

# **Farmers repression in Rio Grande do Sul: Solidarity with the women defending life and biodiversity**

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We express our solidarity with the women of Rio Grande do Sul/Brazil in their action against green deserts.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, around 900 women of Via Campesina Rio Grande do Sul occupied the 2.100 hectares “Fazenda Tarumã” in Rosário do Sul. The women cut the eucalyptus and planted native trees in a land illegally purchased by the giant Finish-Swedish paper and celluloses company Stora Enso. The police violently attacked the peaceful gathering, injuring badly as many as 50 women.

This action was taking place among other activities organised for the International Women Day on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March. Women farmers are the most affected by the current export-oriented agriculture model based on the plundering of natural resources and the exclusion of small farmers by transnational companies.

All around the world, eucalyptus plantations as well as other monoculture plantations (green deserts) destroy the environment and prevent small farmers from making a living and producing food for all.

We strongly condemn any violence against farmers, women and men, defending their right to live and feed their communities in a socially and ecologically sustainable way.

Via Campesina members all around the world promote a model of peasant or family-farm agriculture based on sustainable production with local resources and in harmony with local cultures and traditions.

We promote equality between women and men!

We promote food sovereignty!

Henry Saragih,

General Coordinator of La Via Campesina International

Jakarta, 07 March 2007