
DAKAR DECLARATION 2015

ADOPTED BY THE 2015 ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS

LAND GOVERNANCE FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY: TIME FOR ACTION

We, members of the International Land Coalition, gathered in Dakar, Senegal, on 15 May 2015 for our Assembly of Members. We represent over 150 organizations from 54 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and Latin America and the Caribbean. Our coalition is made up of civil society, indigenous peoples' and producer organisations, academic institutions and research centres, and multilateral institutions. We are brought together by our shared objective to promote and fight for a just, equitable and inclusive world in which land rights are secure and hunger and poverty are eradicated. We reaffirm the Antigua Declaration and dedicate ourselves, as a coalition, to the achievement of 10 commitments that form our goal of "people-centred land governance". Today, these remain central to our vision and mission.

Our declaration comes at a crucial time as our nations agree on universal Sustainable Development Goals. We seek a strong commitment to the promotion, protection and monitoring of land and natural resource rights in the post-2015 development agenda, consonant with their vital importance to a world without hunger, poverty and insecurity, and guided by the fundamental principle of leaving no one behind.

We met in Dakar under the kind hosting of the Pan African Institute for Consumer Citizenship and Development (CICODEV¹ Africa), in partnership with the National Organising Committee composed of IPAR, CNCR, IED, ENDA, OXFAM², and in collaboration with the National Land Reform Commission and the Government of Senegal, for the Global Land Forum under theme of "Land Governance for Inclusive Development, Justice and Sustainability: Time for Action".

- 1** By choosing Dakar, our Coalition manifests our encouragement for the ongoing land reform process in Senegal which puts into practice a close partnership between the state, local communities, civil society, and development partners. We consider this to be the best way to bring about a consensual land reform and invite the government to pursue dialogue and consultation to guarantee peace. The promotion of public and private investment to transform agriculture in Senegal needs to be accompanied by a guarantee of local communities' land rights.

1 Institut panafricain de recherche, de formation et d'action pour la Citoyenneté, la Consommation et le Développement en Afrique

2 CNCR, Conseil national de concertation et de coopération des ruraux, IPAR, Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale, IED Afrique, Innovations Environnement Développement

- 2** Land issues have become a prominent feature of the political agenda across the continent, due to increased awareness of the centrality of natural resources to Africa's development, but also the fact that they are the object of corporate greed globally. We urge governments across the continent to act on their good intentions by implementing and monitoring existing land policies.
- 3** We welcome the adoption of mechanisms for responsible land governance through the guidelines developed by the African Union's Land Policy Initiative, and note the continued importance of implementing the Maputo Protocol, if the challenges wrought by food crises, climate change, demographic growth and rapid urbanisation are to be addressed. In this Year of Women's Empowerment and Development declared by the African Union, we stress the fundamental role of women in African agriculture and the need to ensure their access and control over land.
- 4** **20 years after the creation of the ILC, we reaffirm our commitment as a Coalition and the mission which we have set ourselves. We pledge continued efforts and collaborative and timely action towards the themes at the heart of the Forum: a world that is inclusive, just, and sustainable. In particular, we affirm the following:**
- 5** To achieve inclusive development we strive for policies, laws and practices - public and private - that respect the rights, needs and aspirations of individuals and communities who depend on land, and especially those who experience marginalization. In a world in which more than two billion children, women, and men live from the land as family farmers, peasants, peri-urban producers, fishers, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, hunter-gatherers and forest-dependent communities, there is no inclusive development and no people-centred land governance without public policies and programs that support and promote their capacity to invest, produce and feed our nations. Beyond access to land and natural resources, this includes access to finance, markets and social security, as well as participatory planning for natural resource management and use.
- 6** Having engaged in the 2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF), we will continue to support the decade IYFF+10, working together with its National Committees for effective, inclusive and sustainable food systems. We will also engage in the process of the World Forum on Access to Land and Natural Resources 2016, initiated by several members, which is seeking to enhance its inclusiveness and action-orientation.
- 7** The post-2015 agenda represents an opportunity to have more and better data on land tenure. All too often governments rely on limited and outdated data and statistics regarding the poorest and most marginalised populations of our countries, particularly on their access to land and natural resources. Current limitations in available data cannot limit our ambition to achieve sustainable development for all. Data not only monitors changes, it is a driver and catalyser of change. Inclusive development must be reflected in data used by governments and others in defining, implementing and monitoring development processes.
- 8** Civil society has pioneered ways of generating data and information, including through observatories, which have proven to be robust and feasible. We welcome recent efforts to map the 'invisible' land and territorial rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including through community-based monitoring. Data by public institutions and people's data are both critical for people-centred land governance. We urge UN Member States to include monitoring of access to land and secure and equitable land rights for all women, men, indigenous peoples and local communities in the Sustainable Development Agenda.

- 9 The post-2015 agenda further provides opportunities to accelerate the realization of the declaration of the 2006 International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, as well as of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests (VGGT) and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa. In this context, we encourage governments to develop a strong mechanism for the Committee on World Food Security to ensure that all actors are accountable to each other and can track progress on the realization of the VGGT. Efforts must now concentrate on implementation at national level, through close collaboration between government and civil society. We stand ready to support such engagement.
- 10 In seeking a world that is just, we fight against land grabbing and other forms of land dispossession, and renew our call for effective remedy.
- 11 At a time when new development finance institutions are being set up, we call on existing bilateral and multilateral financing institutions to strengthen their safeguard policies both to protect communities from the impacts of land acquisitions and to strengthen their tenure security in line with the VGGT.
- 12 In spite of the adoption of a variety of norms and standards, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the gross violations of land and territorial rights for indigenous peoples and local communities has become a global crisis. ILC members commit to joining and mobilising around the Global Call to Action on Indigenous and Community Land Rights' goal to double the areas of community and customary land that is recognized as owned or controlled by indigenous peoples and local communities by 2020.
- 13 We reaffirm our commitment to promote equality between men and women in all cycles of life, with emphasis on the empowerment of rural women as key agents in agricultural production and food security. We will work and advocate for the adoption of mechanisms to ensure rural women realise their rights to land and are able to inherit, claim, control and bequeath their land.
- 14 We express our solidarity with land rights defenders and movements who are persecuted, criminalized, and killed. We call for an end to impunity and appeal to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders to carry out a special study on the situation of land rights defenders.
- 15 We will work so that rural women, men and communities have the right to manage the ecosystems on which their livelihoods depend, recognising that they can contribute to environmental sustainability, including mitigating and adapting to climate change, if their rights to land, water, and other natural resources are secure. Pastoralists, hunter-gatherers and forest-dependent communities, fishers, and others depending on the commons are in particular need of secure rights to common property.
- 16 To ensure the social sustainability of production systems, ILC members will contribute to identifying and sharing approaches that reduce land-related conflicts, provide land rights for youth, and protect resources for future generations.
- 17 We commit ourselves to focus on solutions and transform knowledge and experience into real change on the ground. We will mobilise together in a spirit of transparency and accountability and connect to social movements, women's, grassroots, and producer organisations, as well as champions in government and private sector to uphold international human rights standards. The time is right to move from frameworks to practice - **IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!**

We extend our appreciation and gratitude to our hosts in Senegal for their solidarity and generous hospitality.