



HEKS/EPER Land Forum 2021

Invitation & Registration

“The friends of the declaration” (Alliance Sud, BfA/PPP, CETIM, Fastenopfer/AdC, FIAN, Geneva Academy, HEKS/EPER, Swissaid, Uniterre) invite you to the launch of the Study **“Switzerland’s foreign policy and the United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants”** at the HEKS Land Forum.

Putting Peasants Rights into practice

**10 December 2021 (International Human Rights Day),
9.15 –15.15, PROGR Aula (1st Floor), Waisenhausplatz 30, 3011 Bern
Registration before 26 November 2021**

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) was adopted by the UN General Assembly three years ago, in December 2018. The instrument is highly relevant: peasants are key to global food security and thus to the transformation towards sustainable food systems. In addition, it is based on the needs of the people at its centre who participated in the negotiation process.

Economic and agricultural policies have pushed developing countries to produce for export, tying them to the bottom end of global value chains and making them vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices and markets over which they often have no control. This is compounded by the creation of markets for land that make it difficult for peasants to protect their customary, often collective, land rights. Trade agreements are another hurdle for local production. They limit the policy space of developing countries to support their peasantry.

Despite the increasingly evident shortcomings of the current trade system in terms of environmental sustainability, resilience, global food security and peasants’ rights, trade agreements are repeatedly concluded without proper assessment of their impacts and without peasants’ participation. Existing agreements are also not adapted even when it is obvious that they do not respond to the needs of peasants, consumers, or the environment.

Based on the study “Switzerland’s Foreign Policy and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants” (available in [English](#), [French](#) and [German](#)), published by a coalition of Swiss NGOs called “Friends of the Declaration” and the Geneva Academy, this event will come up with proposals to guide Swiss governmental and civil society activities, so that they implement the rights enshrined in UNDROP through their international engagement.

Schedule (all times in CET)

- 09.15 **Welcome**
- 09.30 **Setting the stage – UNDROP in a nutshell**
- 09.40 **Presentation of key findings of the study: Switzerland's foreign policy and the United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants**
Christophe Golay, Geneva Academy; Caroline Dommen, Independent Researcher, Sustainable Development Law, Policy and Practice
- 10.00 **Key messages**
Michael Fakhri, Special rapporteur on the right to food
Elizabeth Mpofu, La Via Campesina
Tatiana Oliveira, Inesc, Brazil
Vanessa Renfer, Uniterre
- 10.30 **Panel discussion: How can we put the recommendations into practice?**
Carlo Sommaruga, State Councillor
Benjamin Müller, Deputy Head of the Human Rights Diplomacy Section (FDFA)
Markus Schlagenhof, Ambassador, Head of the World Trade Division (FDFA) (tbc)
Alwin Kopse, Head International Affairs and Food Security BLW
Christine Schneeberger, Deputy Head Global Cooperation, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Moderation: *Ana Maria Suarez Franco, Accountability Coordinator FIAN International*
- 11.30 **UNDROP implementation in different fields of engagement – Introduction to the Working groups**
- 11.45 **Lunch break**
- 12.45 **UNDROP implementation in different fields of engagement**
1. Food Systems
2. Trade agreements
3. Mainstreaming UNDROP into the UN-system
- 14.15 **Presentation of the recommendations of the working groups**
- 14.45 **Plenary discussion: Conclusions and way forward**
- 15.15 **Farewell and Aperó**

Language: English (no translation)

Registration: Before 26 November 2021 ([Link](#))

Covid-19: At this event a certificate is obligatory.

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