

Media advisory

La Via Campesina Speaks Out at the G8 Meeting in Hokkaido

World's Richest Nations Must Take Responsibility for the Food and Climate Crises They Have Created

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The international farmers' movement La Via Campesina invites the media to speak with representative of peasant farmers organizations, women and men, from around the world during the G8 summit on the global food and climate crisis. More than 600 farmers from Nouninren, the Japan's Family Farmer's Movement member of La Via Campesina, and about 100 farmers from around the world will gather in Hokkaido for this event.

La Via Campesina will hold a press conference on July 7, 10 am - 11 am, at the NGO media centre (Sapporo city)

The media is also welcome to take part in events co-organised by Via Campesina, Nouninren and Shokken-Ren(1) from July 4-9 (see programme below).

The representatives of the 8 richest countries of the world will meet in Hokkaido to discuss issues such as the food and the climate crisis. Yet these governments have imposed policies that are the root cause of the crisis in food and agriculture. By supporting large agribusiness at the expense of small farmers, they have effectively forced millions of small farmers off their land and into urban poverty while doing nothing to alleviate world hunger. The climate crisis, caused by the extensive use of fossil energy in industrialized countries and the massive deforestation by TNCs, will especially hurt small farmers and rural populations.

The reaction of the WTO, World bank, as well as the G8 governments to the food crisis has been disastrous: they call for more of the same policies that are at the root of the current crisis: more liberalisation, more free trade, more support for fertilizers and industrial seeds, a green revolution in Africa, more food aid, and a rapid expansion of agro-fuels. Mainly due to the attitude of the G8 countries, no advance at all was made at the High level Conference organized by the FAO, and the TNCs were not prevented from pushing through their disastrous initiatives on agro-fuels.

The answer to the climate and food price crisis is food production based on small producers using sustainable and local resources producing for domestic consumption.

This will be an opportunity for the media to talk to those who usually have no voice in the debate and to hear the voice of the millions of small scale food producers who struggle to live in dignity and defend their rights

PRESS CONFERENCE

7 July 2008, 10am-11 am: NGO Media Center (Sapporo city: location <http://g8medianetwork.org/en/cmce>)

PROGRAMME SUMMARY: Events co-sponsored by La Via Campesina, Nominren and Shokken-ren

July 4: 10 am- 4 pm: International Forum on Food Sovereignty and Global Warming (venue: Kyosai Hall, Sapporo City)

6 pm: La Via Campesina, Nominren and Shokkenren opening ceremony

July 5: 10 am – 12 pm: International open discussion on Food Sovereignty and Climate Change (venue: Odori West 6 Park, Sapporo City)

10:00 am – 2 pm: Youth Forum (venue: North Inn Hotel Meeting Room – Hokunou-kenpo-Kaikan)

July 6: 10:00 am – 3 pm: Seminar: Women's Day (venue: Meeting Room of Kyosai Hall)

July 7: 10 am – 12 am: Seminar on starvation and food crisis (venue: Kaderu Meeting Room)

July 8: 9 am- 4 pm: Field trip in the outskirts of Iwamizawa city (visiting rural villages, rice producing districts, meeting with Japanese farmers...)

More information on www.viacampesina.org

Information for the media

Mr. Shinya Takeda: +81 8020910813 (from 2 July)

Isabelle Delforge : + 62 81513224565 or + 32 498522163 ([idelforge@viacampesina.org](mailto:isabelle@viacampesina.org))

(1) Nominren: Japan Family Farmers Movement, member of La Via Campesina

Shokken-Ren: National Coalition of workers, farmers and consumers for safe food and health. (Nominren is part of this coalition).