



European Economic and Social Committee



**GENEVA  
ACADEMY**

Académie de droit International  
humanitaire et de droits humains  
Academy of International  
Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

## **Public Conference: *Peasants' Rights in Europe***

*The implementation of the UN Declaration for the Rights of Peasants (UNDROP) in Europe and its contribution to the SDGs and the UN Decade of Family Farming*

**30 September 2019  
13:30 – 16:30**

**European Economic and Social Committee  
VMA building, Rue Van Maerlant 2, room VMA3  
Brussels**

In December 2018, the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas (UNDROP) was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in New York by a large majority of countries.

It is time to see how this international human rights instrument can support the livelihood of rural populations in Europe, and contribute to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and to a successful UN Decade of Family Farming.

It is fundamental to put smallholder farmers at the center of more sustainable food systems and their governance, in order to overcome growing levels of hunger and inequalities in today's world. Smallholder farmers are also essential in the preservation of natural resources and in the development of agro-ecological farming methods.

This event aims to bring together representatives of UN agencies, European Union institutions, academics, experts and most importantly peasants from Europe in an exchange of views to:

- *Share information about the recently adopted UN resolutions through which the UN General Assembly adopted the UNDROP, and created the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDFE);*
- *Promote the implementation of the UNDROP in Europe;*
- *Highlight the relationship between the UNDROP and the UNDFE on issues such as food and agriculture policies, seeds and biodiversity.*

*Duration of the conference: 3h*

## **Agenda**

### ***12:30-13:30 Registration and Lunch***

### ***13:30-13:45 Welcoming***

- Geneviève Savigny, member of the Diversity Europe Group (Group III) of the European Economical Social Committee (EESC)
- Maurizio Reale, President of the NAT section of the European Economical Social Committee (EESC)
- Marielle Vink de Roos, member of the coordinating committee of the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)

### ***13h45 – 14h45 Panel 1: The UNDROP and the UN Decade of Family Farming***

Moderation by Thierry Kesteloot (Oxfam Solidarité)

Presentations (30 min.):

- Presentation of the UNDROP and its link with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development – by Birgit Van Hout, Regional Representative for Europe of the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR)
- The UN Decade for Family Farming 2019 –2028: An opportunity to promote the implementation of the UNDROP in Europe – by Morten Hartvigsen, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (FAO REU)
- The importance of the UNDROP for European farmers – by Ramona Duminiçoiu, member of the coordinating committee of the European Coordination of Via Campesina (ECVC)

Roundtable of reactions from EU institutions (20 min):

- Maria Gafo Gomez-Zamalloa, Representative of the EC / DG AGRI – Deputy Head of Unit
- Luc Dockendorf, Counsellor, International Organisations and Human Rights, The Government of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg

Questions from the floor to the panelists and responses (10 min.)

### ***14:45 – 15:05 Coffee Break***

### ***15:05-16:15 Panel 2 – Focus on Peasants' Right to Seeds***

Moderation by Andrea Nuila (FIAN International)

Presentations (30 min.):

- The importance of the right to seeds in international law – by José Esquinas, former Secretary General of the Intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and former Secretary of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- The primacy of peasant right to seeds over intellectual property rights – by Christophe Golay, Senior Research Fellow, Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

- The importance of the UNDROP for European farmers' right to seeds – by Fulya Batur, Seed Policy Expert, Arche Noah, Seed Savers' Association in Central Europe
- Peasants' seeds systems and the EU law: Which legal changes are needed in the EU in order to comply with the UNDROP? – by Guy Kastler, representative of the seeds WG of the European Coordination of Via Campesina (ECVC)

Roundtable of reactions from EU institutions (20 min):

- Thomas Weber, Policy Officer of DG Health and Food Safety, Unit G1 - Plant Health
- Alfonso Calles Sanchez, Legal and Policy Officer, Unit F3, Intellectual Property and Fight Against Counterfeiting, EC-DG GROW
- Mery Ciacci, International Relations Officer, Access and Benefit Sharing under the Nagoya Protocol, Unit F.3 Multilateral Environmental Cooperation, EC-DG ENV

Questions from the floor to the panelists and responses (20 min.)

**16:15-16:30 Closing Remarks – How can we implement peasants' rights in Europe?**

- Stanka Becheva, Friends of the Earth Europe and representative of Nyeleni Europe, the European Food Sovereignty Movement
- Paula Gioia, member of the coordinating committee of the European Coordination of Via Campesina (ECVC)

*Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish.*

Registration is required. Click here to register. *Registration is closing on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September.*

*For any other information or if you have any problem in registering please write to [peasantsrights-sept2019@eurovia.org](mailto:peasantsrights-sept2019@eurovia.org)*

Click here to read the *UN Declaration for the Rights of Peasants (UNDROP)* in the different UN languages

More info on Peasants' Rights in Europe available online at <https://www.eurovia.org/main-issue/farmers-rights/> and at <https://www.geneva-academy.ch/research/our-project/detail/13-the-rights-of-peasants>

Other Supporting Organizations: *FIAN International, CETIM, Oxfam Solidarité*

