

RESOLUTION

of the International Forum "SMALL PRODUCERS ON THE GUARD OF FOOD SECURITY: The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas"

In response to the initiative of the Association of Farmers and Private Landowners of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Rural Development Network, other NGOs and academic institutions, representatives of peasants, farmers, local governments, government agencies, FAO experts and other international institutions discussed the wartime challenges for small agricultural producers as key actors in the country's domestic food market, the conditions and possibilities of a decent response to them, as well as ways to raise awareness of Ukrainian society about the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, problems and prospects for its implementation in the context of the war and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.

In the process of discussion:

highlighted the significant contribution of Ukraine to the adoption of the UNDROP and the creation of mechanisms for its implementation, the efforts of Ukrainian civil society organizations and scientists to promote the provisions of the UNDROP and implement its guidelines in order to improve the institutional framework for the functioning of the agri-food sector and ensure the development of peasant and farmers' households;

emphasized the important role of peasants and farmers in ensuring the sustainability of Ukraine's food system in general and especially in the context of military operations, in providing significant food and financial support to the Defense Forces and vulnerable civilian groups, and in performing other humanitarian tasks;

stressed that Ukraine has not yet taken significant steps towards strengthening the peasant and farm sector of the agri-food system and implementing other proposals set out in the 2022 Public Forum Resolution "Small Peasant Farms and Farming Households in Wartime and Post-War Reconstruction of Ukraine: Political Dialogue", primarily in terms of suspending market transactions for the sale and purchase of agricultural land during martial law and the post-war period until the creation of legal, organizational and financial mechanisms that would guarantee peasants, farmers, participants in hostilities, women and youth, and other vulnerable groups of the population real opportunities to acquire land.

Considering the above, the participants of the Forum:

emphasize the urgent need to strengthen the protection of peasants' rights to land in Ukraine as a prerequisite for the realization of all other human rights, including the right to living space, food sovereignty, work, decent living standards, health and cultural development;

support the initiative of the members of the Verkhovna Rada to amend the Constitution of Ukraine to recognize the peasant-farming type of agriculture as the basis of the national agricultural system;

call on the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to immediately address the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine with a request to accelerate the procedure for passing draft laws No. 8295, 9341, 9341-1, which have been under consideration for a long time, in order to urgently and extraordinarily finalize them and make decisions on postponing the planned sale of up to 10,000 hectares of agricultural land to individuals and legal entities for the period of martial law and five post-war years from 1 January 2024;

draw special attention to the need to immediately stop the over-concentration of agricultural land in the hands of individuals and interested groups on the basis of private property rights, as well as to counteract land grabbing, especially given the unprecedented use of food by the Russian Federation as a means of waging war against Ukraine. The fatal consequence of turning food into a weapon is a threat to Ukraine's national security because of the continued denial of access to essential and safe domestically produced food, which threatens the lives and health of citizens exhausted by the war. The destruction of farmers' and peasants' food supplies, crops, animals and livestock facilities, the destruction of soil cover, hydraulic structures, mining of fields, and contamination of soil and water bodies pose a real threat to the internal food security of Ukrainians, violating their right to home-produced food and their right to a decent life in rural areas;

emphasize that during the period of martial law, the conditions for farms and other small agricultural producers have significantly deteriorated, in particular because of the lack of financial, organizational and informational support, as well as increased tax pressure (minimum tax liability), which, together with low sales prices and limited opportunities for selling products, leads to bankruptcy and an increase in the number of insolvent medium and small producers, complicates the resolution of legal issues;

underline the priority of the agri-food sector, which has the potential to accelerate and increase the overall effectiveness of Ukraine's recovery in the post-war period. *Emphasize* the importance of prioritizing reconstruction resources for the restoration of the agri-food sector, especially its human, natural resource and logistical potential, as well as demining and soil reclamation and rehabilitation.

In order to develop mechanisms for protecting and realizing the rights of peasants,
the Forum participants:

declare the need to introduce a system of monitoring the observance of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas in Ukraine in order to protect and ensure the realization of these rights and to promote the social, economic and

environmental sustainability of rural communities and rural areas. The monitoring system should contribute to: the creation of an institutional environment for the observance of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas, as defined by the UNDROP; the development of recommendations on state policy for monitoring and responding to identified violations of these rights; and the implementation of legislative and executive actions to guarantee and protect the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas;

entrust the Association of Farmers and Private Landowners of Ukraine, together with representatives of civil society, academia and international organizations, to develop the "Basic Provisions of the System for Monitoring the Observance of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas", which should provide for the establishment of a management body for such monitoring, define its tasks, functions, organizational principles, etc. and submit the document to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for consideration and approval in accordance with the established procedure;

consider that the management body of the monitoring system should be formed with the involvement of the following parties: rural residents and representatives of regional farmers' organizations, who should play a central role in the management process; representatives of NGOs and scientists working on rural development and agriculture - to assist in the organization and conduct of monitoring; representatives of the central legislative and executive authorities (specialized committees of the Verkhovna Rada, ministries) in the areas of agricultural policy and food, community, territorial and infrastructure development - to ensure coordination and communication with the relevant authorities;

appeal to the FAO UN and the EU Delegation to Ukraine, as well as other foreign institutions, to facilitate the organization of broad information and awareness-raising activities in Ukraine to raise awareness of representatives of all levels of government, deputies and local authorities about the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas;

underline the need to enshrine the provisions of the UNDROP in legislative acts, to use them to develop strategies for agricultural and rural development and other regulatory documents on the functioning of the rural areas and agricultural business, which will confirm the seriousness of the intention to protect the right of Ukrainians to domestically produced food and will become an effective tool for implementing the Declaration of the Rights of Peasants in social and political life and economic practices.

Approved by the Forum participants, 136 people.