reforma Agraria (AGRA)	Indonesia
33.	Articulação de Mulheres Brasileiras	Brazil
34.	Asociación Chilena de Organismos No Gubernamentales ACCIÓN A.G.	Chile
35.	Association Citoyenne de Défense des Intérêts Collectifs (ACDIC)	Cameroon
36.	Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network	Australia
37.	Bangladesh Bhumeheen Samitee (BBS)	Bangladesh
38.	Bangladesh Krishok Shangho	Bangladesh
39.	Bantay Bigas	Philippines
40.	Berne Declaration	Switzerland
41.	Bharatiya Krishak Samaj	India
42.	Bloque Popular Honduras	Honduras
43.	CAFRA Trinidad & Tobago	Trinidad & Tobago
44.	Capitulo Argentino de la PIDHDD	Argentina
45.	Centre for Education and Communication (CEC)	India

46.	Centre for Trade Policy and Development	Zambia
47.	Chile Sustentable	Chile
48.	CLADEM Paraguay	Paraguay
49.	Comisión Ecuamélica de Derechos Humanos de Ecuador	Ecuador
50.	Comisión Local 0,7% PIB	Spain
51.	Comisión Nacional de Enlace (CNE)	Costa Rica
52.	Confederación Nacional Agraria	Peru
53.	Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)	South Africa
54.	Council of Canadians	Canada
55.	CRBM-Mani Tese	Italy
56.	Dekada '80 Movement	Philippines
57.	Ditsò	Costa Rica
58.	Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF)	Zambia
59.	Ecologistas en Acción	Spain
60.	Economic Justice and Development Organization (EJAD)	Pakistan
61.	Ecuador Decide	Ecuador
62.	Fair	Italy
63.	Foro "Corriente de Opinión Ciudadana"	Argentina
64.	Frente Democrático Campesino	Mexico
65.	Globalization Watch Hiroshima	Japan
66.	GM Freeze	United Kingdom
67.	Grupo Local de Campaña Pobreza Cero	Spain
68.	Grupo Red de Economía Solidaria del Perú - GRESP	Peru
69.	IBON Foundation	Philippines
70.	Informationsgruppe Lateinamerika (IGLA)	Austria
71.	Institute for Global Justice	Indonesia
72.	Instituto para el Comercio Equitativo y el Consumo Responsable (ICECoR)	Argentina
73.	Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)	Kenya
74.	Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)	Philippines
75.	La Cooperativa Artística Víctor Lima	Uruguay
76.	La Mesa Intercooperativa de Salto	Uruguay
77.	La Via Campesina – Brasil	Brazil
78.	Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre	Nigeria
79.	Labour Research Service	South Africa
80.	Lismore Presentation Congregation	Australia
81.	Marcha Mundial de las Mujeres Perú	Peru

82.	Movimiento Rural Cristiano	Spain
	Movimiento Social Nicaraguense Otro Mundo es	
83.	Posible	Nicaragua
84.	National Agricultural Workers Forum (NAWF)	India
85.	National Alliance of People's Movements-NAPM	India
86.	National Center For Labour	India
	National Network of Agrarian Reform Advocates	
87.	(NNARA)	Philippines
88.	Oakland Institute	USA
89.	OeIE-Kaernten	Austria
90.	ONG Africando	Spain
91.	Paz Ahora	Spain
	Peoples Network on Food Security Programs	
92.	(PNFSP)	Philippines
	Plataforma Rural-Alianzas por un Mundo Rural	
93.	Vivo	Spain
94.	Plataforma Boliviana de Derechos Humanos	Bolivia
95.	Plataforma Colombiana de Derechos Humanos	Colombia
96.	Plataforma Dhesca Brasil	Brazil
97.	Plataforma Peruana de Derechos Humanos	Peru
98.	Presentation Justice Network	Ireland
99.	Presentation Sisters Network India	India
100.	Proyecto Cultura y Solidaridad (PCyS)	Spain
	PUMALAG (Peoples Network against	
101.	Liberalization of Agriculture)	Philippines
	Red de Acción Ciudadana Frente al Libre	
102.	Comercio e Inversiones SINTI TECHAN	El Salvador
103.	Red de Semillas "Resembrando e Intercambiando"	Spain
	Red Mexicana de Acción frente al Libre Comercio	
104.	(RMALC)	Mexico
105.	Red Peruana de Comercio Justo y Consumo Ético	Peru
	Resistance and Solidarity against Agrochemical	
106.	TNCs (RESIST Network)	Philippines
107.	SEARCH Foundation	Australia
108.	Serikat Petani Indonesia	Indonesia
109.	SETEM-Catalunya	Spain
	Sisters of the Presentation Congregation of	
110.	Newfoundland and Labrador	Canada
111.	Soldepaz.Pachakuti	Spain
112.	Solidarité	France
113.	South African Municipal Workers' Union	South Africa
	Southern and Eastern Africa Trade, Information	
114.	and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)	Uganda and Zimbabwe

115.	Surplus People Project	South Africa
	Taiwan NGOs Association for International	
116.	Affairs	Taiwan
	Tanggol Magsasaka (Peasant Network for Land,	
117.	Justice and Human Rights)	Philippines
118.	Trade Strategy Group	South Africa
119.	Transnational Institute (TNI)	The Netherlands
120.	The Development Fund	Norway
121.	War on Want	United Kingdom
122.	World Development Movement	United Kingdom
	World Economy, Ecology and Development	
123.	(WEED)	Germany
124.	Worldview-The Gambia	Gambia
	WTO Vyathiredha Vedika (Platform Against	
125.	WTO)	India