Peasant Movements and International Organizations: 
Facing Contemporary Agrarian and Land Reforms

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To Mom, Dad, Bill, Tom, Doug, Emily, Joel, Jonny and Shaun. To my masteristas and roman brothers. Mille grazie alla famiglia Borsa. And especially to Federica for your encouragement, advice and love.
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## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASOCODE</td>
<td>Asociación de Organizaciones Campesinas Centroamericanas para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Compulsory Acquisition</td>
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<td>CARL</td>
<td>Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARP</td>
<td>Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLOC</td>
<td>Coordinadora Latinoamericano de Organizaciones del Campo</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPE</td>
<td>Coordination Paysanne Européenne</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPT</td>
<td>Comissão Pastoral de Terra</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIAN</td>
<td>FoodFirst International Action Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEAR</td>
<td>Growth, Employment and Redistribution Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMO</td>
<td>Genetically Modified Organism</td>
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<td>Ha</td>
<td>Hectares</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>II PNRA</td>
<td>Second Plan Nacional de Reforma Agrária</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILC</td>
<td>International Land Coalition</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IPC</td>
<td>International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty</td>
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<tr>
<td>KMP</td>
<td>Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas</td>
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<td>LPM</td>
<td>Landless Peoples Movement</td>
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<td>LRAD</td>
<td>Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>MLAR</td>
<td>Market-Led Agrarian Reform</td>
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<td>MST</td>
<td>Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NLC</td>
<td>National Land Committee</td>
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<td>PFS</td>
<td>Peoples' Food Sovereignty</td>
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<td>PNRA</td>
<td>Plan Nacional de Reforma Agrária</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Partido Trabalhdistas</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN WCAR</td>
<td>United Nations World Conference Against Racism</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCHR</td>
<td>United Nations Commission on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>VLT</td>
<td>Voluntary Land Transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>VOT</td>
<td>Voluntary Offer-to-Sell</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCARRD</td>
<td>World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development</td>
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<td>WFAR</td>
<td>World Forum on Agrarian Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Program</td>
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<td>WFS</td>
<td>World Food Summit</td>
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<td>WFS:fyl</td>
<td>World Food Summit: Five Years Later</td>
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<tr>
<td>WSF</td>
<td>World Social Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>WSSD</td>
<td>World Summit on Sustainable Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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Preface: A clarification of terminology

Before beginning this examination of contemporary peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms, it is necessary to define the terms agrarian reform and land reform. Each term carries political, economic, sociological and cultural connotations. Whether for reasons of linguistic simplicity or, perhaps, political motivation, the two terms have recently tended to be lumped together.¹

So as not to contribute to the further confusion of the two concepts, this paper will abide by the definitions of agrarian reform and land reform developed in the Multilingual Thesaurus on Land Tenure (FAO, 2003a) and the Land Tenure Lexicon (IIED, 2000). Both publications present a clear distinction between the two concepts.

Land reform is conceived as a modification to the existing legal and institutional frameworks that govern land policy (FAO, 2003a:69). Land reform is primarily a political process that may establish land redistribution and tenure reform policies. Land redistribution policies may be resettlement programs for landless peoples or reallocation of property rights from landlord to farm worker (commonly known as land to the tiller). Tenure reform concerns the very legal conceptions of land ownership² and management, whether customary or national property laws; or through communal or individualized tenure systems (IIED, 2000:32,33,52).

Agrarian reform is a collection of activities and changes that aim to alter the agrarian structure of a country. The goals of an agrarian reform are to improve agricultural productivity qualitatively and quantitatively, as well as the agricultural producers’ standard of living (FAO, 2003a). Land reform is, therefore, just one tool of an agrarian reform.

The peasant movements presented in the following case studies often use the two terms interchangeably. The movements presented were born out of a struggle for land redistribution, and some have evolved into movements for true agrarian reform. International debate has shifted from advocating agrarian reform to land reform.³ The World Bank has focused its attention on land reform - advocating market-led (or assisted) redistribution, and, in the past, massive tenure reforms.

¹ See, for example, Cox et al. (2003), where the terms agrarian reform and land reform are used “interchangeably”.
² Although in some socio-cultural contexts the concept of ownership does not apply.
³ For example the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 1979 has ceded its place to regional workshops on “Land Issues” organized by the World Bank in 2002.
Solon Barraclough, the renowned agrarian reform researcher and practitioner wrote that agrarian reform “implies changes in power relationships toward greater participation of the rural poor in decision-making at all levels and especially in decisions directly affecting their livelihoods. In other words, it has revolutionary implications” (1991:102).
Introduction

Peasant agriculture is the most widespread form of food production in the world. The agricultural population in 2003 counted over 2.59 billion people - about half of the world’s population (FAOSTAT, 2004). Tragically, most of the world’s 826 million people suffering from under-nutrition are food producers themselves (Mazoyer, 2001). Incapacity to increase production coupled with falling world food prices has significantly damaged peasant agriculture in the last century. Highly unequal land distribution is often at the root of rural poverty and under-nutrition.

Rectifying land inequality and changing agrarian systems in favor of peasant agriculture has been shown to decrease poverty and increase nutrition. Implementing agrarian and land reforms requires political will and technical capacities. These reforms are often met with resistance from landed elites and commercial agriculturalists, and few have been successfully carried out in history. The examples of the South Korean and Taiwanese land reforms are often cited as the most successful reforms peacefully implemented (Barracough: 1991:117). However, many agrarian and land reforms have taken place because of (and been the stimulus for) revolution. The Chinese Maoist Revolution, the Mexican Revolution under Zapata, and the Russian Revolution of 1917, all included sweeping land redistribution and reorientation of agricultural production.

This paper will focus on contemporary peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms, which are understood as groups of landless or near landless peasants organized to promote (and in some cases enact) agrarian and land reforms in their country. As is explained in the clarification of terminology, it is difficult to describe a peasant movement as for agrarian reform or for land reform, therefore, the term peasant movement for agrarian and land reforms will be used.

Agrarian and land reforms are the result of state policies, but as will be shown, many non-state actors have important influence on these reforms. This paper aims to answer several questions. Who are the major non-state actors in regards to agrarian and land reforms? What relationships exist between the actors? And, what strategies and methods do these actors employ to implement or influence national agrarian and land reforms?

The first chapter acquaints the reader with the various actors involved in agrarian and land reforms and their methods of action. This chapter details three international organizations

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4 See for example: El-Ghonemy (1990), Guardian (2003), or Besley & Burgess (2000) for example.
that deal with or impact agrarian and land reforms. The chapter also presents three case studies of national peasant movements and a history of each movement’s national land history. An overview of two international alliances for agrarian and land reforms follows.

The second chapter explores current strategies employed by peasant movements vis-à-vis international organizations. It also investigates three possible central issues from which peasant movements can coordinate a strategy for engaging international organizations. It is argued that peasant movements should create a coherent position on one central and overarching issue from which to lobby governments and international organizations. Finally, this chapter proposes and analyses several possible strategies and considerations for influencing international organizations.

The third chapter is an account of the World Forum on Agrarian Reform held in Valencia Spain on 5-8 December 2004. This forum drew hundreds of peasant movements, academics, NGOs, governments and international organizations together to deliberate agrarian and land reforms. The conclusions and discussions of this forum in relation to the topic of this paper are presented.
1. **Actors, roles and methods: peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms in an international context**

*Chapter Introduction*

This chapter explores the relationship between international organizations, national peasant movements, and international alliances for agrarian and land reforms. Contemporary peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms have taken on a less revolutionary and more international character than movements of the past. As will be shown, these characteristics reflect the modern peasant movements’ increasing sophistication and adaptation to an ever-more internationalized political arena.

Contemporary peasant movements can often be characterized as reactions to the land and agricultural policies implemented at national levels. National policies, however, are increasingly influenced international organizations, as will be shown in the case studies. As such, a review of the policies and activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank begin this study.

Three case studies of contemporary peasant movements for land reform are then presented. In order to illustrate the role of the state and to place the movements in their socio-political context, each case study includes a summary of their country’s land reform history. The South African Landless Peoples Movement (LPM), the Brazilian *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST), and the Philippine *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas* (KMP) were chosen because of their large membership, accomplishments, and international outlook.

In order to complete the picture, an account of the major international alliances for agrarian and land reforms follows. The Via Campesina is one of the most powerful peasant alliances, and the ILC is a growing coalition involving a wide range of actors all concerned with agrarian and land reforms. Although sharing common goals, each alliance uses different methods and includes significantly distinct memberships.

*1.1 International organizations and agrarian and land reforms*

*1.1.1 The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations was created in 1945 and mandated to “to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of
rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy” (FAO, 2001). The FAO is the sole UN body specifically responsible for research and analysis of land tenure systems. While FAO is a considerable research body, it must be noted that the FAO is responsible to, and directed by, the governments of its 187 member nations.

Early in its history, the FAO made land reform an important consideration. The 1945 FAO Conference declared that “Recourse to land reform may be necessary to remove impediments to economic and social progress resulting from an inadequate system of land tenure” (FAO, 1998).

The Land Tenure Service within the Sustainable Development division is responsible for carrying out research and technical cooperation projects in relation to land tenure. The service’s work focuses on assisting FAO Member Nations analyze land issues, and devise policies and strategies for improved access to land. (Cox et al., 2003:9). The technical assistance projects carried out by the service cover land taxation, cadastre development, agrarian systems diagnosis and land markets, among others (Cox et al., 2003:18). The Land Tenure Service is also a space for reflection on land tenure and reform. The service issues two publications: the Land Reform, Land Settlement and Cooperatives bulletin (since 1963) and the Land Tenure Studies that provide an open space for discussion and deliberation of land tenure issues.

The FAO serves as a forum, bringing together world leaders and experts to discuss problems facing agriculture and rural development. In 1966, in conjunction with the UN and the International Labor Organization (ILO), the FAO held the World Conference on Land Reform (El-Ghonemey, 2003:37). This conference underlined the importance of integrating land reform into the comprehensive strategy of a country’s development (FAO, 1985:82).

The period following World War II until the 1980s was one of the most active in terms of agrarian reform (Cox et al., 2003:14). So it was appropriate that the subject take the world stage in 1979, when the FAO convened the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD). The WCARRD’s recommendations produced powerful and unified statements in favor of agrarian reforms. The conference’s final document officially called the Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action quickly became known as The Peasants’ Charter. The Peasants’ Charter notes that “the responsibility for agrarian reform and rural development rests with governments and their people - on a political commitment and their determined efforts,” but that “agrarian reform...should be strengthened and supported” by international economic policies (FAO, 1981:iii,24). The Peasants’ Charter designated the FAO as the “lead agency” to implement its ambitious goals and actions concerning land access. The
Peasants’ Charter specifically addresses the need for redressing land inequality through agrarian reform:

“In countries where substantial reorganization of land tenure and land redistribution to landless peasants and smallholders is needed as part of the rural development strategy and as a means to redistribution of power, governments should consider action to:

*Impose ceilings on the size of private holdings and acquire land, water, other natural resources and farm assets in accordance with nationally determined policies and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.*

[and]

*Implement redistribution with speed and determination...”* (FAO, 1981:10)

Cox et al. write that, following WCARRD the "FAO supported 25 high-level interagency policy formulation missions on agrarian reform [and]...[t]echnical assistance was also provided to Member Nations implementing agrarian reform projects...” (2003:18)

The World Food Summit 1996 was the largest world meeting in regards to agrarian reform following WCARRD. The summit united 186 governments, inter-governmental organizations, and hundreds of non-governmental organizations and farmers associations. The summit mainly focused on food policy and production, but the World Food Summit Plan of Action declared that governments will “Reinforce the follow-up to the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), 1979” (FAO, 1996:105).

The Summit, and the follow-up five years later (WFS:flyi), was remarkable because of the inclusion of so many civil society groups. These groups held parallel sessions and drafted a series of proposals to achieve food security. The Statement by the NGO Forum declares that “Agrarian reform in favour of rural poor people who will work the land must be implemented immediately and priority placed on integrated rural development”. The statement also demands the end to IMF and WTO structural adjustment programs and the right to food sovereignty (FAO, 1997:56-57).

Thanks to the FAO’s will to include civil-society bodies in the elaboration of policies, many peasant movements see an interlocutor in the FAO. Borras notes that Via Campesina refuses to work with international organizations in general, but makes an exception for the FAO, because they see the FAO as a possible “counter reference to the WTO” (2004:18). Zeigler notes that

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5 Hundreds of organizations attended including the Via Campesina (FAO, 1997).
the FAO is working in the opposite direction as the Bretton Woods institutions, which are often the targets of peasant movement rhetoric (UNHCR, 2002:5).

Views on the FAO changed sharply in 2004, when the FAO produced an annual report that considered the possibility of biotechnology as an answer to hunger. The international peasant alliance Via Campesina called the report “a slap in the face” (Via Campesina, 2004c). Nevertheless, there is a dialogue between peasant movements and the FAO that does not exist with other international organizations. This relationship is exhibited in the open letter (and quick response) to the Director-General of FAO, Jacques Diouf, from over 800 people and organizations (including Via Campesina, the MST and the KMP) protesting the report’s alleged abandonment of food sovereignty (FAO, 2004a). Moreover, the address by the President of the Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (ROPPA) during the 2004 FAO World Food Day celebrations gives an impression of peasant movement involvement in the dialogue within the FAO.6 Borras quotes the Via Campesina as writing, “The doors of the FAO are open to civil society and we feel that it is important to occupy this space...[however] constantly alert to the possibility of manipulation...” (2004:19).

Echoing this sentiment, Desmarais cites Nettie Wiebe, a member of the International Coordinating commission of the Via Campesina, as saying in regards to the FAO:

“The FAO, in principle, is not a hostile venue for us. The UN is one of those last remaining multilateral institutions which might have some impact on its member agencies...It just turns out that the more it is influenced and dominated by US foreign policy and WTO overlap, the less useful it becomes”(2003:21).

