

We, the representatives of rural organisations and movements, committed to the cause of the rural marginalised sections of the society in the Asian countries of Bangladesh, India, South Korea, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand have gathered together in Jessore, Bangladesh around the seminar organised by FIMARC, on Food Sovereignty and Solidarity Economy. During this occasion, we have had the opportunity of deeply analysing our rural realities from our own experiences.

We understand that by the end of the Second World War the ruling elite of the world had erected a number of tools such as World Bank, IMF, WTO, etc. with a view to ensure the overall development of the world. But at present we find out that these institutions are only serving the interest of the rich and are pushing the vast majority of world population into utter poverty, illiteracy and injustice.

The agriculture and rural sectors which were neglected by these institutions in the beginning have become the main targets of WTO which aims at exploiting these sectors to make more benefits for the Multinational Companies without having least respect for the humanity and environment. As a result, over the last years, the marginalised communities around the world have started to resist these inhuman conditions through peaceful mobilisations and through developing alternative models. But the dominant system which is well organised and which has a strong financial and media back up is trying its best to defeat these resistances through working out bilateral agreements between Nations States after the collapse of WTO negotiations in Hong Kong. This situation leads us to commit ourselves to struggle against the ideology of neo-liberalism through an organised resistance as well as constructing a new ideology which we can call the Sovereign Economy. This ideology developed by the marginalised communities combines two important concepts that are gaining power day by day all over the world. These are Food Sovereignty and Solidarity economy.

Food sovereignty is the right of farmers, communities, countries or groups of countries to define their own food, agricultural and territorial policies, as well as their work in those sectors including fishing sector and other indigenous populations. These policies must be ecologically, socially and culturally adapted to each specific situation. Food sovereignty includes a real right to food and to food production, which means that all the populations have the right to safe food, culturally and nutritionally adapted as well as access to resources of food production and capacity to ensure their survival and their community survival.

Solidarity economy is an alternative model, just and human, to realise economy. It is based on solidarity, work and mutual support and on co-operation; it comprehends an integral and sustainable development, based on human scale which especially refers to local reality, with new relationships between the economic actors, based on the principles of mutual understanding and co-operation and with the main objective of social utility before the profit.

To strengthen and develop the existing experiences of Solidarity Economy and Food Sovereignty, we want to consolidate these concepts and develop it as an ideology of Sovereign Economy. In order to materialise this ideology, we, the participants of this Asian Seminar, commit ourselves

- To boycott the products of the multinationals that are invading our markets through the advertisement of the media, and to promote local products which are better for health and culture
- To explain in our families, group members and communities, about the danger of those products
- To avoid hybrid and Genetically Modified Seeds, chemical fertilisers and pesticides which are causing to our natural resources
- To systematically promote organic farming and fair marketing of those products
- To join all campaigns, especially campaign on no more arms and to alliance with platforms and like minded groups to lobby all governing structures at the local, regional and international levels in order to achieve our goal.

We strongly demand our politicians, religious leaders and representatives of all decision-making institutions to consider our legitimate demand for an economy that respects the welfare of the communities and ensure justice and a dignified life to all. The current situation of imperialism is no more supportable to us and we are ready to use all pacific but strong means to change the present system.

We would like to whole heartily thank BSDF organisation of Bangladesh to have hosted this seminar in Jessore and all local authorities for their encouragement's and supports

The participants
Jessore, January 28, 2008