



INTERNATIONAL
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Antigua Declaration

ILC Global Land Forum 2013 "Inclusive and Sustainable Territorial Governance for Food Security: Sharing Lessons from Around the World", Antigua, Guatemala

We, members of ILC, have met at our Assembly of Members on April 25th, 2013, following the Global Land Forum in Antigua, Guatemala, which involved 273 members and guests from 47 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, Africa, Asia and Europe. We represent farmers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, youth, and women's organisations, as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academic institutions and research centres, unions and multilateral institutions. We are brought together by our shared objective to promote secure and equitable access to and control over land for women and men who live in poverty.

Land rights are fundamental to addressing the common challenges of humanity, including overcoming poverty and hunger, recognising the rights of Indigenous Peoples, mitigating and adapting to climate change, reversing desertification and land degradation, sustainable development and peace-building.

We acknowledge the growing international consensus on land governance that includes collective rights and respects territorial visions of development, human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability, as well as the decisive role of small-scale producers and family farmers in present day and future food production systems in achieving food security for all. We applaud the achievements of Indigenous Peoples in gaining international recognition for their distinct inherent rights. We recognise the important role the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) and the Africa Land Policy Framework and Guidelines (ALPFG) play in expanding this consensus.

We are disturbed, however, by the gap between aspiration and reality. Agrarian economies are profoundly affected by corporate and other interests that are external to local territories, taking control of land, productive resources and food value chains, alienating land-users from their environment, and posing great risks of marginalising small-scale producers and family farmers. We observe the increasing levels of land grabbing and land concentration that are embedded in wider political and economic choices, including poorly regulated investment frameworks and poor governance that do not respond to the needs of rural communities, undermine democratic processes, create unhealthy environments and unequal societies, and perpetuate poverty and hunger.

We are encouraged by the successes achieved by our members in securing the tenure rights of women, men and their communities. We will build on these and on the opportunities provided by the growing global recognition of the importance of responsible land governance. To this end, we, members of ILC, take the following commitments:

1. We will support models of development and environmental stewardship based on respect for **territorial governance and local food and natural resource management systems**, which recognise the multiple dimensions of land, including its cultural, social and spiritual functions, as a basis for social inclusion and dignity.
2. We will work towards encouraging public policies and strategies for **investment in agriculture and natural resource management** that are socially equitable, environmentally and economically sustainable, and that place small-scale producers and family farmers at the centre of their rural development strategies. We will therefore build evidence and advocate for public investment and trade policies and market regulation that achieve this goal. At the heart of our efforts will be empowering small-scale producers and family farmers through stronger organisations, especially of women producers, and working towards secure and equitable access to land.
3. We fully support the **International Year of Family Farming** in 2014 and are encouraged by the development of a UN Declaration on Peasant Rights.
4. We voice our concern at the extreme vulnerability of many **Indigenous Peoples** to land grabbing and criminalisation of customary forms of land and natural resource use, particularly in contexts of extractive industries, conservation areas and commercial agriculture. Recognising that respect for indigenous cultures contributes to sustainable and equitable development and management of the environment, we commit ourselves to work together to more effectively support Indigenous Peoples in their struggle for territorial rights and the protection of their environments.
5. We will work towards strengthening **women's land rights and gender justice** in land governance, with the aim of achieving both *de jure* and *de facto* equality between men and women, while recognising the diversity of women, their tenure rights and ensuring women's equal opportunities and participation in decision-making at all levels. We support and place great expectations on the development of a General Recommendation on the Rights of Rural Women by the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). We see the operationalisation of this Convention, especially of its provisions pertaining to rural women, as a critical tool to advance women's land rights in rural areas.
6. We denounce all forms of **human rights** violations related to land, territorial and environmental issues, and we will work together with others to monitor such abuses. We express our severe concerns over the increasing harassment, threats and killings of human rights defenders, including in our host country Guatemala, especially those who work to defend land and territorial rights. We urge governments to ensure their protection, including those facing trial as a result of their defence of land rights.
7. We recognise the integral value of the **environment** and the sustainable management of natural resources to achieve food security, the well-being of our societies and full realisation of the right to food¹. We will work to recognise and enable the stewardship role of local communities by up-scaling our efforts to secure their customary and diverse tenure rights and by advocating local governance of territories and commonly held land, water and other natural resources.
8. We note with grave concern the lack of **transparency and accountability** related to decision making over land, in particular relating to large-scale concessions and land use conversions. We welcome the increased emphasis by the international community on this issue, and strongly urge that this is accompanied by efforts to support nationally-owned multi-stakeholder processes in the context of implementing the VGGT and the ALPFG. We will upscale support to participatory monitoring initiatives that open space for dialogue and evidence based advocacy.