1.1.2 The World Trade Organization (WTO)

One of the most controversial international organizations, the World Trade Organization (WTO) plays an important - though indirect - role in agrarian and land reforms. The WTO was created in 1995 as the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The organization serves as the only international body regulating international trade and tariffs; while also serving as a dispute settlement body wherein member countries can bring cases against each other for "unfair" trade practices. The WTO’s overall goal is to liberalize world trade (WTO, 2003). The concept of comparative advantage serves as the economic backing for

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6 During his address, Mr. Cissokho called for the recognition of the Via Campesina in terms of a worldwide campaign for bio-diversity.
the organization - that each country will produce what it is most suited for, and export to other countries.\textsuperscript{7} Agreements on trade of goods, services and intellectual property are made by consensus in closed meetings with trade representatives from each country. The meetings, called “rounds”, often take place over several years, and the outcomes legally bind member nations to the set of rules decided upon through the negotiations (WTO, 2003).

The conclusions of the Uruguay Round created the WTO and determined the rules regulating international trade and tariffs concerning agriculture in the Agreement on Agriculture (WTO, 2003). The Agreement on Agriculture has three goals: to increase market access by reducing tariffs (by 36\% for developed countries and 24\% by developing countries) and imposing a requirement on food imports (3-5\% of national consumption for developed countries and 1-4\% for developing countries); to increase market access by reducing export subsidies (by 36\% and 24\% for developed and developing countries respectively), and; to reduce domestic support by reducing direct and indirect government supports. The Doha Round that began in 2001 recognized and reaffirmed the goals of the Agreement on Agriculture (WTO, 2001).

The strong push towards liberalization of agricultural markets has an important effect on agriculture and land tenure. While the promoters of liberalization claim that less state interference and increased market access will “level the playing field” and help agricultural producers compete in the international market, many argue that increased liberalization of agriculture will have (and has had) profoundly negative impacts on the worlds small farmers (Desmarais, 2003:5-9).\textsuperscript{8} More on this will follow in Chapter two.

It is important to highlight how negotiations in the WTO take place, who takes part, how decisions are reached, and what opportunities exist for involvements of peasant movements, if any exists. The trade rounds are convened according to a pre-determined agenda and center on specific issues. Negotiations take place behind closed doors by government representatives and several non-government advisors.\textsuperscript{9} Agreements are decided upon by consensus, which means that all parties agree, not a simple majority (WTO, 2003). This results in intense lobbying by interested parties in the negotiation rooms. The argument put forward by proponents of the WTO system, is that because there are many more “poor” nations than rich, the agreements should reflect their interests. But smaller countries, often in a much weaker position because of a lack of qualified negotiators, must submit to the lobbying pressures of richer more powerful governments.

\textsuperscript{7} The Hecksher-Ohlin model is the most current version of one of economics’ oldest theorems, first developed by Ricardo.

\textsuperscript{8} For the arguments in favor of freer trade see WTO (2001).

\textsuperscript{9} Desmarais (2003:14-15) notes that most of the advisors taking part in the negotiations have strong ties to multi-national corporations, and in the agricultural talks, with multi-national agribusiness.
The WTO is a controversial entity, to say the least. Trade round talks are often and increasingly met with protests from a wide variety of groups, including trade unions, farmers’ organizations, and religious groups - often allying groups with very different views, but sharing an opposition to increased liberalization (Kingsnorth, 2003:62). A Via Campesina member has said, "We are clear about the WTO: in principle this institution is pernicious for us" (Desmarais, 2003:21).

1.1.3 The World Bank

The World Bank is one of the most active international organizations dealing with land reform. The World Bank, established by the Bretton Woods Agreements in 1945 is responsible for providing loans, policy advice and technical assistance to developing countries. During the 1980s, the famous Washington Consensus drove the World Bank’s work, placing strict limits on spending, liberalizing markets, and privatizing state holdings (Stiglitz, 2002:53). The goal was to make developing countries attractive to foreign direct investments, which would, in turn, contribute to the growth of the economy. In the late 1990s, however, the World Bank, under James Wolfensohn, began to concentrate on human development as well as economic growth. \(^\text{10}\)

In regards to land tenure and land reform, the World Bank’s first comprehensive policy statement came in 1975. Entitled the Land Reform Sector Policy Paper, it set out the three guiding principles of land policy intervention: “the desirability of owner-operated family farms; the need for markets to permit land to be transferred to more productive users; and the importance of egalitarian asset distribution” (Deininger & Binswanger, 1999:247). The paper insisted, however, on formally titling and individualizing land holdings. In effect, the paper recommended that the communal tenure systems existing in much of the developing world be replaced with Western-style freehold systems. Although supporting the concept of redistributive land reform on the basis of equity and efficiency, the 1975 paper neglects to discuss the political aspects of land, and was hesitant to offer policy recommendations (Deininger & Binswanger, 2003:248, 255). Nevertheless, the underlying principles of the paper were clear, land is a factor of production like capital and labor, and to make the most efficient use of it, land must be freely exchanged in a secure environment.

It was not until 1989 that the World Bank changed its policy concerning individualization of land holdings. A move towards recognizing the importance of communal tenure schemes in

\(^{10}\) See Stiglitz (2002) for a history and critique of World Bank policy.
developing countries began with the discussion paper entitled *The Management of Common Property Natural Resources* by Bromley and Cernea (1989). The paper called into question the World Bank’s insistence on individual property rights, especially in the developing world context. The authors write that the concept of communal tenures was poorly understood as a “free-for-all”, when in fact communal resource management was an efficient management tool in specific instances (Bromley and Cernea, 1989:iii). The paper also emphasized the socio-economic features of resource management that had been ignored in previous works.

*Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Reduction* prepared by the Land Policy and Administration Unit in 2003 is the latest major policy research published by the World Bank on land reform. This research paper was written by Klaus Deininger, but drew from a series of Regional Workshops held throughout the world in 2002. Participants came from academia, international organizations, national governments, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations. Peasant movements were not included in these workshops or the electronic consultations (World Bank, 2003:193-204). The document reveals the foundation of World Bank interventions and again makes their view clear, land is a transferable asset. Importantly, the policy paper recognizes the inverse relationship between farm size and productivity (World Bank, 2003: 83).

The World Bank abides by several tenets concerning land tenure and reform founded upon the maxim of the “most efficient allocation and use of land resources” (Borras, 2004:6). The 2003 *Land Policies* research paper emphasized *enforceable property rights* (customary, individual, and state) for reasons such as increased investment incentive, improved access to credit, lower transaction costs, improved productivity, and reduced costs of protecting land claims; *land sales* in order to use land as a collateral and use land as the basis of a financial market; *rental markets* because of their lower transaction costs and flexibility (“rental is a more flexible and versatile means of transferring land from less to more productive producers than sales”); *owner operated farms* because reduced supervision of labor costs increase efficiency; finally that *land reform* should be carried out by market forces on the grounds of efficiency and equity as one strategy to increased access to productive resources (World Bank, 2003:xxvii-xlvi).

Many peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms challenge the World Bank’s view of land. Land, peasant movements argue, cannot be valued, and cannot have a market value at

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11 To read the electronic consultations see World Bank (2001).
12 In a statement available on the World Bank website, Sofia Monsalve Suárez, Coordinator of the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform, writes of the landless, that “their participation [in the consultations] has been marginal and subjected to communication forms dominated by academic circles. Which women farmers’ leader has been able to read this report in English in less than a month’s time?”
which it should be sold. As Borras writes, land has “a multidimensional function and character (that is, with political, economic, social and cultural dimensions)” (forthcoming:94). This may be the main disconnect between peasant movements and the Bank.

1.1.3.1 World Bank redistribution strategies

Studying the examples of “failed” land reforms - especially in Latin America - the World Bank drew several conclusions to explain why they failed to achieve their long-term objectives: landlord opposition to redistribution, infrastructural problems after reform, tendencies for land reform beneficiaries to collectivize farming, and lack of business and agricultural training for beneficiaries (Deininger &Binswanger, 1999:257).

The reason for the above problems, the World Bank argued, was that the redistribution schemes were state-led, not market-led. The World Bank and other pro-market thinkers’ argued that the state-led approach fails for three principle reasons: it is coercive, it is supply-driven, and it is state-centralized (which the Bank says poses a myriad of problems such as rent-seeking, market distortion, slow transaction speed, etc.) (Borras, 2001). The World Bank approach is therefore diametrically opposed; it is voluntary, demand-driven, and decentralized.13

The Negotiated or Market-Led approach is the World Bank’s solution to redistribution problems.14 The process is summarized as one that "relies on voluntary land transfers negotiated between buyers and sellers, with the government’s role restricted to establishing the necessary framework for negotiation and making a land purchase grant available to eligible beneficiaries.” The approach surfaced after the Cold War and has been applied in several developing countries as part of an overall macroeconomic restructuring - often in line with the trade liberalization and austerity programs imposed by the IMF (Deininger, 1999). In theory, the Market-Led approach will reduce conflicts because peasants that want land negotiate a price directly with landowners that voluntarily put their land up for sale. This so-called "willing-buyer - willing-seller” scheme, says the World Bank will result in speedy transactions because of “on the spot” market-value, cash payments (sometimes provided by the government through grants), all resulting in a “self-selection” of the fittest farmers who will most productively use the land (Borras, forthcoming:95).

The World Bank has carried out pilot programs of the Market-Led approach in many countries, including the three countries with active peasant movements, Brazil since 1998, The

13 For a comprehensive analysis of the Market-Led approach and applied examples in Brazil and the Philippines see Borras (2001) and (forthcoming) respectively.
14 The World Bank also refers to its strategy as Market-Assisted Land Reform.
Philippines since 1998, and South Africa since 1995 (Borras, forthcoming:96). However, on the whole, the Market-led approach to redistribution suffers several criticisms.\(^{15}\) Firstly, landowners are not compelled to sell their land. The result is that the landowners are in a far superior negotiating position. Secondly, peasants are usually not able to pay for land (or repay government grants) through farm production alone (FAO, 1998).\(^{16}\) Thirdly, the market-led approach discriminates against the poorest of the poor because they cannot compete with the “richer” peasants in negotiations (who along with savings have a government grant) (Borras, 2001).\(^{17}\)

Nonetheless, Peter Rosset, a critic of the World Bank’s land reform policies, mentions one benefit from their involvement:

“While what the Bank calls land reform - essentially privatization, the promotion of markets in land, and ‘market-led’ mechanisms of redistribution is a far cry from what La Via Campesina, Food First, and others call for, the change in Bank policy is making it ‘legitimate’ again to call for land reform and to struggle over its definition. At least we are beginning to reach agreement that there is a problem to be addressed” (Rosset, 2001).

1.2 Peasant Movements for agrarian and land reforms: historical inequalities and contemporary responses

After exploring several international organizations whose work impacts agrarian and land reforms, several national peasant movements will be examined. These movements are often the result of frustration and suffering due to severe and historic land inequalities. Here, a presentation of three peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms will be presented. Each presentation will be preceded by a historical examination of land inequality in their country in order to put the movement in a socio-political context and detail the role of the state.

\(^{15}\) Borras (forthcoming:94) argues that the Market-led approach where the buyer assumes the land and transaction costs is nothing more than a typical capitalist real estate transaction, and therefore does not constitute a real redistributive land reform.

\(^{16}\) See also Mazoyer & Roudart (1997:20-21) for an analysis of small farmers and their inability to produce enough to feed their family, save, and repay debts.

\(^{17}\) Borras (2001) argues that the underlying assumptions of the Market-led approach are not valid; that landlords will not always sell at lower prices when transactions are in cash; that land is not purely a factor of production; that the rural poor are not always homogenous; that central governments are not by nature inefficient and rent-seeking.
1.2.1 South Africa: The Landless People’s Movement (LPM)

South Africa’s land area covers 121.5 million Ha, 99.64 million Ha of which is agricultural land (82.1% of the total land area) (FAOSTAT, 2004). White farmers control 82.6 million Ha (83.8% of the agricultural land), and blacks hold 14.1 million Ha (14.1% of the agricultural land), mostly in former homelands (Atkinson, Pienaar & Zingel, 2004:29). South Africa’s 44.76 million people are mostly urban, 45% of the population is considered rural. Blacks account for 76% of the population, 56.5% of which are classified as rural. Moreover, blacks represent 95% of South Africa’s poor, and the rural populations account for over 75% of the poor. (Thwala, 2001:5-8).

Black South Africans have endured a long history of racism, discrimination and inequality. Exclusionary land tenure systems were imposed as early as 1652, and they constituted just one of the many ways that the colonial and then apartheid governments guaranteed their holds on power.\(^{18}\) A series of legislation beginning with The Native Land Act of 1913 and continuing through the apartheid regime relegated the black majority to “native reserves” or “homelands,” and also allowed the forced removal of blacks from white-owned farms (Walker, 2000:7). In their totality, the legislation established the symbolic 87/13 proportion - as a result of the laws, 87% of South African land was controlled by only 13% of the population (entirely white) while 87% of the population (entirely black) controlled just 13% of the land (Koch, Massyn & van Niekerk, 2001:134).\(^{19}\)

It was with high hopes for major land redistribution that the African National Congress (ANC) took power in the first post-apartheid national election in 1994. As early as the 1950’s the ANC, in its famous Freedom Charter, proposed nationalization policies as a means to redistribute dispossessed lands and remedy the years of inequality (Bosch, 2003:97). Furthermore, the party published its Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) which specifically named land reform as a basic need of the people, immediately before the election (Walker, 2002:8). The ANC had a difficult task ahead of them. In 1993, the average amount of land held by per person was 1.3 Ha by blacks and 1,570 Ha by whites (Deininger, 1999:25). However, as the new government set out to rectify the land inequalities, it had to contend with a changed international political and economic landscape in an age of globalization and liberalization.

The land reform policies proposed in the RDP focused on three principles: tenure reform, redistribution and restitution (Bosch, 2003:98). The policies supported fundamentally

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\(^{19}\) Walker (2002:23) points out that in reality, only 0.15% of the nation’s total population (all white commercial farmers) own 67% of the agricultural land.
neoliberal market-based land transfer with financial support from the government (El-Ghonemy, 2003:39). The goals of the land reform were lofty. The RDP, with World Bank support, aimed at redistributing 30% of the agricultural land to the poor within 5 years (Hall, 2004:214). The 1996 constitution includes a "property clause" that protects existing property rights in South Africa, and effectively removes expropriation from the possible land reform tools (Koch, Massyn & van Niekerk, 2001:134). Deininger notes that the South African government chose the market-led reform in order to "maintain public confidence in the land market, and ... to affirm the government’s respect for individual property rights” (1999:26).

