

VII International Conference: Women's Assembly Declaration

Wednesday 9 August 2017, by [Via Campesina \(Women\)](#) (Date first published: 18 July 2017).

DECLARATION

We, the women of more than 70 countries, representatives of our movements, meeting for our V Women's Assembly, in the framework of the VII International Conference of La Via Campesina, address all women, peasant movements and popular movements in general, the following declaration:

We are rural women who represent the diversity of rural women: indigenous women, peasants, rural employees, fisherfolk, shepherds, artisans, young people, migrants and gatherers, who, through our productive and political work, contribute on a daily basis to the rural struggles and to the international movement of La Via Campesina. We do this from the point of view of feminism and food sovereignty.

We began this Assembly by recounting our story so far, highlighting the progress we have achieved, sure of our actions and our thoughts.

We ratified the Rural Women's Manifesto, produced by the IV Women's Assembly in 2013. This manifesto guides us in our practises and serves as a proposal for change for all of society.

We reiterate our commitment of resistance in the field, of full participation in the organisations, to fight violence against women until it has been completely eradicated, to condemn war and contribute to peace building with social justice, to defend Mother Earth and to fight to recover good living for all humankind.

Once again we note:

The capitalist and patriarchal system continues to grow throughout the entire world, violating our territories, our bodies and our minds. It continues to accumulate ever more capital to the detriment of the planet and humankind's future.

In this era of profound crisis of the capitalist system, its neoliberal expression, dictatorial and imperialist governments spread war, treacherously extract the common goods, invade nations, provoke forced migration, evict peoples from their lands, militarise the land, pursue, murder and imprison fighters and they do not stop.

Nature and agriculture continue to be commercialised and the uncontrolled extraction of all types of resources is being felt in accelerated climate change; the consequences of which are catastrophic for our communities and in particular the women. They are exposed to situations that restrict rural life and culture. Severe hunger and poverty are suffered by those who produce food and riches.

In this context, we women are increasingly bearing the weight of producing goods and food. However, our work continues to be made invisible and our care work is neither valued, supported,

nor collectively or socially assumed, thereby increasing our burden of work and restricting our full participation.

The types of structural violence have multiplied. We suffer economical, employment, environmental, physical, sexual and psychological violence. Femicide continues and is increasing. Criminalisation of women and their organisations have increased lately and together with impunity and political murders, they have become significant obstacles in the progress of the women's struggles. Land grabbing by multinationals is evicting us from our land and homes. Often, with the help of the army, our crops and houses are burnt to the ground. We have been suffering forced migration for decades, but now, more and more people are being trafficked through organised crime. The war is particularly brutal for us; economic violence is more severe resulting in the generalization of sexual violence and us drowning in poverty. All of this makes our lives infinitely more difficult. Death, imprisonment and persecution of our families' men leaves us even more vulnerable, and overburden us with the tasks necessary for survival and the protection of our children who are increasingly exposed to sexual violence, death and uprooting. Fumigation with agrottoxins of large monocultures has a direct effect on our bodies, the environment and our work. Native and creole seeds are contaminated with transgenics and endanger our food sovereignty.

Regarding our right and our duty to participate in political processes and decision making.

We recognize the ideological, political and legislative progress that has been made with regard to political participation. However, these advances, are often not translated into practical policies for our daily lives, the States or our organisations.

We will continue to work and fight so that our organisations are at the forefront of the changes necessary to ensure our full political participation, especially in decision making, in defining strategies and in the responsibilities of our representatives. We will continue to demand that our productive work be recognized and that our reproductive and care work be valued, shared and collectively taken care of. This is essential if we are to fully participate.

Building a peasant and popular feminism

We are building a feminism out of our peasant and popular identity as a tool for our organisations and in the social emancipation process for men and women.

The feminism that we propose recognises our cultural diversity and the very different conditions that we face in each region, country and place. We are building it from the daily struggles which women across the planet fight. Struggles for our autonomy, social transformation, the defence and protection of peasant agriculture, and food sovereignty. From this, new men and women will emerge with new gender relationships based on equality, respect, cooperation and mutual recognition. This feminism is transformative, rebellious and autonomous. We are building it collectively through reflection and concrete actions against the capital and the patriarchy. It stands in solidarity with the struggles of all women and all those peoples who fight.

This feminism must also be nourished with feminist training for us and for all our organisations. Our movements must guarantee spaces solely for women in which together we can strengthen our autonomy.

Campaign to stop violence against women

Our campaign Stop Violence against Women has been immensely important in highlighting violence against us and to raise awareness in our organisations. We need to broaden the commitment that all of La Via Campesina's women and men, including the young people, have made so as to include

concrete actions in our daily campaigns and remove violence which is the key obstacle in our lives.

Our popular methods of communication should enhance the campaign through the dissemination, promotion and increased visibility of the problem we are facing, the struggles we are undertaking and the proposals we are developing.

We, rural women, will continue to organize ourselves, to fight for the right to live with dignity, justice and equality.

Building the movement to change the world with feminism and food sovereignty.

Euskal Herria, Derio, 18th July 2017.

P.S.

* <https://viacampesina.org/en/vii-international-conference-womens-assembly-declaration/>