¹ Members began a debate on the relevance of the concept of Food Sovereignty, which will be continued.

We therefore strongly advocate for the inclusion of a *sustainable development goal on governance of land tenure* and targets specifically related to secure and equitable land rights, especially for women, in the post-2015 development agenda. We encourage the work of the Committee on World Food Security in defining Principles of Responsible Agricultural Investment.

The International Land Coalition expresses its *solidarity with the people of Guatemala* in this critical moment where the Nation is still healing the wounds of the recent war, while deepening the democratisation process. We commend the courageous efforts to achieve truth, justice and reparation. These elements are essential to build peace with social justice.

To this end, we affirm our experience that constructive engagement and participation of civil society in decisions over territorial development is key to achieving the aim of a more prosperous and peaceful society. We therefore welcome the commitment made by the Government to address as a matter of urgency the fair settlement of the rural communities evicted in the Polochic Valley, and we urge the rapid implementation of this commitment. Being also aware of the Government's willingness to promote the approval of an Integrated Rural Development Law, based on the spirit of proposals by peasant organisations, we encourage the allocation of an adequate budget for its implementation.

We affirm our willingness to support national members and the Government of Guatemala to implement the VGGT, in particular regarding the need for strengthening its land institutions and developing territorial development policies and institutions so that they can effectively help promote timely and meaningful social participation; realise the land rights of women and men in peasant and indigenous communities; reduce negative impacts of private investments on indigenous peoples' territories; and stop land grabbing and forced evictions.

Globally, we will continue fostering collaboration between the States and civil society, and sharing experiences across countries that contribute to equitable and productive land tenure that increases food security. We, as members of ILC, commit ourselves to working at all levels, and in support of governments and other stakeholders, to operationalise the VGGT and the ALPFG in a people-centred manner, as detailed in the attached commitment to action on People-centred land governance.

We extend our appreciation and gratitude to our hosts in Guatemala for solidarity and their generous hospitality.

The International Land Coalition (ILC) is a global alliance of civil society and intergovernmental organisations working together to promote secure and equitable access to and control over land for poor women and men through advocacy, dialogue, knowledge sharing and capacity-building. The Global Land Forum on *Inclusive and sustainable territorial governance for food security* was held together with the sixth biennial ILC Global Assembly of Members. They took place in Antigua, Guatemala, from 23-27 May 2013 and were jointly hosted by the Asociación Comité de Desarrollo Campesino (CODECA), Comité Campesino del Altiplano (CCDA), Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas (CONGCOOP), Unión Verapacense de Organizaciones Campesinas (UVOC), Oxfam-Guatemala and ILC.

This Declaration was endorsed by the ILC Assembly of Members at Antigua, Guatemala, on 25 April 2013.

Annex

People-centred land governance

Commitment to action on the VGGT and ALPFG with a focus on women and men living in poverty

As members of ILC, we welcome and reaffirm the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure, and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, as much-needed global and regional norms and benchmarks. We call on States to take the appropriate legal and institutional policies to operationalise these Guidelines, and we commit ourselves to working with them and other partners towards extending these Guidelines to practice and policy, both as member organisations and as a coalition.