The actual results of the land reform policies are much lower than hoped. The land transferred to blacks after 8 years of land reform ranges between 1.75% and 2.9% of the targeted 25.5 million Ha (Bosch, 2003:98). In addition to the failure of redistribution, restitution of lands lost during the apartheid has been extremely slow. Of the more than 10,000 applications from rural communities for restitution, only 10 claims had been settled by 1998 (Deininger, 1999:25). Some commentators blame the poor results on the fiscal austerity imposed by neoliberal spending policies, embodied in the contested Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) program, which replaced the RDP in 1998 (Koch, Massyn & van Niekerk, 2001:139). Under GEAR, only 0.2% of the national budget is allocated for land reform (Walker, 2002:11).

It must also be noted that the bi-modal agricultural system that has long existed in South Africa continues under the present system, even though the World Bank emphasized the importance of smallholder farming (Hall, 2004:221). The new Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) program launched in August 2001 seeks to “de-racialize” commercial agriculture, but the effect, some say, is to concentrate on commercial farms, which although black-owned, do not change the land distribution of the country (Thwala, 2001:17).

The Landless Peoples Movement

The Landless Peoples Movement (LPM) of South Africa is a young peasant movement for land reform, the first such national movement in more than 80 years (Eveleth & Mngxitama, 2003:164). Created in a climate of frustration and disillusion with the ANC’s land policies, the

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20 In 2000, the government reconfirmed the 30% goal, but extended the deadline by 15 years (Hall, 2004:214).
21 Hall points out that this clause was inserted due to lobbying by white farmers and industrialists, and that pressure from the World Bank ensured that the constitution framed all land reform in the "willing-buyer - willing-seller" model (2004:214).
22 Koch, Massyn & van Niekerk supply different but equally poor performing figures. They write that by 2001 only 5 cases out of more that 20,000 had been resolved (2001:142).
LPM fights against the slow pace of bureaucratic reforms, worsening conditions on commercial farms, and ongoing evictions and human rights abuses of peasants (Eveleth & Mngxitama, 2003:151).

The LPM was founded by various regional movements for land reform, supported by the well-known NGO National Land Committee (NLC). These regional bodies staged marches to the capital to demand a meeting with President Mbeki in 2000 (Eveleth & Mngxitama, 2003:164). Other peasant groups and landless people linked to the NLC carried out two land invasions of commercial white-owned farms in the beginning of 2001 - on the Groot Vlakfontein and Bredell farms. The former pushed the government to speed up land restitution claims, while that latter was met with violence and arrests. In addition, there were threats by unorganized labor tenants, who were growing frustrated with the slow pace of land redistribution and the legalistic strategy of the NLC, to occupy farms (Eveleth & Mngxitama, 2003:152).

Once the different groups began to understand that their struggles for land had common interests, a series of meetings was held in March and April 2001 where it was determined to unite their demands at a national level. A national meeting held in July 2001 formally established the LPM (LPM, 2001a). The creation of the movement coincided with the United Nations’ World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) held in Durban in August 2001. The LPM’s first assembly, supported by the NLC, was staged as an alternative to the conference, and it convened 3,500 landless people from all over South Africa. With the slogan “Landlessness = Racism,” the assembly was also the first protest march against the government since the end of apartheid (Hall, 2004:223). The assembly garnered the LPM international attention and messages of solidarity from Via Campesina and other peasant movements from around the world working for land reform (Eveleth & Mngxitama, 2003:164).

The LPM grew rapidly following the WCAR protests. Immediately, a formal organization was established at national and provincial levels (Eveleth & Mngxitama, 2003:164). The membership of the LPM covers a wide slice of the South African population that includes farm workers, peoples from communal areas, traditional leaders, informal urban residents, and those with historical claims to dispossessed lands (Hall, 2004:223). As of 2004 the LPM had a membership of over 100,000 (Economist, 2004b).

The LPM states their objective as, “struggling for land and working to organize and unite all the landless people of South Africa to demand land now” (LPM, 2004b). The movement makes it clear that they have grown tired of waiting for land redistribution and that they do not believe that the market-led programs will function. The Landless People’s Charter puts it in easy to understand terms: “The government land reform program is slow and mostly still benefits the
farmers more than us. The problem with this program is that it wants us to buy back our own land, and we are very poor.” The Charter explicitly blames the World Bank for the land reform problems, "The World Bank’s 'market-led, willing seller-willing buyer' land reform formula has failed in Zimbabwe and many other countries, and is failing and will continue to fail in South Africa” and instead, "a state-led, needs-based, supply-led programme” must be installed. The LPM demands that the government meet the RDP’s 30% goal immediately expropriate the land of absentee landlords, abusive farmers, indebted farmers, all unused and under-utilized land, and all unproductive land (LPM, 2001b). Moreover, the LPM founding document takes aim at the constitution and demands that the "government must scrap the property rights clause and replace it with a "social obligations” clause (LPM, 2001a).

The LPM has also expressed some desire for a more comprehensive agrarian reform. In particular they demand adequate support services for subsistence production and small-scale farming after land redistribution. In addition they demand training, extension services and production finance (LPM, 2001b).

Hall notes that the LPM is explicitly non-aligned with a political party, but that the LPM’s positions are mostly anti-ANC, denouncing GEAR and privatization policies (2004:223). The LPM, however states that “[they] placed [their] hopes for the return of our birthright in the liberation movement that we supported and helped to put in power,” and that so far the ANC has not lived up to its promises (LPM, 2001b). On January 10, 2004, leaders of the LPM met for the first time with the South African Agriculture and Land Affairs Minister to attempt to convince the government to hold a national conference on land reform (Quinn, 2004). After the meeting, the government made no attempt to organize a conference, and as a result, the LPM began its "No Land, No Vote” against the ANC campaign prior to the April 2004 elections.

So far, the LPM has limited itself to peaceful protests, but its charter does reserve the right to occupy land, and force expropriation. In this sense, the LPM is clearly influenced by the MST and Zimbabwean movements (LPM, 2001b). Until 2004, it had not carried through on this threat (Economist, 2004b).

The LPM did, however, cause concern in South Africa that they would support (or enact) a Zimbabwe styled land redistribution, where many white farmers have been killed and the situation is only provoked by the president Robert Mugabe (Economist, 2004d). Fears may have arisen from a clause in the LPM’s founding document where they "invite Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe to share ideas on land reform in South Africa” (LPM, 2001a). Since then, however, the leaders of the LPM have declared their disapproval with Mugabe’s methods stating that redistributions have given land to functionaries and party members, not the
peasants. Mangaliso Kubheka, one of the LPMs leaders, says however, that the LPM will end up resorting to land occupations similar to those of Zimbabwe, and that they have already started creating a peasant army to defend the peasants against the private security forces of land owners (Braeckman, 2003).

Internationally, the LPM is increasingly active. Their Charter states: "We must build solidarity with other landless people throughout the world" (LPM, 2001b). As of 2004, the LPM is an official member of Via Campesina. It is involved in the movement’s international campaigns and supports their anti-neoliberal principles, often participating in forums with Via Campesina. In return, Via Campesina has issued several press releases supporting the South African movement, and along with FIAN organized a protest letter writing campaign to support the LPM in 2002 (Via Campesina, website).

The LPM is considered and “affiliate” of the International Land Coalition, as part of its Network Support Programme (ILC, 2004). The cooperation with the ILC, which includes the World Bank and other more mainstream bodies, shows that the LPM has not excluded the possibility of working with international organizations.

1.2.2 Brazil: Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST)

One of the largest and most populated countries in the world, Brazil is also one of the most unequal in terms of distribution of wealth and perhaps more importantly, of land. Brazil’s land area covers 846 million Ha, 31% of which is agricultural land. It has a population of 176 million people, of which 18% are considered rural (FAOSTAT, 2004). Land holdings are acutely unbalanced - 31.6% of the land holdings control just 1.8% of the total land, whereas 3.5% of the holdings control 56.1% of the total land area. The Gini index of land concentration in Brazil is 0.8 (INCRA, 2003:11). Unfortunately, much of the land held in these latifundia (holdings over 1000 Ha.) go unused (Ferreira, 2002).

Extreme land inequality is not a new phenomenon in Latin America, nor is it in Brazil. As in most Latin American countries, land was doled out to powerful colonists appointed by the European crowns, who in turn gave large areas of land to settlers (Williamson, 1992:168). This original concentration of land in the hands of colonists has never been rectified by massive land redistribution, unlike many other Latin American (Kingsnorth, 2003:249).

23 See Barraclough (1999) and (2001) for details of the land redistributions in several other Latin American countries.
The early post-colonial history (1822 - 1930) is characterised by waves of European immigration and settlements programs coordinated by the government intended to supply needed manpower and create smallholder farms throughout the country (Groppo, 1996). Nevertheless, the landholders (fazendeiros) controlling Brazil’s land made agreements among themselves to block immigrants from acquiring land. As a result, the system was biased against family farms, and a bi-modal agricultural system of large corporate farms and poor minifundios was created and has persisted until today (da Veiga, 2003:59).\(^{24}\)

Beginning in the 1930s, as Brazil concentrated on developing its industrial capacities by employing the Import-Substitution Model, landholders reasserted their control on rural areas causing increased peasant-landlord conflict. Landlords created the Rural Society movement to bloc any development of smallholder farms (Groppo, 1996). In response, peasants influenced by awareness raising campaigns lead by Paolo Freire and supported by the Catholic Church (influenced by the liberation theology movement), organized opposition groups calling for radical solutions to land inequality, such as the Popular Action (Huizer 1999:29). Groppo points out that although these movements had gained strength, they were not able to effectively propose coherent policy proposals, which was compounded by the ability of the landowners to crush any peasant demand (1996).

During the military dictatorship (1964 - 1984) peasant movements were effectively suppressed through intimidation and assassinations, silencing the land debate (Huizer, 1999:29). The government issued a minor reform (the Land Statute Bill), which appears to have been a fearful response to growing Latin American peasant movements calling for radical land reform, in Cuba for example. The bill did little to change the agrarian class structure other than to compound the import substitution model chosen by the government. The creation of the Instituto Nacional de Colonisação e Reforma Agrária (INCRA) in 1971, marked the beginning of settlement policies to manage the surplus labor created from the modernization of agriculture and industry (Groppo, 1996). During the same time, the Confederação dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura (CONTAG) promoted the rights of agricultural workers, and because it was not overly critical of the regime, it was allowed to operate (Huizer, 1999:29). The overall benefits of the agricultural modernization and reforms enacted were negligible for the millions of landless and near landless people of Brazil (Teofilo and Garcia, 2003:21).

The military dictatorship lost power in 1984 and was subsequently replaced by a democratic government that expressed a clear interest in resolving, at least in part, the land concentration inequalities. The Sarney government drafted the first Plan Nacional de Reforma Agrária (PNRA)

\(^{24}\) Kay notes that the latifundios and minifundios created an inefficient production system where land was underutilized on latifundios, and the minifundios used too much labor per production unit(1998, 1998:14).
which targeted 1,400,000 families for resettlement. After 5 years, however, only a small fraction of the families had been resettled (Gropp, 1996). The next two governments, Collor and Franco, paid little attention to the agrarian problem. Collor introduced the first neoliberal programs\(^{25}\) and repressed, sometimes violently, the social movements for land reform (such as MST). Franco stopped the violent oppression, but did not propose an agrarian reform (Stedile, 2002).

At the same time that Cardoso was elected president in 1995 conflicts between landowners and peasants were increasing. One striking example was the massacre of 19 peasants by landowners in Eldorado de Carajás. With the added pressure of the increasingly popular MST, the government proposed resettlement policies. Between 1995 and 2001, the government distributed 18.73 million Ha to 584,301 families (Teofilo and Garcia, 2003:22).\(^{26}\) Cardoso became closely aligned with the World Bank during his second term, and ushered in neoliberal spending policies and looked to the World Bank for assistance in redistributing lands (Deininger, 1999:22).\(^{27}\) Critics of Cardoso complain that he subordinated the country’s agricultural policies to international markets, which has had deleterious effects on the small farmer (Stedile, 2002).

In 2002, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, former union leader and long time sympathizer with MST, was elected president. Under President da Silva, the INCRA developed a second Plan Nacional de Reforma Agrária (II PNRA), in a renewed spirit of resolving the country’s rural problems. The plan envisions settling 400,000 landless families, providing credit to 130,000 families, and regularizing the tenancy situation of another 500,000 families. Strengthening family farms, increasing production, encouraging sustainable farming techniques and diminishing the concentration of land holdings represent the major goals of the plan (INCRA, 2003). This represents a remarkable shift away from Brazil’s predominant corporate agricultural system. But much remains to be done; there are an estimated 4 million landless families in Brazil (Stedile, 2002)

\(^{25}\) Guanziroli (1998:41) notes that the liberalization of Brazilian agricultural policies began in 1984 but were significantly strengthened in the end of the 1980s.
\(^{26}\) Stedile (2002) says, however, that most of these settlements were instigated by MST occupations. Lemoine (2001) writes that the government has exaggerated the number of settlements by more than 75%, of which 60% are on frontier lands.
\(^{27}\) See Borras (2001) for an examination of a Market-Led Agrarian Reform test project carried out by the World Bank in 5 regions of Brazil.
Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra

"We don’t want a revolution, land reform today means to reform capitalism to give everybody a chance."
- José Rainha, an MST national director (Huizer, 1999:30)

The Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) is a peasant movement that has attempted to solve the Brazilian landlessness problem through direct, coordinated action, taking advantage of a clause in the Brazilian constitution that obligates the government to redistribute unused land.

In the late 1970’s as popular action against the military dictatorship began to rise, land occupations started to take place in an effort to settle the thousands of frustrated landless families who had lost their land due to agricultural commercialization and modernization (Huizer, 1999:29). Occupations were often coordinated and encouraged by the Comissão Pastoral de Terra (CPT), a Catholic organization inspired by the growing liberation theology movement. Although these occupations were highly organized, they were not coordinated amongst each other (Stedile, 2002). Some of the first and most important large-scale land occupations occurred in Rio Grande do Sul in 1979, when groups of landless families occupied a local fazenda. This proved to many that landless farmers could stand up to the landholders, and it proved to be one of the main impetuses behind MST’s founding (Kingsnorth, 2003:251).

