

**Isabel Vilalba, from Sindicato Labrego Galego (Galicia, Spain) : intervention on the rights of peasant women and women working and living in rural areas on behalf of the World March of Women.**

Geneva 15/05/2017

Madam Ambassador, representatives of member states, civil society organizations.

My name is Isabel Vilalba. I am a peasant. I come from the Spanish state of Galicia. I am part of the Union *Labrego Galego*. We are founding members of the World March of Women in Europe.

I want to tell you that I am one and at the same time I am millions. The millions of peasant women committed to feed our communities, to health, to protect biodiversity and so many other common goods.

I am one of the millions sisters of Berta Cáceres Flores and other comrades and we come here to ask you, we come to implore you to help us live in peace, so that we are not murdered for defending life, for defending human rights.

The World March of Women is a worldwide movement present in more than 60 countries of different regions. It has among its fundamental axes of work the fight against all forms of discrimination, against poverty or any form of violence against women.

In line with the principles of the World March of Women, from our movement we would like to point out that the declaration of the rights of peasants and other rural workers is in our view a fundamental tool to defend human rights.

We wish to return once again to the conclusions of the final Study of the *Human Rights Council Advisory Committee on the advancement of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural Areas* as a fundamental element of the process of this declaration. The study makes it clear that women play a vital role in feeding people.

We must not ignore the fact that no less than 70% of the world's hungry people, who lack remuneration and legal recognition for their work, who have greater difficulties in accessing resources to produce or are in a situation of poverty, most of us are women and we work in agriculture.

We wish to recall that the study of the Council Advisory Committee mentions that gender discrimination is one of the fundamental causes of discrimination and vulnerability. I want to

take a moment here, if it is one of the fundamental causes of discrimination and vulnerability, the elimination of gender discrimination is an indisputably essential element of this declaration. Language and treatment must be inclusive and incompatible with any form of *de jure* or *de facto* discrimination. We are concerned about a setback in this area which we believe would be an essential reduction in human rights protection.

Equality between women and men is a basic principle of human rights, as is the observance of principles such as those arising from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women or CEDAW recommendations.

We demand the right to be treated in accordance with the principles of equality and justice, both in the public and private spheres, and to be able to develop our lives free from any form of violence. Based on a human rights perspective, the declaration must contribute effectively to eradicating violence in all its types, in particular gender-based violence against peasant women, regardless of their form (psychological, economic, sexual, domestic, physical or any other).

In Human Rights, there is no permissible discrimination. As women, as human beings we are subjects of rights. Legal status, documented or undocumented, identity or any other factor cannot put this into question.