

## "The Future of Family Farmers We Want"

Issued on 16 October 2014

Jakarta, Indonesia

AsiaDHRRA Position/Statement on the  
**Follow Up Workshop on Post Millennium Development Goals 2015 and Human Rights**  
*Hosted by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*

The Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA), a regional partnership of 11 social development organizations in 11 Asian countries, would like to register the following points:

- The major economic development in recent decades in Southeast Asia has led to increased wealth in the ASEAN region, but inequities persist between and within countries. There are large and growing numbers of urban and peri-urban poor, but many of the poorest people still live in marginalized rural areas.
- Since yesterday, this workshop has been discussing poverty reduction, social protection, food insecurity and malnutrition eradication, environmental protection, women and children protection, etc. However, we rarely discussed about the protection of marginalized small holders or family farmers who comprise 40% of the world's households, and, majority of them are in Asia.
- The majority of the hungry and poor are in Asia, and they are in the rural areas of Asia; and, they are considered as the most vulnerable population to human and climate induced disaster risks.
- Further, family farmers also happen to be the key stakeholders in poverty reduction, they produce 90% of the food that we eat and are the biggest investors in agriculture. They are the natural managers and protectors of our biodiversity; they, especially women farmers, are the key to food security, health and nutrition.
- As some of you may know, 2014 is declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). As defined by the UN-Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), family farming is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on non-wage family labor, including both women's and men's. The family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, reproductive, social and cultural functions. Family farmers include men and women farmers, artisan fishers, pastoralists, gatherers and landless peasants, as well as indigenous people.
- Agriculture has remained to be an important component of ASEAN economies, despite rapid growth in other sectors. Economic growth in the region has created opportunities for agriculture but also major challenges.
- Mounting population pressure together with unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing and over-fishing have resulted in widespread land and fishing degradation.
- Another major threat is the pressure on land for non-agricultural uses and land grabbing by large companies or even other countries to divert land used by smallholders to large-scale agricultural production.
- Since the Post-2015 Development Agenda promote "sustainable," "inclusive," "resilient," and "dynamic" development model, how do we ensure that the rights of majority of ASEAN people, who live in rural areas, are actually protected? With the Post-2015 Development Agenda to be adopted by September 2015, how do we ensure that investments afterward favour the rights of family farmers?
- As Chair Loretta Rosales of the Philippines National Commission on Human Rights have said yesterday, in reducing poverty, there is a need to recognize the fact that inequality is a structural and historical problem. **While models, approaches, and/or language in the Post-2015 Development Agenda have changed, the fact remains that the world's poorest of the poor are the family farmers.**

- It is in this context that we put forward to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on the Human Rights the following recommendations:
  - Issue a statement or position acknowledging the role of family farmers as key stakeholders in poverty reduction, food security, health and nutrition; and, recognizing their contribution to sustainable social and economic development and growth;
  - Promote greater policy coherence and synergies between social protection, rural employment, food security, agricultural development and rural poverty reduction. Social protection policy options should ensure the right to food, with a view to preventing poverty-induced hunger and undernutrition.
  - Pursue or underpin the “human rights-based” approach to poverty reduction in the Post-2015 Development Agenda;
  - Formulate, in consultation with civil society groups, CONCRETE PROPOSALS, such as language use, targets/indicators, to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals that explicitly capture the basic principles embodied in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and are in accordance with national policies and laws in the ASEAN Region; and,
  - Ensure that the “transparent and accountable governance” goal, NOT ONLY OF THE GOVERNMENT OR PUBLIC SECTOR, BUT ALSO OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, be retained in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

In behalf of the 11 DHRRAs in 11 Asian countries and the 12 million family farmers-members of the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), our partner regional farmers’ organization, we pray for your resolve and immediate actions towards promotion of the rights of family farmers.

— oOo —

---

<sup>i</sup> This statement was issued / presented during the AICHR’s workshop on Post-2015 Development Agenda on 15-16 October 2014 in Jakarta, Indonesia. AsiaDHRRRA, together with other regional civil society groups working on human rights, was invited to take part on the workshop.