It was not until the beginning of the 1980’s that the individual movements began to share experiences with each other through meetings and conferences on land, landlessness, and land reform. A national meeting of farmers was held in Cascavel, Paraná during January 1984 where the MST officially organized and the philosophy of the movement was decided upon. In 1985 the first national congress of MST was held and over 500 farmers participated. The movement intensified its activities in the mid-1980’s, during which time, many multinational companies acquired enormous tracts of land throughout Brazil, and the fear of losing their livelihoods drove peasants to mobilize mass occupations. The peasants often faced harsh repression from landlords and the government that feared that instability would scare off possible foreign investors. (Huizer, 1999:30).

Under Cardoso, the movement was better received, but continued carrying out occupations. The MST even pressured the Cardoso government to include the movement in the Program Especial de Crédito à Reforma Agrária in 1999, which invests in the social and economic projects such as schools, healthcare, and agribusinesses that are run by MST (Stedile, 2002).
The MST claims to have settled 350,000 families through occupations, and that there are over 160,000 families in encampments waiting for recognition from INCRA. Other achievements cited by the MST are the creation of over 500 production and commercialization associations, and 96 small and medium agribusinesses (MST, 2004d).

The MST has evolved and transformed itself into much more than an organizer of occupations in its twenty year history. As of 2004, MST members had established a radio station, published a newspaper, and produced CDs. The overall strategy is to acquire land, but then also to ensure its productivity. To do so, it organizes the encampments into cooperative farms and provides agricultural training. One of the pillars of the MST movement is to change the Brazilian agricultural system into one of small family farms that can ensure the food security and well-being of the peasants (MST, 2004a).

The MST has six main objectives: to construct a society where “work is superior to capital” and “land is a good for all”; “to guarantee work for all, with a just distribution of land, of salary and of riches” and to “search for social justice”; and “to defend humanist and socialist values in social relations” and “fight all forms of discrimination and promote equal participation of women.” (MST: 2004c). The movement sees its struggle for agrarian and land reforms as part of a larger struggle for social justice in Brazil and the world. It incorporates the notions of food sovereignty, human rights, and opposition to WTO policies and genetically modified organisms (MST, 2004d).

One of the MST’s most vocal national directors, João Pedro Stedile, emphasized the broadening of the movement’s objectives:

“We’ll carry on squatting land, because that’s the only way for families to resolve their immediate problems - to have a place where they can work. But if we are to move towards popular agrarian reform we have to confront

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28 Foweraker notes that the number of families settled by MST appears to be inflated because often the families counted only occupy the land for a very short time and that only a proportion of the mobilized families will actually be settled (2001:15).
29 See Padgett (1998) for an examination of the MST’s entrepreneurial accomplishments.
30 Foweraker (2001:16) makes an interesting observation by examining the movement’s evolution from a combative organization to one using occupation as a negotiating tool. He writes: “The MST’s overall strategy has changed. It has continued to occupy land and support de facto settlements. But it is less combative in style, and now tends to mobilize mainly in order to create openings for negotiation. This shift can be traced through changing MST slogans, from “The land to those who work it” (1979 - 1984) and “Occupation is the only solution” (1986), to “ Occupy, Resist and Produce” (1993 - 1994) and “Agrarian Reform, everybody’s struggle” (1995 - present).”
the neoliberal program itself, and that can’t be done by land occupations alone”

The land occupations carried out by MST are well organized and exceptionally planned. They begin with awareness raising campaigns by MST activists in areas with a large number of landless farmers. There are two important rules that MST abides by: the whole family must occupy the land together and all costs involved in a land occupation are borne by the landless farmers themselves. In such a way, the farmers become part of the movement, financially as well as physically. Since the occupations are organized, directed and financed by the farmers, a sense of solidarity plays a fundamental role, according to the movement. It also provides the incentive for them to make the encampments successful (Stedile, 2002).

The goal of the occupation is to push INCRA to carry out a formal investigation of the case and prove that the government should have expropriated the land. The MST provides lawyers to argue in court that the occupation is legal according to the constitution. However, it takes about two to four years until the settlers receive their title, during which time they are often subjected to abuse by police and landholders (Wright & Wolford: 2003). It is reported that at least 2,000 peasant settlers have been killed during land occupations (Huizer, 1999:30). The Economist reports that 84 people died in conflicts between the police and the landholders’ private armies between January and November 2003, which was a 40% increase over 2002 (2004a).

The structure of MST emphasizes its “bottom-up” approach to agrarian and land reforms. The base of the movement is the landless family, those that take part in the marches and occupations. The movement is a set of independent MST groups with a national headquarters in São Paulo and a presence in 23 of the 27 Brazilian states. There is no president or national leader of the movement, rather each state organization elects a leader and the national organization is run by the 21 leaders. Decisions are made democratically by committee at all levels. A national-level meeting is held every two years in which a national commission is elected. Those elected share decision-making power to direct the organization. Every five years, a national congress is held to debate the philosophy and direction of the movement. In 2000, over 11,000 farmers attended (Stedile, 2002). (Stedile, 2002).

The movement recognized that it must be autonomous from political parties and the church in order to be completely free from external influence (Stedile, 2002). However, the MST is

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31 For a detailed description of an MST land occupation, see Kingsnorth (2003: 241 - 272)
closely aligned with the Partido Trabalhista (PT), currently in power under President da Silva. During the 2002 presidential election campaign, the MST cut back on the number of land occupations so as not to scare off moderate voters (Economist, 2004b). But, as a sign of their independence MST has stepped up occupations during Lula’s presidency (Kingstone, 2004).

Internationally, the MST is a founding member of Via Campesina and continues to be one of the most active members of the alliance. The MST played an important organizing role of the World Social Forum (WSF) held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2002, and is on the organizing committee for the WSF 2005 (FSM, 2004). In this way, the movement emphasizes the globality of land reform and its part as an interconnected struggle for social justice. The MST also plays a leading role in the Congreso Latinamericano de Organizaciones Campesinos (CLOC) which represents over a million small farmers and leads campaigns against neoliberal economic policies (Kingsnorth, 2003:270).

The MST has evolved into much more than a movement for land reform; it recognizes the need for agrarian reform. A year in to da Silva’s presidency, Stedile summarized the evolution of the MST’s fight for agrarian reform:

“...Agrarian reform in this step of capitalist development...needs a new interpretation...for this reason the MST and Via Campesina champion a new type of agrarian reform that doesn’t reduce itself only to land redistribution...we need to democratize capital and construct our own cooperative agribusinesses,...democratize education,...develop new technologies while fighting agro-toxins,...and finally prioritize the reorganization of agriculture so that it provides food and jobs” (2004:2).
[author’s translation]

1.2.3 The Philippines: Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)

The Philippines has a land area of 29.82 million Ha, 41% of which is agricultural land (FAOSTAT, 2004). There are 2.9 million small farms (<5 Ha) that occupy just over half of the agricultural area, while 13,681 medium sized farms (>25 Ha) occupy 11.5% of the land (ANGOC, 1998). On the average small farms occupy 2.1 ha, and 7 out of 10 farmers do not own the land they till. The Gini land concentration coefficient was 0.64 in 1988 (Borras, forthcoming:98). Forty percent of the 78.9 million Filipinos are considered rural (FAOSTAT, 2004). Agriculture accounts for 22% of the Filipino GDP and 16% of the export income, while employing 43% of the labor force (Borras, forthcoming:98).
In the pre-colonial Philippines, land was held in communal lands owned by the village (barangay), and individuals enjoyed usufruct rights. First colonized by the Spanish in the 1500’s, the Philippines are marked by a colonial history similar to that of many Latin American countries. Land was dealt out to a small but powerful group of missionary friars and Spanish colonizers. The Spaniards took advantage of an already existing feudal system by inter-marrying with native chiefs and creating a new class called caciques (Huizer, 1999:17). Land titles were introduced and landlordism grew rapidly under Spanish rule (Olano, 2002:86). Land remained concentrated among this elite group which led to a peasant revolt in 1898, the same year that Spain transferred sovereignty to the United States.

Peasant conditions and land concentration only increased under the US rule as commercial farms benefited from a redistribution-through-sales program that priced land too high for peasant to afford (Guardian, 2003:71) (Huizer; 1999:17). The resulting large class of farm workers endured (and continues to endure) a feudal relationship with the farm owners (ANGOC, 1998). Huizer notes that tenancy farmers rented paid a tenancy rate as high as 90% (1999:17). Agricultural production directed by the commercial farms concentrated on producing export crops, especially sugar and tobacco.

In the face of such powerful landlords and poor living conditions, many peasant groups mobilized throughout the countryside in the 1930’s and constrained President Quezon to introduce a massive resettlement program. This program, which settled peasants on previously unused lands, had the effect of marginalizing and injuring the indigenous populations that inhabited the areas (Huizer, 1999:17). A 1963 reform enacted by President Macapagal officially abolished share tenancy and set up an amortization system for peasants to buy land from the landholders. The project, however, did not follow through effectively (Guardian, 2003:72). It was not until President Marcos took power in that major land redistribution took place. Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and issued Presidential Decree no. 27, which declared the entire country a land reform area. The program covered rice and maize lands and only tillers were eligible. The program failed, however, because of the high retention limit of 7 Ha, a complicated process to obtain land, lack of a support services, and its “betting on the strong” approach (Guardian, 2003:72) (Huizer, 1999:21).

Marcos’ successor, President Aquino, with the support of the World Bank\textsuperscript{33}, implemented the controversial Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) (Huizer, 1999:21). The law was

\textsuperscript{33} Borrás (forthcoming:117) argues that the Market-led agrarian reforms (MLAR) began much earlier than the implementation of CARP, and that World Bank involvement in Filipino land reform programs began as early as the 1970s.
passed in 1987 after peasant organizations protesting for immediate land distribution were fired upon by government troops. Critics of the law say that measures such as high retention rates (5 Ha) and compensation favored the landowners, leading the peasant movements, such as the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), to denounce the law as a sham (Guardian, 2003:72).

The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), established by the CARL and begun in 1988, covered all public and private agricultural lands, and it aimed at redistributing land to farmers, farm workers, and landless people. The program utilized the “willing-buyer - willing-seller” World Bank model, and maintained the principles of amortization and lease holding, in order to compensate landowners (Guardian, 2003:73). Implemented by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), the CARP had 10 years to distribute 8 million ha. But, by 1998, it had only redistributed 58% of the targeted land. After a 10-year extension (until 2008) by President Ramos and additional funding, the CARP had not, by 2002 redistributed all 8 million ha, in fact it had achieved only 72% of its goal (Guardian, 2003:73). Some large landowners feel threatened by CARP and have resorted to violence and legal maneuvering to stop farmers from receiving lands (Olano, 2002:87).34

The CARP is implemented in three modes, the Voluntary Offer-to-Sell (VOT), the Voluntary Land Transfer (VLT), and the Compulsory Acquisition (CA).35 The VOT and VLT offer cash and bonds to landlords that sell their land to the state for redistribution or to the peasant through price negotiations. The CA is a last resort measure which expropriates the land without the landlords cooperation (Borras, forthcoming:100).

Borras notes that the CARP does not worry multinational agribusinesses since most of them lease land from the state and therefore their land is not affected by the redistribution scheme (forthcoming:100). In addition to the CARP, the Filipino government has drafted a Medium-Term Development Plan that outlines several reform measures to strengthen the Filipino land markets (Llanto and Ballesteros, 2003:202).

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas

Founded in 1985, The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) is a prominent Filipino peasant movement for agrarian and land reforms. The movement is composed of provincial chapters which are present in 55 of The Philippines’ 79 provinces. The estimated membership is over

34 For more on landholder and peasant conflicts see Olano (2002).
35 For a detailed explanation of the VLT and MLAR see Borras (forthcoming).
800,000 poor and landless farmers, which represents approximately 9% of the agricultural workforce. In 2001, The KMP was called "one of the most powerful organizations of its kind in Asia" (Bessières, 2001).

The KMP describes itself as "a nationwide federation composed of organizations of landless peasants, small farmers, farm workers, subsistence fisherfolk, peasant women and rural youth." Specifically it 'advocates and struggles' for "a revolutionary agrarian reform program that will abolish all forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and will implement a free and equitable distribution of land resources to the tillers, a rural development program complementing agrarian reform that encourages agricultural cooperation among farmers and enhances local production and productivity" (KMP, 2004).

The KMP has framed the land reform question in a larger perspective. It fights for the elimination of genetically modified seeds, food sovereignty, price increases for agricultural products, against the further privatization of government bodies, against neoliberal trade policies, among other things. The KMP has a program of six "struggles" the "Struggle for genuine land reform"; the "Struggle against imperialist globalization and US war of aggression"; "The struggle for human rights"; "The struggle for safe food and food production"; and other "Multisectoral campaigns" (KMP, 2004).

It is important to point out that the KMP does not preclude the use of violence, although it has not in the past used organized violent means. The KMP has declared that it "respects the option of armed revolution" (KMP, 2004).

Unlike the MST and LPM, which work within the land laws of their countries, the KMP works to undermine CARP (Borras, author:2004). To do so the movement organizes strikes, protests, educational programs, and has in the past organized land occupations. The KMP notes that some 100,000 Ha were expropriated through land occupations by 1991 (Fuwa, 2000).

The position papers prepared offer an insight into the ideological backing of the movement. About the CARP, the KMP writes that from the beginning the program had an "inherent anti-peasant bias...[it was] conveniently used by the ruling class to concentrate land into their own hands." The peasantry, they write, understands that land reform cannot be achieved within the CARP framework (KMP, 2001b).

Within the Philippines, the KMP often coordinates activities with other peasant movements and associations. For example, in October 2004, the KMP along with the Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Gitnand Luzon (AMGL - Central Luzon Peasant Alliance) and the Katipunan ng
mga Magbubuki Timog Katagalugan (Kasama-TK - Southern Luzon Peasant Association), staged a several day farm strike that mobilised more than 10,000 peasants to march on Manila in protest against landlessness, poverty, and hunger to coincide with the World Food Day. The specific demands from the protesters were raising the price of rice and palay and opposition to the privatization of the National Food Authority (Remollino, 2004).

