

**Intervention by Civil Society Organisations to the Plenary of the
7th GOVERNING BODY (GB7) of the International Seed Treaty (IT PGRFA)**

Sergio Alonzo (delivered in Spanish)

Intervention on Agenda 15: Farmers' Rights

Thank you Chair.

We support the call of the G77 to establish a working group on Farmers' Rights.

My name is Sergio Alonzo. I represent a peasant organisation of more than 9,000 families in Guatemala and I am speaking here on behalf CSOs present as observers.

In previous meetings of the governing body, Contracting Parties agreed through resolutions to fully implement Farmers' Rights. Yet to date, the previous resolutions still need action. The formation of a working group is a positive step to implement the previous decisions of the governing body. The working group on Farmers' Rights should also be sufficiently funded so that it will be able to make headway in the implementation of Farmers' Rights. It has already been widely acknowledged that Farmers' Rights make a decisive contribution to the achievement of food security and the conservation, development, and sustainable use of PGRFA.

Also, to ensure that membership of representatives of farmers' organizations, social movements and CSOs is guaranteed in the working group on Farmers' Rights because farmers are the principal actors on this issue and should have a privileged voice in the working group; and to reflect the Treaty's recognition of the right of farmers to participate in decision making-processes.

The formation of a working group is one of the recommendations arrived at by the co-chairs during the 2016 Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights held in Bali, Indonesia on September 27 to 30, 2016. The working group should consider all recommendations from Bali, as well as from other consultations on Farmers' Rights at global or regional levels. We urge the Governing Body to allocate sufficient resources for the operation of the working group in the Treaty's budget, to ensure progress on this crucial matter for the Treaty.

Additionally, pursuant to the resolutions on Farmers' Rights during GB5 and GB6, we urge the governing body to direct the secretariat to take bolder initiatives in engaging with UPOV and WIPO to persuade them to revise rules and policies that could impede or limit the implementation and realisation of Farmers' Rights, as provided under our Treaty's Article 9 and its preambular text.

Finally, we urge the contracting parties to request the secretariat to conduct a study on the impact of new and emerging technologies, such as digital sequence information on farmers' rights.

Thank you Chair.