We, in particular, recognise that the implementation of these Guidelines at the country level requires intensive engagement by multiple stakeholders at local, national and regional levels, and that implementing these Guidelines and other international standards involves trade-offs between competing interests and priorities. We also know that transforming international norms into reality on the ground is an enormous challenge that requires the collaboration of all.

As ILC members, we commit ourselves to contribute to their operationalisation, with a particular focus on those who live in poverty and consistent with our vision that ‘Secure and equitable access to and control over land reduces poverty and contributes to identity, dignity, and inclusion.’

Drawing on our fifteen years of experience as a coalition, we emphasise the following ten actions as essential to achieving people-centred land governance. We will work together as a coalition, and with all concerned state and non-state actors, to see that these actions are put into practice.

1. **Respect, protect and strengthen the land rights of women and men living in poverty**, ensuring that no one is deprived of the use and control of the land on which their well-being and human dignity depend, including through eviction, expulsion or exclusion, and with compulsory changes to tenure undertaken only in line with international law and standards on human rights.
2. **Ensure equitable land distribution and public investment that supports small-scale farming systems**, including through redistributive agrarian reforms that counter excessive land concentration, provide for secure and equitable use and control of land, and allocate appropriate land to landless rural producers and urban residents, whilst supporting smallholders as investors and producers, such as through cooperative and partnership business models.
3. **Recognize and protect the diverse tenure and production systems upon which people’s livelihoods depend**, including the communal and customary tenure systems of smallholders, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, fisher folks, and holders of overlapping, shifting and periodic rights to land and other natural resources, even when these are not recognized by law, and whilst also acknowledging that the well-being of resource-users may be affected by changes beyond the boundaries of the land to which they have tenure rights.
4. **Ensure gender justice in relation to land**, taking all necessary measures to pursue both de jure and de facto equality, enhancing the ability of women to defend their land rights and take equal part in decision-making, and ensuring that control over land and the benefits that are derived thereof are equal between women and men, including the right to inherit and bequeath tenure rights.

5. **Respect and protect the inherent land and territorial rights of indigenous peoples**, as set out in ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including by recognizing that respect for indigenous knowledge and cultures contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment.
6. **Enable the role of local land users in territorial and ecosystem management**, recognizing that sustainable development and the stewardship of ecosystems are best achieved through participatory decision-making and management at the territorial-level, empowering local land users and their communities with the authority, means and incentives to carry out this responsibility.
7. **Ensure that processes of decision-making over land are inclusive**, so that policies, laws, procedures and decisions concerning land adequately reflect the rights, needs and aspirations of individuals and communities who will be affected by them. This requires the empowerment of those who otherwise would face limitations in representing their interests, particularly through support to land users' and other civil society organizations that are best able to inform, mobilize and legitimately represent marginalized land users, and their participation in multi-stakeholder platforms for policy dialogue.
8. **Ensure transparency and accountability**, through unhindered and timely public access to all information that may contribute to informed public debate and decision-making on land issues at all stages, and through decentralization to the lowest effective level, to facilitate participation, accountability and the identification of locally appropriate solutions.
9. **Prevent and remedy land grabbing**, respecting traditional land use rights and local livelihoods, and ensuring that all large-scale initiatives that involve the use of land, water and other natural resources comply with human rights and environmental obligations and are based on:
 - » the free, prior and informed consent of existing land users;
 - » a thorough assessment of economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts with respect to both women and men;
 - » democratic planning and independent oversight; and
 - » transparent contracts that respect labour rights, comply with social and fiscal obligations and are specific and binding on the sharing of responsibilities and benefits.
 - » Where adverse impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights have occurred, concerned actors should provide for, and cooperate in, impartial and competent mechanisms to provide remedy, including through land restitution and compensation.
10. **Respect and protect the civil and political rights of human rights defenders working on land issues**, combating the stigmatization and criminalisation of peaceful protest and land rights activism, and ending impunity for human rights violations, including harassment, threats, violence and political imprisonment.