Government response to peasant movements for land reform in the Philippines, in recent history, has not produced effective reforms. Because of the influence of the landowners, the government enacts reforms to “manage” the peasant, but not to genuinely redistribute land (Borras, forthcoming:98). This may be why the KMP lists their struggle for reform as a “struggle for genuine land reform” (KMP, website) [italics added].

In its effort to undermine the CARP, the KMP has aligned itself with a national political party - the Anakpawis (Toiling Masses) Party. Prior to the May 2004 election, the Secretary-General of KMP, Danilo Ramos, asked the members of the KMP to vote for the party, and demanded that the incumbent President Gloria Arroyo order the military to stop attacks on the party’s leadership (KMP, 2004c).

The KMP is very active internationally and it declared that “solidarity and support to the struggles of the peasantry and peoples of the world” is one of the pillars of the organization. The KMP is a founding member of Via Campesina, and actively participates in campaigns for agrarian and land reforms throughout the world (Desmarais, 2003:4)

The KMP is outspokenly hostile towards NGOs that cooperate with the World Bank and other international organizations, calling them “collaborationist” (KMP, 2000). The KMP, however, consulted with the International Land Coalition (ILC), which includes the World Bank among its members, in October 2003 concerning the development of LAND Partnerships in the Philippines (ILC, 2003b).

Concerning the WTO, the KMP, like the MST, believe that its Agreement on Agriculture has allowed multinational agribusinesses to monopolize the world markets, allow dumping, and promote monocultures. They write, “it is crystal clear that the World Trade Organization is mainly to blame for this catastrophe [landlessness and food insecurity] as its policies promote the business interests of TNCs [Transnational Corporations] resulting in the displacement of domestic food and agriculture sectors” (KMP, 2001a).

Openly hostile to international organizations and the state, the KMP has published a tract, which excludes working these institutions. They write:
"The radical reforms that are needed cannot be brought about by negotiating a social contract with the government and business sectors, even at an international level. As long as multilateral agencies remain subservient to the demands of the US and other imperialist countries, they cannot serve the interest of the people at the same time" (KMP, 2001a).

The KMP, however, shows a willingness to engage the FAO. In September 2004, the KMP organized, in collaboration with other peasant movements and organizations, the People’s Caravan for Peoples Food Sovereignty. The People's Caravan "aims to raise awareness among a broad range of sectors...to build a strong and broad network of advocates for...the People’s Convention on Food Sovereignty that will be presented to governments and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) at the World Food Summit + 10 in 2006” (KMP, 2004).

1.3 Alliances for agrarian and land reforms: a modern international phenomenon

As the character of national policy making has become more and more internationalized, peasant movements - that were once nationally isolated - have adapted to a changing political landscape and created (or joined) international alliances to strengthen their cause. Two international alliances will be examined here, the Via Campesina and the International Land Coalition. Though they differ significantly in history and membership, both represent innovative, international responses to rectify land inequality and the worsening condition of the world’s peasantry.

1.3.1 Via Campesina

The Via Campesina is one of the most prominent international alliances of peasant movements operating for agrarian and land reforms today. It describes itself as, “an international movement which coordinates peasant organizations of small and middle-scale producers, agricultural workers, rural women, and indigenous communities from Asia, Africa, America, and Europe” (Via Campesina, 1999). The movement has been successful in globalizing the struggle for agrarian and land reforms by connecting previously disconnected grassroots movements. The movement is perhaps a response to an increasingly internationalized policy-making system. With actors like the World Bank and WTO having such profound effects on all levels of society, an international peasant movement is an attempt to counter-balance their power. MST
director João Pedro Stedile explains, “if capital has become international and uses international methods, peasant movements must also internationalize their forms of struggle and develop new and creative ways to confront a common enemy” (Stedile quoted in Borras, 2004:10).

Under the auspices of the second congress of the Nicaraguan Unión Nacional de Agricultores y Ganadores (UNAG) in April 1992, eight farm organizations from Central America, Canada, Europe, the US and the Caribbean drafted a declaration uniting the organizations in a common opposition to neoliberal trade policies known as the Managua Declaration (Desmarais, 2003a:3). A year later, in Mons, Belgium, 46 farm leaders met to follow-up on the Managua Declaration. At this meeting, the leaders formally established the Via Campesina and elected a Coordinating Committee composed of the MST representing South America, ASOCODE representing Central America, North America and the Caribbean, Peasant Solidarnosc representing Eastern Europe, the KMP representing Asia, and the CPE representing Western Europe (Desmarais, 2003a:4). The leaders drafted a second declaration demanding the right of farmers to make a living from their labor, the right to a diversified agriculture, and the right for each country to define its own agricultural policy (Desmarais, 2003a:5).

Three more International Conferences were held in 1996, 2000, and 2004, in Mexico, India and Brazil, respectively. At these conferences, the growth of the movement was obvious - from the 8 organizations in 1992, to more than 400 delegates from 76 countries in 2004 (Via Campesina, 1999) (Via Campesina, 2004e). The scope of the movement’s aims also broadened. In 1992, the movement was mainly concerned with opposing neoliberal policies of the GATT, while the topics covered in 1996, 2000 and 2004 included women’s rights, genetically modified organisms, food sovereignty, implementation strategies, seed patenting, and agrarian reform, among other topics (Via Campesina, 2000:7) (Via Campesina, 2004e). However, the main goal stayed the same: peasant well-being. In the Fourth Conference declaration, the members of the movement “reaffirm[ed] that the permanent existence of peasant agriculture is fundamental for the elimination of poverty, hunger, unemployment and marginalization.” In conjunction with the fourth conference, the First Youth Assembly of Via Campesina was held, as well as the Second International Assembly of Rural Women. These assemblies stressed two points for Via Campesina: the inclusion of whole families in its activities, and gender equality (Via Campesina, 2004e).36

An exact number of Via Campesina members is not available, but as of 2003, the movement counted over 100 peasant and small farmer organizations and movements from North, Central

36 The organization of Via Campesina abides by an internal gender policy wherein all leadership bodies must have an equal number of women and men (Borras, 2004:25).
and South America, the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and Asia. The organization of the movement is based around its international conferences held every four years. Between conferences, the movement is directed by its International Coordinating Committee and regional coordinative groups. An operational secretary is located in Honduras, but will move to Indonesia. Borras writes that this is indicative of a trend within the organization as 16 Asian members were added, as well as seven from Africa were added during the Fourth Conference. In the past, he writes, the movement has been dominated by Latin American and European organizations, but this might be changing (2004:25,26).

In order to clarify the positions of Via Campesina and its member organizations on agrarian reform, it is useful to examine the position paper prepared by Via Campesina following the Third International Conference. In this paper, the movement lays out their vision of what agrarian reforms should be and how the issue should be integrated into a larger social transformation.

“Agrarian reform has to start with a broad process of distribution of land ownership...to be undertaken in conjunction with changes in the economic, social, and political model. Ownership of land has to be submitted to the criteria that only those that work the land...have the right to land...Land is not, and cannot, be a marketable good...[those benefiting from reform] cannot use it for commercial purposes. There should be no speculation and it should be prohibited that capitalist enterprises can obtain large amounts of land...Agrarian reform needs to be united with a policy of food sovereignty” (Via Campesina, 2000:3-4).

Moreover, the movement places land reform in a global struggle towards social justice, similar to the MST. They write,

“The struggle for the implementation of land reform cannot be cloaked as a peasants’ exclusive need or banner, but as a social solution for the whole of the society’s problems...We have to propose changes in agriculture, in land ownership and in rural development processes, as part of a wide popular project for our peoples, where there would be a new economic social an political order” (Via Campesina, 2000:6)

Food sovereignty is a pillar of the Via Campesina’s fight for improved living standards for peasants. The movement defines food sovereignty as the right of a people or country to define their own agricultural and food policy without fear of “dumping” from third countries. It does
not preclude international trade of agricultural products, but it does put restrictions on it. Food prices, they believe, should reflect the true cost of production. Moreover, countries have the right to protect themselves from cheap imports by putting up tariffs, perhaps in coordination with other poor countries (Via Campesina, 2003a). More on food sovereignty follows below.

The movement’s strategy to enact these changes is to organize the largest amount of people around the struggle for agrarian and land reforms and "generate a willingness for a permanent struggle for our rights, be it through direct action or through large mass mobilizations" (Via Campesina, 2000:6). As part of its campaign, it has designated April 17 as the International Day of Farmers’ Struggle (Via Campesina, website). Desmarais notes that the Via Campesina may engage in negotiations, but they are always accompanied by mobilization (2003a:23). These mobilizations - essentially protests against the WTO - have brought the movement much international attention. Borras notes that the movement has not carried out 'WTO style' mobilization against the World Bank and their neoliberal policies, but he holds hope for such actions in an effort to increase awareness about the destructive effects of World Bank policies on land (2004:22). He writes that the Via Campesina strategy is two-fold, opposition to neoliberalism and negotiation on selected issues with "selected agencies and institutions for possible reformist gains" (Borras, 2004:22). These strategies will be discussed in more detail below.

Independence of the movement is very important for the members, which has often led to conflicts with NGOs - the refusal to sign the FAO WFS NGO declaration is an indicative example (Borras, 2004:17). Desmarais notes, however, that the movement is looking for allies in its fight against neoliberalism (2003b).

Though not a member, it is important to mention one of the most trusted partners of Via Campesina is the FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN). FIAN is the operational side of the think-tank FoodFirst, which fights for "the human right to food" throughout the developing world. FIAN is a respected network of NGOs with a headquarters in Germany, and hold consultative status with the UN. FIAN is one of the strongest partners of Via Campesina. Together, in 1999, they began the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform. The purpose of the campaign is to strengthen already existing peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms by creating an international network to respond to violations of human rights. There are three main components to the campaign: the Emergency Network, Fact-Finding Missions, and Exchange (FIAN, 2000a). The Emergency Network organizes protest letter-writing campaigns to convince governments to change policies regarding land issues. The World Bank notes that a protest letter campaign compelled the Phillipine government to force landlords to surrender
land to the peasants of Toledo (World Bank, 2004b). The fact-finding missions are usually carried out by members of FIAN, Via Campesina and other associated groups to investigate land reform programs and human rights violations of peasants.

With regards to international organizations, he Via Campesina has advocated an increased role for the United Nations in terms of setting world agricultural trade policies. José Bové, acting as representative of Via Campesina, met with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and pressed for the recognition of food sovereignty as a human right (Via Campesina, 2004d).

Via Campesina has historically kept the option of dialogue with the FAO and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) open. In April 2004, the movement called for more power to the FAO and UNCTAD to decide agricultural policies (2004c:3). But, this was just one month before the FAO report on biotechnology was issued, as mentioned above. Two months later in its statement following the Fourth International Conference, it remarks that these institutions have “joined the IMF, WTO and World Bank as the guardians of capital” (Via Campesina, 2004d:3). The spread of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) agriculture, they argue, is a step towards multinational agribusiness control, and the FAO’s quasi-approval of biotechnology indicates a move away from peasants and towards business.

The World Bank involvement in land reform has always been a target of criticism from the Via Campesina. The movement decries the effects of liberalizing and privatizing land and agriculture markets and its privatization policies. The movement writes, “We denounce the World Bank’s promotion of policies that have initiated counter-agrarian reform processes and have concentrated land ownership in few hands...have transformed land into a mere commodity...[that] encourage the concentration of the world food system in the hands of a few transnational corporations...[and that] encourage export of cash crops” (Via Campesina, 2004d:2) The Via Campesina, does however note that the World Bank’s 2003 Land Policies report “finally accepts some of the critics that [they] have made,” but “it seems likely that the Bank will continue financing the model of redistribution through the market” (Via Campesina, 2003b:2).

Removing the WTO from agriculture is one of the movement’s pillar arguments.37 The agriculture trade liberalization policies (the Agreement on Agriculture) hashed out in the WTO negotiations have harmful effects on the world’s peasants, says the Via Campesina. They write, “Dominant powers kept trying to impose their own liberalization policies, which destroy

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37 For the most complete examination of the Via Campesina and the WTO see Desmarais (2003).
peasant based food production, especially in developing countries” (Via Campesina, 2004b:3). As such, it denies “the right to export” of rich nations, calls for the rejection of WTO agricultural policies, and demands a stop to further WTO negotiations on agriculture. As part of its campaign against the WTO, the Via Campesina has consistently organized protest demonstrations outside the trade negotiations, in Seattle, Cancun and Washington, for example (Desmarais, 2003a:9-14).

The Via Campesina has, since its founding in 1993, broadened the scope of its struggles. Beginning mainly as a reaction to the GATT’s neoliberal policies, the movement has protested against the concentration of genetic resources in the hands of multi-national agribusinesses, against GMOs, against World Bank land reform policies, and against the expansion of free trade areas. All the while it has battled for agrarian and land reforms, indigenous peoples’ rights, for peasant human rights, for environmental protection, for increased democracy, and for gender equality. It is hard to say whether the movement has become more or less powerful in terms of concrete policy changes, but it is evident that the expansion of the issue base has increased the number of organizations that belong to the movement. It has also caused internal fractures between more moderate voices and more radical groups (Desmarais, 2003:23).

The Via Campesina has, over its 11 year history, evolved considerably - increasing membership, diversifying its issues, and gaining notoriety. But its international character and global message for social change have not been weakened.

1.3.2 The International Land Coalition (ILC)

The International Land Coalition is an NGO founded, originally as the Popular Coalition to end Hunger and Poverty, as the result of an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) conference held in 1995. Hosted in the IFAD headquarters in Rome, the ILC describes itself and work as “a global alliance of intergovernmental, governmental and civil-society organizations...[that] works together with the rural poor to increase their secure access to natural resources, especially land, and to enable them to participate directly in policy and decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods at local, national, regional and international levels” (ILC, website a).

The ILC is governed by an Assembly of Members and a Coalition Council, with a secretariat hosted by IFAD. In addition, the ILC is composed of ad hoc committees and “action groups.” The Assembly of Members is the “supreme” governance body, and is composed of all
organizations that have "member" status including ASOCODE, ANGOC, FAO, World Bank, and IFAD. The assembly takes the larger decisions of strategy and policy, while the Coalition Council is the executive board of the coalition and is responsible for the overall governance of the Coalition. The Council is composed of 13 civil society and international organizations. The secretariat is responsible for management, operations and administrative services (ILC, website a).

