

**Press Release****Facing the Food Crisis: Decrease**

In many areas of the world we hear about dramatic stories caused by the world food crisis. Despite the fact that farmers are the ones who produce the food, they are the ones who most suffer from hunger. The price of basic food products are constantly on the increase, e.g. the 25 million poor farmers who suffer from increased rice prices.

FIMARC, the International Federation of Adult Rural Catholic Movements, gathered in Assesse (Belgium), with representatives from the 4 continents, analyzed and reflected on the world food crisis.

Natural resources are in the world for the development of human beings. Natural resources are, however, increasingly being privatized and are mainly now in the hands of transnational companies – supported by international finance organizations such as the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF – who manage them without taking the main objective into account : feeding the whole of mankind.

The land used for monocrop production is extending for the production of agrofuels which the multinational companies mainly present as an alternative to fossil fuels and as a solution for the environment. However, this is bringing about the destruction of numerous forests and traditional crops in order to produce ethanol or similar fuels, in huge areas of Africa, Asia and America, due to their land concentration.

We are moving towards a world which is upside down: cars, not people, will be needing to consume the yearly cereal production.

We suggest as an alternative farmer and family agriculture that contributes to guaranteeing food sovereignty for millions of people. This agriculture respects nature, soils, water, promotes biodiversity, local development and puts the people within their communities at the heart of the system.

In a world with a consumerist minority and a majority who lives on the threshold of poverty, it is necessary to propose an alternative. To the neoliberal system – only measured by the growth indicator – we propose a different lifestyle : decrease – promoting responsible consumption in order to maintain the values of justice and re-distribution, within the framework of solidarity economy, a model which secures the principle of food for all, respects diversity of cultures, local initiatives and the rural world.

Assesse, 5 May 2008