

## **UDAIPUR ASIA DECLARATION: LAND FOR PEOPLE, PEACE AND JUSTICE**

We, 54 civil society organisations of 13 countries in Asia and Europe, members of the International Land Coalition Asia are gathered in Udaipur, India to discuss the situation and the future of land governance in the region from September 30th to October 3rd, 2019.

### **We agree to see that**

1. The last decade was marked by skyrocketing land investment in Asia, which was mostly pushed by developed countries. Global corporations and financial institutions, mainly the Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank Group (WB), New Development Bank (NDB) and Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have always been involved with such investments. They designed two investment roadmap documents in Asia that have been running for the past decade, including the Comprehensive Asia Development Plan (CADP) in 2009 and the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) in 2013. Unfortunately, such economic development strategy was not equipped with an adequate social and ecological justice road map, including other global agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN Declaration on Family Farming Decade, and the Global Framework on Climate Change. This global investment agenda accelerates the process of land acquisition and natural degradation threatening the livelihoods of farmers, pastoralists, fisher folk, Indigenous peoples, women and youth. This contradicts the global SDGs 2030 vision and commitment that we only have 10 years to achieve. We commit to a better world, but we go in to the opposite direction.
2. As a result of this large-scale investment practice land conflicts are spreading in various countries in Asia, resulting in rapid criminalisation of farmers, dalits and Indigenous peoples, as noted in the Bandung Declaration, Global Land Forum, September 2018.
3. This neoliberal economic model is also counter-productive with the global agenda of climate mitigation and adaptation, so that the target of avoiding rising global temperatures by 1.5 degrees will be increasingly difficult.
4. Apart from industry expansion, climate change is further driven by the rapidly shifting use of land for the benefit of large-scale agriculture corporations, plantations, and mining. Deforestation in tropical countries is starting to get out of hand. But despite this, there has been no representation of local communities and farmers in the climate dialogue, which is instead dominated by corporations with their greenwashing agenda.
5. What we are doing together in strengthening our movement and building regional solidarity among grassroots organisations and other stakeholders has achieved significant awareness, but has not been able to restore the situation to a better way.

**We discuss, understand, and analyse specifically the following ideas related to land governance**

1. Land reform agenda in Asia is experiencing acute stagnation because governments in the region are prioritizing high economic growth, paving ways for corporations to enact large-scale land investment. This has exacerbated inequality, poverty rate, ecological destruction, and rural-urban migration.
2. Women and youth still do not have a proper place in land governance, due to the deeply entrenched patriarchal, casteist, racist, and feudal mindsets and institutionalised systems that dominate the land governance practices. Gender justice is still far from the discourse and there is a dire need to work together and strive for it.
3. We see that a sustainable ecosystem would only prevail if governance was decentralized and prioritised the roles of local communities, farmers, and Indigenous Peoples with their respective tenure diversity. We find that international support has not been directed towards the protection and recognition of such governance.
4. Pastoralists, especially in Central and South Asia, are experiencing difficulties in their territory range due to policies that do not favor their traditional livelihoods and rangelands user rights. Traditional pastoralists have lost their territory range and suffered from grave water crisis because of large-scale concessions to corporate herders.
5. In India, more than one million tribes and Indigenous Peoples who have been living in the forests for hundreds of years are at risk of being evicted and threatened with criminal conviction.

**We recommend the following action plans for a better tomorrow**

1. We endorse the Land Rights Charter of Demands that aims to ensure land provision for poor, adivasi, dalit, pastoral, nomadic, fisher folk, single women, landless, small farmers and marginalised communities in India.
2. To all parties:
  - a. Support people-centered and gender-just land governance where farmers, local community and Indigenous peoples, pastoralists, women and youth have access, control, ownership and management of land and natural resources.
  - b. Review the development agenda promoted by CDAP and BRI that do not align with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the road map to sustainable social and ecological justice
3. To Governments in Asia; promote national policies oriented to the protection of people's land rights, the recognition of diverse tenure systems, the land rights of local communities and Indigenous peoples as well as rural development orientation. We call on stronger law enforcement to stop the criminalisation of

land and environmental rights defenders. We call on governments to fully enforce the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that protect local communities' and Indigenous Peoples' land rights.

4. To intergovernmental organisations in Asia; we encourage the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to actively encourage the best practices of people-based land governance in Asia and promote human rights protection for land rights defenders in the region.
5. To the parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
  - a. We applaud that Indigenous Peoples and local communities have been recognised in the climate negotiation under the UNFCCC
  - b. The upcoming Conference of Parties, COP 25, in Chile should uphold civil society space and encourage discussions on climate justice together with farmers and local communities rather than promoting false solutions
  - c. Farmers and local communities in the region need to build a joint caucus to encourage their representation in the global climate dialogue and ensure that their voices are heard
6. To our regional partners; we need to unite hand in hand to fight against inequality, poverty and strive for a better Asia that is just and peaceful.
7. We support the Jai Jagat 2020 global peace campaign as we express solidarity to voice land as human rights to the world. The year-long Jai Jagat march will start in New Delhi, India from 2 October 2019 and ends in Geneva, Switzerland on 2 October 2020.