The membership of the ILC covers a broad range of actors. The Coalition writes that, “the strength of the Coalition lies precisely in the different spheres of influence of its partners” (ILC, website b). The founding members of the ILC included five international organizations: IFAD, the World Bank, the World Food Program (WFP), the European Commission, and FAO; as well as nine civil society organizations from Asia, Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Since 1995, the membership and activities of the ILC have expanded significantly, as of 2004 more than 150 organizations were classified as partners, members, donors or affiliates. NGOs, regional alliances, national governments, peasant and farmer organizations, international organizations and universities are just some of the bodies involved in the ILC.38 The ILC notes that, “the participating organizations, while diverse in nature and mandate, share a common belief that rural people must be empowered to be effective agents of their own development” (ILC, website a).

Despite the Landless People’s Movement of South Africa partnership agreement with the ILC, more radical peasant movements are not well represented in the ILC ranks. Via Campesina and MST are noticeably absent from the Coalition. Bruce Moore, the ILC Coordinator, mentioned in his 2003 statement to the Session of the Governing Council of IFAD, however, that “relations have also been established with Via Campesina and outreach is being extended to other associations of fisherfolk and rural people” (Moore, 2003b).

The ILC operates six programs that address interconnected issues of land: the Knowledge Program to raise awareness amongst the poor of their rights, the Network Support Program to strengthen civil society networks at the national level, the Community Empowerment Facility to strengthen capacity of the poor to gain and maintain access to land including institutional strengthening of CSOs, the Women’s Resource Access Program to increase international understanding of women’s access rights, the Common Platform Program to elaborate the Common Platform on Access to Land, and the Land Alliances for National Development (ILC, website b).

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38 Beside those mentioned above, members also include CONTAG from Brazil, Fundación Tierra from Bolivia, International Federation of Farmers (IFAP), the Brazilian INCRA, the National Land Committee from South Africa, OXFAM and USAID, just to name a few.
One of the ILC’s more prominent activities was its involvement with the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002. The ILC brought together many of its members and partners at the summit, and gave them the floor during the discussions. As a result, they say, access to land features prominently in the WSSD final declarations (ILC, website c).

At WSSD, the ILC took the opportunity to present its Common Platform on Access to Land. The Common Platform was developed through consultations with partner organizations and associations in order to “unite concerned organizations in a concerted effort to empower the rural poor through access to land and greater participation in the decisions affecting their livelihoods” (ILC, 2002:2). The specific recommendations are too numerous to mention, but the goals of the common platform are to mainstream the discussion on land and build a broad-based support for land tenure reform by “leveraging the moral persuasion and financing conditions of international organizations in order to place land and resource rights on national agendas” (ILC, 2002:12,13).39

As the ILC continues to expand, it has developed the Land Alliances for National Development (LAND Partnerships). The program’s goals are to alleviate rural poverty by strengthening the partnerships between actors at local, national, and international levels. By strengthening the alliances between these actors, the program hopes to create a consensus on the problems facing the rural poor in national contexts and mobilize support for actions to solve the problems. The ILC’s role is to support the alliances by mobilizing resources and facilitating the solutions through its already existing programs (ILC, 2003).

To highlight the ideological characteristics of the ILC, it is useful to quote Borras differentiation between the ILC and Via Campesina: “the Via Campesina takes on neo-liberal policies as presenting a threat to the peasantry, while the ILC, or at least its leadership and secretariat, considers it an opportunity.” He also writes that the “conflict-free” arena that the ILC creates may not do much to eliminate the power imbalances, especially since the larger organizations have more financial control (Borras, 2004:21).

39 Via Campesina issued this statement at the WSSD August 2002 stating its unhappiness with the ILC approach: “In the framework of more effective alliances among stakeholders, initiatives like the “Common Platform on Access to Land” count on the moral persuasion and financial conditions of international organizations to place land on national agendas. Such alliances are worthless for the rural poor since the engagement of intergovernmental organizations like the World Bank in land policies has not taken into account the demands of landless and small farmers organizations and has been often more damaging than helping in improving the access to land for the rural poor” (Via Campesina, 2002a).
Another distinction between the ILC and Via Campesina is evident in a passage written by Bruce Moore, the ILC Coordinator. He writes that the

"common ground that unites stakeholders to the cause of resource rights all too quickly fades as the modalities for implementation are debated...There is also a need to test emerging land tenure markets (negotiated/market assisted, sharecropping, leasing, corporate farming) to understand the features of these forms of land use that can provide the opportunity for the poor to gain and maintain access to land and related assets” (Moore, 2001:9,10).

The Via Campesina is united by a refusal of the market-assisted reforms, the “modalities” of reform are very important to the movement. This does not mean, however, that there is no space for dissent in the ILC, and active involvement by peasant movements - coupled with research - could sway the coalition. While the ILC is criticized by some, the coalition could provide an important opportunity for peasant movements to make their views known by a diverse and potentially powerful group of actors.

Chapter Conclusion

The above examination of the roles and methods of international organizations, peasant movements, and international alliance shows the increasingly international nature of agrarian and land reforms policy deliberation. The peasant movements highlighted in the case studies represent contemporary reactions to age-old problems of land inequality and a shift towards commercialized farming. The international alliances for agrarian and land reforms present new opportunities for peasant movements to engage international organizations and increase public awareness of the problems of agrarian and land reforms in their countries. This point and strategies towards international organizations will be explored further in the second chapter
2. Peasant movements and international organizations: Strategies for influencing effective agrarian and land reforms.

Chapter Introduction

"Land reform is back on the agenda because rural populations have put it there"

- (FAO, 1996)

Engaging international organizations and persuading them to change policy is not an easy undertaking. International organizations wield considerable power, and their support can bring worldwide attention and resources to a specific issue. The peasant movements discussed above have interacted with international organizations, and their positions regarding the work of the organizations should be clear. These movements must, however, contend with firmly entrenched power structures as never before - at all levels, local, national and international - all requiring new strategies to make their views on agrarian and land reforms a reality.

As Solon Barraclough writes, "The state cannot be expected to adopt policies benefiting a fragmented and unorganized peasantry at the expense of landlords and other groups on whom it depends for support" (1991:130). Peasant movements must, therefore, find new avenues to influence national governments. International organizations now play an increasingly important role in domestic affairs, and peasant movements - though often opposed to the policies of these organizations - must consider them in an overall strategy for enacting effective agrarian and land reforms.

An overview of the current strategies employed by peasant movements in relation to interacting with international organizations will be presented here. This will be followed by a discussion of three major issues that could be used to unite peasant movements in a common position from which to lobby international organizations. Finally, an examination of strategies peasant movements could implement to influence international organizations and several recommendations will be presented.

2.1 Current peasant movement strategies for interaction with international organizations

Peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms have, over time, taken on a variety of strategies in dealing with states. In an increasingly internationalized political environment, national peasant movements and their international alliances have developed strategies
directed at international organizations. The peasant movements examined in the above case studies and the Via Campesina’s strategy vis-à-vis international organizations will be examined here. This will be followed by a brief justification for engaging international organizations, and doing so from a coordinated and unified position.

Webster notes that the “objectives of social movements are to change policies, their implementation and their outcomes, rather to demand the retreat of the state and government from ‘their’ locality” (2004:2). In regards to international organizations, this generalization holds only for some. The peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms are calling for the retreat of some international organizations from their state, like the WTO. As for others like the FAO and World Bank, they employ a more nuanced approach.

Adapting Webster’s formulation, there are three typologies for interaction between peasant movements and international organizations: cooperation, negotiation or contestation (2004:15). Contestation takes the form of demonstrations, direct action and civil disobedience, among others. Negotiation and cooperation have been sensitive forms of interaction for peasant movements fearing political manipulation. Nonetheless, they have been employed to a certain extent.

The peasant movements examined in the above case studies vary significantly. The national movements are struggling against specific injustices and for specific goals. They all, however, have recognized the very international character of agrarian and land reforms processes that have developed since the creation of Bretton Woods institutions and other international organizations. For the most part, the individual national movements employ a strategy of contestation with regard to international organizations, and the movements have only made limited attempts for negotiation with international organizations.

The LPM has primarily employed a strategy of contestation towards international organizations in relation to their domestic effects. Mass protests and rallies are the LPM’s preferred method of contestation; the important protests outside of the UN WCAR meeting are a good example. With regards to the World Bank, the movement decries the land reform process and demands the removal of the World Bank from the South African land redistribution process. However, the LPM’s affiliation with the ILC shows some willingness to engage if not negotiate with international organizations in order to change World Bank land reform policies (ILC, 2004).

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40 It should be noted that Webster disagrees with the use of the term “peasant movement” and prefers “rural social movement” or “landless movement” etc. (Webster, 2004:20).
The KMP fiercely contests the WTO and World Bank policies in Philippines and shows little room for negotiation with these organizations. The movement has, however, shown a willingness to engage the FAO. As an example, the movement has taken a leading role in the Peoples’ Caravan for Food Sovereignty, and was a signatory to the open letter to the FAO Director General (FAO, 2004a). While these campaigns battle against current FAO policy, they do show an openness to the organization, much like other peasant movements.

Similarly, the MST approaches international organizations from the standpoint of contestation and selected negotiations. In the international arena, the movement has been at the forefront of the Via Campesina, and has not made many domestic overtures to international organizations. Taking part in the protests against the WTO and the eventual negotiations in Washington in 2002, the movement has employed the approach of contestation and negotiation favored by the Via Campesina (Desmarais, 2004:13). The movement’s main form of contestation is their land occupations, which have brought international attention to the movements. They have not, however, drawn any official support from international organizations.

As the Via Campesina is the only international representation for many peasant movements, its strategies are very important to consider, and also discuss the debate over participation. The Via Campesina has also employed a strategy of contestation and negotiation to international organizations. Desmarais summarizes the Via Campesina strategy towards international organizations:

“The Via Campesina also engages with international institutions involved in defining agricultural and food policies. However, the Via Campesina approaches engagement in numerous ways. In attempts to prevent or change policies and institutions that are hostile to peasants’ and small farmers’ interests, the Via Campesina will engage in mobilization, mass demonstrations, and even direct action. Only in certain contexts where there is adequate space for negotiation will the Via Campesina cooperate and collaborate to effect favourable policy changes. The Via Campesina, however, stresses that negotiation must always be accompanied by mobilization” (2003:23).

Borras calls the Via Campesina’s strategy of negotiating with contestation a wise choice for disputing the “neo-liberal land policies” and promoting “pro-poor agrarian reform” (2004:22). The strategy of public mobilization capitalizes on the Via Campesina’s most powerful resource - the millions of farmers that it represents. The public mobilizations against certain
organizations have brought considerable attention to the effects of neoliberal policies. Some of the movement’s most powerful demonstrations against neoliberalism were staged in Seattle, Genoa, and Cancun (Kingsnorth, 2003). The question remains, whether the movement’s activities have brought enough worldwide attention to the more complex issues agrarian and land reforms.

Though the Via Campesina has shown a certain willingness to involve itself in negotiations with some international organizations, the FAO for example, it is sensitive to the legitimizing effect of its participation. The movement’s independence is paramount to its strategy, and fear of capitulating to policies that they see as harmful runs through the movement. Desmarais writes that, “the Via Campesina would rather give up ‘participation’ in certain international forums than compromise its commitments...” (2003:26). This rational shows the movement’s awareness that it might be manipulated by international organizations. Desmarais clarifies the issue of participation and the willingness of Via Campesina to participate with select organizations:

"The Via Campesina’s participation in the WTO would most certainly have contributed to legitimizing the institution’s reach into agriculture and food — something that the Via Campesina adamantly opposed. By working within the FAO — a relatively more farmer-friendly institution than the WTO — the Via Campesina could potentially help shift power dynamics between the FAO and other major agencies like the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO”(2003:21).

Although worries of manipulation and legitimization may deter peasant movements from engaging international organizations, there are also many benefits. International organizations carry substantial moral power, not to mention financial mobilization. Many states are constrained by agreements with international organizations, and if peasant movements can make inroads with these bodies, the movement will have much more bargaining power vis-à-vis the state and its institutions. This does not mean abandoning the ideals of the movement, but strengthening and enlarging it.

Movements for agrarian and land reforms have an interest in engaging international organizations, and there are several central issues that can have important impacts on effecting genuine agrarian and land reforms. Coordinating a coherent, unified position on a central issue can give the peasant movements important weight vis-à-vis international organizations and therefore their national governments. The issues of removing the WTO from agriculture, family farming, and food sovereignty will be discussed below with the hope of determining a central point for engaging international organizations.
As is the case of the international organizations, the Via Campesina involves many points of view regarding international organizations. They range from calling for reforms to calling for the abolition of some organizations (Desmarais, 2003:22). Via Campesina includes indigenous people movements that call for autonomy and land, it involves movements calling for an end to GMO agriculture, and it involves movements with grander ideals of social justice and transformation. The various views that are assembled in the movement may give it more international exposure, but perhaps the movement should unite on a common fight for an issue that encompasses all the related issues. This will be explored below, by focusing on three important issues: removing the WTO from agriculture, food sovereignty or family farming in order to advance its cause within international organizations.

2.2 Central strategic issues for influencing agrarian and land reforms

There are many possible issues around which peasant movements can unite, and three of the most significant in terms of land reform and agrarian reform are examined here. The issues of food sovereignty, removing the WTO from agriculture, and family farming are often used in the rhetoric of peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms. Creating a unified and coherent position from which to lobby international organizations will serve the peasant movements well. Here, the issues will be explored and their importance for persuading reform will be considered.

It is not the purpose of the paper to recommend one of the above issues as a central issue, but rather to explore them and their effects on agrarian and land reforms implementation.

2.2.1 Food Sovereignty

The concept of food sovereignty represents one of the most popular campaigns to change agrarian structures and promote a new concept of food security. The concept of food sovereignty has consistently gained ground in the international arenas. First developed and presented by the Via Campesina in 1996, the idea was introduced in the NGO parallel sessions of the FAO WFS, and subsequently in the WFS:fyl in 2002 (UNCHR, 2004:10).

