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## ***Press release***

# **WTO: Farmers worldwide must not be sacrificed in the name of free trade!**

**Representatives of farmers worldwide today presented the Director General of the WTO, Pascal Lamy, with a joint declaration, in which they state their opposition to the current proposal on agriculture, which serves but a few industrial agricultural exporters and which will drive a large number of farming families to ruin. And yet these farming families are the core providers of food to local communities.**

Since yesterday, a mini-ministerial WTO meeting has been taking place in Geneva, where a select group of Member States is making fresh attempts to reach a breakthrough in the WTO Doha Round. If the current proposals under negotiation were to go ahead, it would mean farmers throughout the world, particularly small farmers, being sacrificed in the name of freetrade. And this despite it being clear that, far from solving the global food crisis or growing environmental problems, further and further liberalisation merely exacerbates them. It jeopardises, the world over, the very existence of family farms that operate sustainably and primarily on their respective domestic market.

In a joint declaration farm leaders from developed, emerging and developing countries, including Switzerland, the EU, Japan, Canada, India, Sri Lanka and Kenya, state clearly that the only countries to benefit from the proposals on agriculture are a few major agricultural exporters such as the USA, Brazil and Australia at the expense of smaller farms which are the backbone of rural communities.. In their declaration, farmers ask the WTO for the right for each country to produce food for its own people. They also demand that specific national concerns regarding food security, the environment, animal welfare and rural areas be taken into consideration.

All farming organisations involved in the declaration agree on one thing: they are not opposed to an agreement, but not at any price! The WTO's duty is to foster agriculture worldwide and not to destroy it to the benefit of a mere few. Especially not in times of growing food supply shortages.

The declaration is available at:

[http://www.copa-cogeca.eu/img/user/File/declaration\\_WTO/DECLARATION\\_WTO\\_e.pdf](http://www.copa-cogeca.eu/img/user/File/declaration_WTO/DECLARATION_WTO_e.pdf)

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## The Food Crisis cannot be solved by a WTO agreement

- *The Voice of Farmers from Africa, Asia, America and Europe Must Be Heard* -

***We call upon all citizens to make their voices heard. The trade talks must not be allowed to destroy sustainable development in agriculture and put farmers throughout the world at even greater risk. We also urge ministers attending the WTO meeting not to sell wider food concerns in return for trade. Food is vital for human life and cannot be treated like other commodities or be the subject of speculation.***

We, farm leaders from developing and developed countries throughout the world, share grave concerns about the current WTO Doha Round negotiations on agriculture.

It is clear that it is not a lack of trade which has caused the current food crisis but a lack of production: between 2000 and 2006 world trade in agricultural products grew twice as fast as world agricultural production. Further trade liberalisation will benefit large-scale corporate farming and multinational traders at the expense of small-scale vulnerable farmers, thereby hindering agricultural and rural development in countries which need it most.

We firmly support the objective that all WTO members respect the same clear, transparent and predictable rules for world trade and a balanced outcome which contributes to growth and employment and to reducing poverty and hunger in the world.

However, the extent of liberalisation must be tempered by the need to provide the means and incentives to farmers around the world so that their production is profitable and they can fulfil their production potential in a sustainable way, thereby meeting the rising demand for food in the world.

We fear that the proposals currently on the table in WTO will undermine the ability of many countries throughout the world to provide their citizens with urgently needed food security and stability. In this situation, no agreement is better than a bad agreement.

This is why we believe that the following basic principles and proposals must be fully reflected in the outcome of agricultural modalities:

## Basic Principles

- all countries must have the right to produce for domestic consumption in order to improve self-sufficiency and ensure their food security
- trade rules must allow for policy measures, including supply management, which promote stability of food supplies and prices
- special and differential treatment and capacity building for developing countries must enable them to address the real concerns of resource-poor, vulnerable and small-scale farmers
- all countries should have the right to meet the non-trade concerns of their citizens including food safety, the environment, animal welfare and needs of rural areas

## Proposals

Chairman Falconer's proposals must be changed in the following way:

- tariff cuts must reflect the position of all WTO members, not only those of the major agricultural exporters
- each country must be allowed to self-designate an adequate number of sensitive products and these must be treated with maximum flexibility in terms of both tariffs and tariff quotas taking due consideration of their sensitivities
- all forms of tariff capping are totally unacceptable
- conditions applying to special products should respond to the development objective for rural areas, food and livelihood security, taking into account agro-climate, population and employment
- WTO rules must not erode preferential access given to imports from the least developed and ACP countries
- safeguard measures to address import surges and/or price volatility must be maintained for both developing and developed countries
- there must be parallel treatment of all forms of export support, so as to ensure predictable, transparent and non-trade distorting rules
- strengthened rules, with special and differential treatment for developing countries, should be applied to export prohibition/restriction and export taxes in order to secure food availability in each country
- there must be reinforced rules to protect bio-diversity and geographical indications

July 22, 2008

Soral, Switzerland

[Africa]

Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP)

Eastern African Farmers Federation (EAFF)

- DR Congo

- Kenya

- Rwanda

- Tanzania

- Uganda

[Asia]

National Cooperative Union of India

JA Zenchu, Japan

National Chamber of Agriculture, Japan

National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Korea

Independent Farmers Network of Sri Lanka

[America]

Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency

Canadian Hatching Egg Producers

Chicken Farmers of Canada

Dairy Farmers of Canada

Canadian Egg Marketing Agency

Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA), Canada

[Europe]

COPA-COGECA, EU

Farmers Association of Iceland

Norwegian Farmers' Union

Federation of Norwegian Agricultural Cooperatives

Swiss Farmers Union