

PRESS RELEASE

The Bali Package jeopardizes our right to Food Sovereignty. WTO is gambling with our future

Friday 6 December 2013, by [Gerak Lawan](#), [La Via Campesina](#), [SMAA](#) (Date first published: 6 December 2013).

The Bali package is a total sham for the poor and hungry of the world. Why should humanity beg the WTO for a peace clause to guarantee the right to food? The whole negotiation of the Bali package is nonsense. The right to food, the right to survival of small farmers cannot be subjected to any kind of negotiation in the WTO or in any place.

Under the WTO, the developed countries can subsidize their agriculture sector with more than 300 billion dollars while developing countries are not allowed to support as needed their small farmers.

“The right to food is a universal human right. The Tyranny of the WTO cannot put brackets on these rights. Agriculture should never have been included in the WTO. Food is not just one more commodity. All countries have the responsibility to use all available measures to guarantee the food sovereignty of their people.” Stated Henry Saragih, Chairperson of SPI-Indonesian Peasants Union and Member of International Coordinating Committee of La Via Campesina, the global peasants movement with over 200 million members in 85 countries.

According to Pablo Solon, Executive Director of Focus on the Global South, “The Bali Package delivers a legally binding agreement on Trade Facilitation that will open more borders for Transnational Corporations (TNCs), empty promises to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and an unacceptable “peace clause” solution on Agriculture. There is nothing in the Bali Package for the people.”

“There is nothing in the WTO for the people. After 18 years, the WTO has never delivered on its promises of development, instead it has concentrated wealth in the hands of the few.” said Josua Mata, Secretary General of SENTRO, a labor alliance in the Philippines. According to the 2013 World Trade Report, 81 percent of exports are concentrated in the top 5 largest exporting firms in developing countries. As Jean Enriquez of the World March of Women stated, “The WTO has been stalemated for years in the Doha Development Round negotiations and should just accept that it has become a failure and has lost its legitimacy.”

“Today, the WTO tries to revive itself and bring back credibility to its delegitimized institution, by producing a Bali Package that jeopardizes our future.” said Cindy Wiesner of Grassroots Global Justice Alliance from the United States. It takes away our right to food sovereignty by limiting agricultural policies and tying our hands into an expansive Trade Facilitation deal.

Our food, livelihoods and sovereignty are not commodities to be gambled, traded and sold to the highest bidders. The WTO needs to stop gambling with our future. It is time to End the WTO and instead build an Economy for Life.

Social Movements for an Alternative Asia (SMAA), Gerak Lawan, and La Via Campesina