The concept is still developing and has not been the subject of much academic research (UNCHR, 2004:10). Proponents of food sovereignty argue that national governments have lost their power to regulate agriculture policies because of binding international commitments like
the WTO Agreement on Agriculture to the detriment of the agricultural producers and consumers. Food sovereignty is defined by the People's Food Sovereignty network (PFS) as:

"The right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture; to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives; to determine the extent to which they want to be self-reliant; [and] to restrict the dumping of [agricultural] products on their markets" (PFS, 2001).

As the concept evolved, a set of requirements were developed to ensure food sovereignty, which are important to mention as they show the movements’ formulation of concrete actions:

- "Placing priority on food production for domestic and local markets, based on peasant and family farmer diversified and agro-ecologically based production systems;
- Ensuring fair prices for farmers, which means the power to protect internal markets from low-priced, dumped imports;
- Access to land, water, forests, fishing areas and other productive resources through genuine redistribution;
- Recognition and promotion of the women’s role in food production and equitable access and control over productive resources;
- Community control over productive resources, as opposed to corporate ownership of land, water, and genetic and other resources;
- Protecting seed, the basis of food and life itself, for the free exchange and use of farmers, which means no patents on life and a moratorium on the genetically modified crops; and,
- Public investment in support for the productive activities of families, and communities, geared toward empowerment, local control and production of food for people and local markets” (UNCHR, 2004:11).

It is important to mention, that this framework for food sovereignty does not aim at eliminating the agricultural trade, but rather to give producers more control (UNCHR, 2004:13). Each country, proponents argue, should have more control over the extent to which they depend on food imports or domestic production. Trade should serve "the rights of peoples’ safe, healthy, and ecologically sustainable production” according to concept advocates (PFS, 2001). The concept is a clear rejection of the current trend towards increased corporate control of farming and trade.
Two international alliances have led the fight for food sovereignty. The Peoples’ Food Sovereignty Network (PFS) is more an outlet for opposition to the current agrarian structure than a coordinating body. The PFS includes many peasant movements including the KMP and Via Campesina in its ranks. Meanwhile, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) has taken the lead in pushing the concept in the FAO. The membership of the IPC covers all continents and includes the Via Campesina, ANGOC, ROPPA, and Food First among others, with a liaison office in Rome. This organization was created in anticipation of the WSF:fyl, where it was very active in the NGO/CSO sessions for Food Sovereignty. The IPC serves as a pressure group and serves as “a mechanism for diffusion of information and capacity building” (IPC, 2004). The Via Campesina is, as shown, a strong advocate for food sovereignty and writes that “food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security.”(2002b:8).

Of the peasant movements profiled above, the KMP is one of the most active proponents for food sovereignty, leading the Peoples Caravan. The MST has also included food sovereignty in its strategies for improving the livelihoods of peasant farmers that have been settled after land occupations (MST, 2004e). The LPM, on the other hand, has not made any proclamations supporting the concept.

Although the term food sovereignty did not appear in the final official declarations of the 1996 WFS or the 2002 WFS, it did figure prominently in the Statement by the NGO Forum to the World Food Summit. The statement declares, “each nation must have the right to food sovereignty to achieve the level of food sufficiency...market forces at national and international levels will not, by themselves resolve the problem of food insecurity” (FAO, 1997;58). Over 400 NGOs, CSOs, and peasant organizations signed the WSF Statement in 1996, from the developed and developing countries. Via Campesina that the statement missed the mark and did not include any provisions or steps for implementing the concept, and thuy refused to sign the statement (Desmarais, 2003:28).

In its statement rejecting the WFS:fyl final declaration, the Via Campesina outlines their plan to achieve Food Sovereignty which includes strengthening social movements, advancing regional and international solidarity and cooperation, struggling for agrarian reform, and ensuring equal access of women (Via Campesina, 2002b).

The concept has gained significant ground in international organizations as well. The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food for the UN Commission on Human Rights, Jean Zeigler, devoted much of his report to the UN Economic Social and Cultural Rights Commission on the Right to Food to food sovereignty. He writes that “food sovereignty offers an alternative vision
that puts food security first and treats trade as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself” (UNCHR, 2004:13). In the recommendations made to the Human Rights Commission, Zeigler states that “food sovereignty [should] be considered as an alternative model for agriculture and agricultural trade...” (UNCHR, 2004:19)

The FAO has been relatively supportive of the concept and financed the side panels on food sovereignty referenced above. Jacques Diouf responded to the open letter that accused the FAO of turning its back on Food Sovereignty by concentrating the increasing number of countries conserving their genetic resources, and that the Heads of State and Government at the WFS reaffirmed “the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food” (FAO, 2004a). Moreover, during the FAO World Food Day 2004 activities, the FAO housed the Civil Society Forum on Agro-Biodiversity “What Policies for Biodiversity and Food Sovereignty? Civil Society Views Of Opportunities and Threats” (FAO, website).

Agrarian and land reform plays a major role in the movement for food sovereignty. One of the pillars of the concept is that people should enjoy equitable access to land, seeds, water, and credit. Zeigler writes that, “[t]his implies challenging existing relations of power and distribution, through for example, engaging in agrarian reform” (UNCHR, 2004:12). Moreover, the signatories to the Peoples’ Food Sovereignty Alternative Framework demand that governments “implement genuine agrarian reform and ensure the rights of peasants to crucial assets such as land, seed, water and other resources” (PFS, 2001).

The concept of food sovereignty is an important and coherent issue that presents a powerful central issue for peasant movements to influence international organizations. The concept is far-reaching and includes elements of agrarian and land reforms. It is well supported by many actors including parts of the UN, like the FAO and the advocates within the UN Commission on Human Rights. Choosing food sovereignty as a central issue for influencing international organizations may be a wise choice considering the support (albeit tepid) it has received from the FAO and UNCHR. The concept fits the definition of agrarian reform and implies land reform.

2.2.2 Removing the WTO from Agriculture

Arguing that the WTO has gone too far in liberalizing agricultural trade, many peasant movements rally around removing agricultural products from the purview of the organization.\footnote{For a thorough examination of the Via Campesina and WTO see Desmarais (2003).}
The WTO’s Agreement on Agriculture, as shown above, adheres to the view that liberalizing all trade will benefit countries because each country will produce according to their comparative advantage. For a country endowed with labor (most developing countries), this means that they will produce labor intensive goods; while countries endowed with capital (developed countries) will produce capital intensive goods. This implies a general shift of agricultural production towards developing countries, and lower prices for agricultural goods. As an example, the WTO lists “food is cheaper” as one of the benefits of increased liberalization of markets (WTO, 2003).

The problem according to the many peasant movements opposing the WTO policies is that they open-up poor countries to “dumping” from developed countries with highly productive agricultural systems. Moreover, the Agreement on Agriculture obligates all countries to lower protective tariffs and import a certain amount of the national agricultural consumption.

Marcel Mazoyer summarizes one argument against the comparative advantage model of agricultural production that hinges on falling agricultural prices:

“[T]he current strategy to combat under-nutrition and nutritional deficiencies which consists in lowering agricultural prices to facilitate access to food by poor consumers and purchasers appears to be singly misguided; firstly, because the majority of those suffering under-nutrition are not purchasers and consumers of food, but rather producers and sellers of agricultural goods who have been reduced to extreme poverty through falling agricultural prices; secondly, because the poverty and under-nutrition of non-farmers are indirectly but largely due the impoverishment of under-equipped small farming communities” (Mazoyer, 2001).

The evolution of the world agricultural trade has driven down world prices. The lower prices mean less income for poor farmers that have been unable to mechanize production causing many to migrate to cities or sell more and more of their harvests just too renew their fields and tools (Mazoyer, 2001). The Via Campesina summarizes the peasant dilemma: “As cheap food imports flood local markets, peasant and farm families can no longer produce food for their own families and communities and are driven from the land...Local and traditional foods are being replaced by low priced, often poorer quality, imported foodstuffs” (Via Campesina, 2000).

The advance of neoliberal policies on agriculture has united many diverse groups. Farmers from the North and South have demanded the retreat of the WTO from agricultural policy since
the inception of the GATT (Desmarais, 2003:3). This call to action against WTO agricultural policies has been an effective rallying point, lead by the Via Campesina.

Opposing the WTO’s Agreement on Agriculture is an umbrella issue opposing the “global governance over food, genetic resources, natural resources, and agricultural markets” (Desmarais, 2003:20). The undemocratic nature of the WTO negotiations has opened it up to criticism from many fronts. Borras notes that the Via Campesina does not believe in reforming the WTO, or in abolishing it (2004:10). The Via Campesina’s membership covers many positions regarding the WTO, and Desmarais notes that their position was an internal compromise between the radical groups calling for an abolition of the WTO and those more moderate calling for a reform of the WTO, such as the CPE. The resulting position called for the removal of the WTO from agricultural trade and giving power to the more democratic UN (2003:22). The Via Campesina position is a pragmatic solution to the WTO issue, as the movement recognizes that the abolition of the WTO is unlikely.

Removing the WTO from agricultural trade has gained widespread support amongst the current peasants for agrarian and land reforms. The KMP writes that the WTO is “eradicating the Philippine peasantry” (1999:6). The MST echoes these sentiments, and Stedile states, ”We are against the WTO, and against the monopolization of world agricultural trade” (Stedile, 2002). The LPM has not made any specific statements against the WTO, but its new membership in the Via Campesina implies its agreement with the position.

The effects of removing agriculture from the WTO on land redistribution are not clear. Removing the WTO from agriculture is part of a larger agrarian reform project. Removing the obligation to import food and allowing countries to put up protective barriers to international trade cannot guarantee a more equitable distribution on land. Removing the WTO from agriculture may give peasants more power domestically, but this is not guaranteed. But, national agrarian and land reforms, if coupled with increased national power over their international trade regimes could raise the price of agricultural products which would increase the incentive for farmers to stay on the land and may even encourage urban residents to move to the country side.42

Removing the WTO from agriculture has been a consistent demand of peasant movements, especially those affiliated with the Via Campesina. However, as the sophistication and complexity of the movements has evolved so has the international agricultural trade climate. The WTO is widely supported by governments and business, especially major multinational agri-

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42 See Mazoyer (2001) for a detailed examination of the role agricultural prices play for peasant farmers.
businesses. The issue may be an important component of a worldwide agrarian change, but it may not make much progress with regards to influencing international organizations. The issue may be too specific to direct international debate on agrarian and land reforms. However, opposition to the WTO appears as though it will remain in the arsenal of peasant movements, and as such, incorporating the removal of the WTO from agriculture can be an important component of any campaign for agrarian reform.

After considering the removal of the WTO from agriculture and the advocacy of food sovereignty, it is important to consider a more basic central issue for influencing international organizations. The issue of family farming will be discussed below as a potential central strategic issue.

2.2.3 Family Farming

"A real agrarian reform will place family farming in the center of agricultural policies that will not just limit themselves to land tenure... agrarian reform is a means to strengthen family agriculture, not just an end in itself... What have the attempts at changing agrarian policies been useful for if the young population cannot reproduce family agriculture in the future?" (Guanziroli, 1998:49)

Focusing on a strategy of rebuilding family farming sector would have important impacts on land distribution and agrarian systems, as well as peasant well-being. Family farming is the oldest form of agricultural production and the most at risk in the present climate. Many argue that the current trend towards commercial farming and increased liberalization of the agricultural sector is pushing family farms towards extinction.43

Mazoyer explains the "crisis of the peasantry" in simple terms (1997:602-617, 2001). He argues that the lower world agricultural prices as a result of increased production capacities and market liberalization has led farmers (most of whom use manual techniques) to sell more and more of their crops just to replenish seeds (and possibly buy a new tool) and possibly leave the land in search of "off-farm" income opportunities. Farmers that cannot make enough income from selling their harvests to replenish their fields "can only survive at the price of decapitalization (sale of livestock, fewer and poorly maintained farm implements), under-consumption (farmers in rags and barefoot), under-nutrition and soon outmigration".

Mazoyer’s analysis shows that family farmers today are much less competitive as compared to the past, and that the “green revolution”, while causing huge leaps in agricultural production of those ready to take advantage of the progresses, skipped most of the world’s small farms. According to Mazoyer, only 2% of the world’s farmers enjoy the use of a tractor, while half of the non-mechanized farmers use animal traction, and that the rest rely on manual tools (2001).

In terms of agricultural production, however, small farms have been shown to be more productive than large farms, in fact an inverse relationship exists between production/hectare and plot size (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 1997:8) (Rosset, 1999). The family farm is also the most sustainable farming system thanks to its production density and renewable management of seeds and natural fertilizers. Rosset explains that small farms tend to mix their crops, thus taking advantage of the space in between crop rows and using natural techniques to eliminate weeds and pests (1999:5-10). Taking advantage of indigenous knowledge and avoiding the monoculture style of production often practiced by commercial farms, family farms are 2 - 10 times more productive per unit area than commercial farms (Rosset, 1999:7).44 Family farms’ higher production is a result of the density of their crops, but also because of the farm laborers have more incentive to work because they receive part of the harvest, and also because they are affected by poor results (Guanziroli, 1998:39).

An important trait of family farms is their ability to adapt to changing technologies, demands, and ecological conditions, unlike their commercial counterparts. Groppo writes, “historically, the large commercial farms with salaried employees have proven to be unable to confront the variable conditions of the agricultural sector” (1997) [author’s translation]. Moreover, as the MST has shown, family farms can be transformed into successful producers that in turn can run small businesses, perhaps through cooperatives.

Family farms have a certain mystique in society. Commentators from all points on the political spectrum have hailed family farms for reasons of economic efficiency, social cohesion, food security, and ecological sustainability among others.45 The proponents of family farming run the gamut of political persuasion and ideology, in developing and developed countries.46 The consensus on the advantages of family farming can be seized and used in national campaigns for agrarian and land reforms.

44 FAO (1998) notes that multinational agribusinesses have started contracting farms to families, recognizing their superior production system.
45 See for example: (Guanziroli, 1998), (Rosset, 1999), (FAO, 1998), (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 1997), (INCRCA, 2004), (Deininger, 1999), and (World Bank, 2003).
46 See for example the National Family Farm Coalition in the United States or the Confederation Paysanne in France.
The MST and Via Campesina have both argued in favor of family farms as part of their fight against neoliberal policies and more specifically against multinational agribusiness. The Land Chart developed by CONTAG and signed by the MST, writes that as part of their campaign for a radical change in land holdings and power distribution, family production must take a central role. The Land Chart argues that in order for facilitate family farming, policies of credit, technical assistance, and minimum prices for agricultural production must be assured (CONTAG, 2003). As mentioned above, the LPM has also listed supporting “small-scale” farming as one of its demands for post-reform South Africa (LPM, 2001b).

The Via Campesina argues that the large commercial farms do not assure food security and that promoting family farming is essential to peasant well-being. Promoting family farming will, argues Via Campesina, reduce the dependency on these multinational corporations, increase food security, reduce environmental degradation, reverse the concentration of genetic resources (such as seeds) in the multinationals, and raise agricultural prices for producers (Via Campesina, 2002b).

International organizations have not embraced the concept of family farming per se. While the FAO has recognized the utility and social impacts of family farming, it has not taken an official position on promoting an agricultural system based on family farms (FAO, 1996). Groppo writes in La FAO y la Reforma Agraria en América Latina: Hacia una Nueva Visión that the FAO believes that an agrarian reform not based on family farming will be limited and without historical consideration (1997:7). The World Bank has emphasized owner operated farms and accepted the higher productivity of small farms (World Bank 2003: 2003:xxvii-xlvi). Peasant movements, however, argue that the World Bank’s land reform programs have only increased the power of commercial farming, and so small, family farms are being driven out of existence.

Choosing family farming as a central issue for influencing international organizations has a precedent of success. The case of Brazil is illuminating. The MST places family farming in the center of their efforts for agrarian and land reforms, and they have pressured the government to figure family farming prominently in agriculture policy. On this point, Guanzirolì writes,

"Without the actions of the MST and the permanent pressure from the CONTAG there would not have been an agrarian reform like the one that began in 1993, nor would the demands for a deepening of the differentiated policy in favor of family farming" (1998:44).

The II PNRA places family farming in the center of its approach to agrarian reform and even notes that "family farming, even with all the weight of its difficulties, shows that it is a sector
that produces, uses and responds rapidly to public policies and guarantees production...During the entire decade of the 1990’s family farming increased productivity more than commercial farming” (INCRA, 2003:13).

Promoting family farming can have direct effects on agrarian reform and land reform. Family farms will necessitate a deconcentration of land, through redistribution, in order to ensure their productivity and avoid minifundism (Rosset, 1999:11-12). It must be noted, as Groppo points out, that promoting family farming is not a cure-all strategy for effective agrarian reform (1997). Moreover, peasant heterogeneity requires agrarian reform plans to develop local-level diagnostics (Guanziroli, 1998:49). But, placing family farms in the forefront of peasant movement struggles will promote an equitable distribution of land, and also over time reverse the negative effects of concentrated agricultural production.

Promoting family farms is an intelligent rallying point for promoting agrarian and land reforms. Building a common front on the issue of family farming will satisfy the definition of agrarian reform and land reform described above. Changing the agrarian structure to concentrate on family farms will increase the quantity of production and perhaps quality over time, it will also improve peasant well being, as Rosset shows. It will also necessitate a land reform through redistribution and tenancy reform. Although there are also many groups, such as commercial farmers, that might oppose moves towards strengthening the family farm sector, there are many advocates of the issue and strong justifications behind it.

International organizations have provided the justification for choosing family farming as a central strategic issue. The World Bank and the FAO acknowledge their superior productivity and sustainability. Peasant movements have argued that family farms can repair the negative social effects of commercial farming. If peasant movements choose family farming as a central issue from which to influence international organizations, they will have not only moral arguments in favor, but also economic justifications - which may be more important.

2.3 Influencing international organizations

The peasant movements examined and their international alliances make contesting international organizations a centerpiece of their strategies. However, these movements would be wise to engage the international organizations to fight along side them for genuine agrarian reform in their countries and throughout the world. The moral, political and financial clout of international organizations make them important actors in domestic affairs. If
peasant movements can persuade the international organizations to champion their causes and direct the international discourse to the plight of landless and peasant farmers, the peasant movements will have considerably more domestic power.

Power redistribution within countries, along with a new international trade regime, may be one way of resolving the problems of the world’s peasants, but it will take much effort from many actors to enact these changes without violence. The strategies examined here promote profound change without revolution. They are strategies for peasant movements to influence international organizations, and thusly their national governments to implement far-reaching and long-lasting agrarian and land reforms.

There is a certain willingness in peasant movements to engage with the United Nations and the FAO, while excluding others entirely. Peasant movements must recognize that all international organizations are the sum of their parts. As Borras points out, “these agencies are comprised of various actors that have different and, at times, conflicting and competing agendas” (2004:19). The key is to engage pro-reform actors within organizations. Again, as Borras writes,

“The challenge for transnational social movements such as Via Campesina is how to continue to engage with pro-reform actors within these institutions rather than the institution as a whole, so as to create cleavages within these agencies, isolating the anti-reform actors, while winning over, expanding and consolidating the ranks of pro-reform actors, and supporting the latter in their struggle against the anti-reform forces within their agencies and in other intergovernmental entities” (2004:19).

The researcher Michel Merlet of the Institut de Recherches et d'Applications des Méthodes de Développement (IRAM) has studied the question of promoting agrarian reform extensively. At the World Social Forum of 2002, Merlet outlined a set of actions that peasant movements should employ in order to make their demand of agrarian reform a reality. He writes that the agrarian reform desired by peasant movements can be carried out if movements and organizations adopt the following actions:

- Create experience exchange networks between peasant organizations with support of researchers and experts;
- Promote education and training programs about land issues, establishing research methodologies for land questions;
- Lobby international organizations, bilateral cooperation to obtain space for proposals and innovation for alternative economic and agricultural policies;
- Create urban-peasant alliances that stress urban interests (food quality, the environment, rural management, urban poverty and rural wage linkages);
- Promote the inclusion of land use and distribution in the agendas of the global problems, making sure that the problem is framed as causing world poverty (Merlet, 2002). [authors translation]

Merlet’s recommendations are interesting because they promote the inclusion of the land issue in the larger dialogue on social ills. They create linkages between interest groups, and also promote a strengthening of the peasant movements internally.

It is important to remember the way decisions are made in international organizations. In addition to lobbying international organizations as Merlet suggests, peasant movements can lobby within their countries and raise awareness of the problems of land concentration and the problems with the current agrarian systems nationally and internationally.

It is important to point out that international organizations are driven by their member-states, although power is often de facto or de jure unbalanced. In the World Bank and the IMF, operational power is allocated by voting rights which are proportional to the amount of money contributed to the organizations by member states. This results in the United States wielding approximately 17% voting power with in the directive bodies of the organizations (World Bank, website) (IMF, website). The FAO, on the other hand, uses a one-member-one-vote system in its FAO Conference, the supreme governing body of the organization - so in effect developing countries should have more say (FAO, 2004). This allocation of power amongst the developed countries should drive peasant movements to lobby and increase awareness raising programs in developed countries. The MST has done this, and several international support groups for the movement exist, in the United States, France and Italy, for example.47

47 For example the Friends of the MST organization based in the United States organized the ”First North American Meeting” on 14 November 2004.
Peasant movements have an interest in allying as many supporters as possible to their causes, as long as their independence can be assured. As part of a campaign to influence international organizations, the movements should not be too quick to deny participation in the ILC. The peasant movements should engage the ILC in dialogue on their views of land redistribution policies and use the wide membership of the coalition to push its agendas forward in a neutral environment. The movements can engage in pro-reform actors through the coalition, and use the networks created by the coalition to attract more reformist organizations to its side and work to develop national agrarian reform plans following the movements’ principles.

Movements must also strengthen domestically and continue pressuring their governments, as well as increasing awareness of their problems throughout their country. This is a historical opportunity for peasant movements to influence national and international debate on agrarian and land reforms. In the past, peasant movements were mobilizing under authoritative regimes, and the result was often revolution or extreme repression. Most peasant movements are now acting in democratic environments. In all the cases studied, the formal organized peasant movements were born under democratic governments. The MST solidified after the fall of the military dictatorship, the LPM grew out of frustration with their democratically elected government, and the KMP emerged as a newly democratic government was taking power after years of dictatorship.

Increased democratic opportunities coupled with technological advances give peasant movements a unique opportunity to coordinate amongst themselves and raise awareness around the world. This means that peasant movements now have more power than ever to influence the direction of their countries’ agrarian structures and the international economic system.

The MST is a successful case of pushing their agenda on the national government. As mentioned above, the da Silva government has placed agrarian reform in the spotlight and issued an agrarian reform program. The KMP has been outright hostile to the Philippine government, but has been very successful in drawing peasant support for their aims throughout the country. Moreover, its alliance with the Anakpawis Party shows the movements willingness to engage in politics as a way to alter agrarian and land policies. The LPM, though young, has been very successful in merging their campaign for land redistribution into the larger international context. It is important for the movement, however, to include their struggle into a larger scope of agrarian reform in South Africa. Unfortunately, its pressure on the South African government has not produced many results.
In order to be effective, peasant movements must formulate counter-proposals for reform and not resort to merely rhetoric. In relation to Brazilian peasant movements in the mid 1900’s, Groppo notes that they did not create effective proposals for change (1997). Contemporary peasant movements must remember this point and organize comprehensive, coherent, and compelling proposals for agrarian and land reforms in national contexts.

In order to create the vast agrarian changes that the movements have pushed for, it seems useful to develop comprehensive national agrarian reform plans in concert with international objectives, but developed at the local level. As Groppo points out, ”an agrarian reform cannot be imposed on the rural sector...[it is] a social product” (1997) [author’s translation]. By elaborating national agrarian reforms developed at the local level and in concert with international objectives, peasant movements will be able lobby international organizations from a much stronger and coherent position. The Via Campesina, for example, could provide a medium for coordinating the national reform programs, and establishing the common international objectives.

Considering that the goal of the peasant movements is foremost land redistribution, the movements’ agrarian reform programs should include land reform strategies. And seeing as though, most peasant movements for land reform are rallying against the World Bank market-assisted land reform, it would be advantageous for them to study the strengths and weaknesses of the process and work to develop an alternative. Peasant movements could train local land reform experts to draft land reform proposals that minimize conflict with powerful landowners, and that effectively redistribute land to landless and small farmers.

Agrarian and land reforms represent issues of social transformation for peasant groups. To be successful in accomplishing their goals of a more just society and better living standards for peasants, the movements must link their afflictions with larger social problems, as Merlet suggests. They should link the issue of reform to the issue of poverty, which is the centerpiece of almost every international organization.

Movements must also work to strengthen democracy in their countries. As shown, most movements today operate in a much freer environment than their predecessors. While keeping their independence from political manipulation, movements should pressure political groups to adopt their positions on reform, and mobilize support for certain parties (as the MST and KMP have done this well).
It is in the interest of international organizations to listen to peasant movements. In a period when “bottom-up” and participatory approaches⁴⁸ are increasingly heralded, ignoring the millions of peasants committed to rural development is not only unwise, it is potentially dangerous.

Chapter Conclusion
Technological advances, increased democratic governance, and the influence of international organizations on domestic policies enable peasant movements to influence the agrarian and land reforms policies of their country, as never before. The internationalization of domestic politics means that peasant movements should strengthen their international networks and look to influence international organizations to take up their causes. The strategies examined and proposed above may not be the solution to land inequalities or worsening agricultural structures, but they present an important new opportunities for peasant movements to change their country’s agrarian and land policies. Chapter three will examine a concrete example of contemporary peasant movements’ efforts to strengthen international alliances and bring agrarian and land reforms to the international development agenda.

3. The World Forum on Agrarian Reform: Valencia, Spain 5 - 8 December, 2004

Chapter Introduction

In order to verify the observations made in the first two chapters, the author attended the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (WFAR) held on 5-8 December, 2004 in Valencia, Spain. The Forum provided an opportunity to witness the increasing internationalization of peasant movement strategies and observe the relationships between the movements and international organizations. Chapter three relies on the author’s first-hand account of the World Forum on Agrarian Reform. Quotations are used when available, but due to the circumstances and the lack of transcriptions, most views relayed will be paraphrased and attributed to the speaker when possible.

Originally, the purpose of attending the WFAR was to conduct interviews with several prominent figures on the role of peasant movements and strategies for interacting with international organizations. Interviews were arranged prior to the Forum, but due to the time constraints imposed by such a large and logistically challenging conference, only two interviews were possible - with Luciano Borquez, Marcel Mazoyer and Peter Rosset (by email). For the remaining interviews, email questionnaires were sent, in accordance with the interviewee, but none have been returned at the time of this writing.49

3.1 Remarks on the WFAR

Growing out of the 2002 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, the WFAR drew representatives of peasant movements, academics, NGOs, and international organizations together to deliberate and exchange views on agrarian reform, the WFAR. The WFAR identifies itself as

"a space for dialogue, exchange of experiences and reflection, as well as for the construction of processes and proposals, where agrarian and social organisations, experts, NGOs and governmental organisations from various continents will address the question of land, positing the influence of agrarian reforms in social and economic processes aimed at attaining food sovereignty, the fulfillment of human rights and the creation of conditions necessary for world sustainable development" (FMRA, website)

The WFAR lists its objectives as to:

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49 Emails were sent to Michel Merlet, Jun Borras, Alberto Boch and Francisco Sarmento
• "Help situate the land question on the priority agenda of world social movements;

• Contribute to developing a new paradigm for agrarian reform in the 21st century and demonstrate that these policies are justified both for reasons of social justice and for economic reasons as well as to debate the new approaches to land policies required within the present context; and,

• Strengthen social processes and alliances between various sectors seeking to bring about new policies for access to land and natural resources management" (FMRA, website)

The WFAR, logistically organized by the Centro de Estudios Rurales y de Agricultura Internacional (CERAI), included the Via Campesina, the MST, CONTAG and FIAN, among others, in its international promotion committee. Several important academics and researchers served on the committee as well, Marcel Mazoyer, Jacques Chonchol (former Chilean Minister of Agrarian Reform under Salvador Allende), Peter Rosset, and Michel Merlet for example. Funds for the WFAR came from Oxfam, Caritas and the Government of Spain, among other institutions and foundations.50

3.2 Participants and views

While this paper focused on only three national peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms, the WFAR assembled movements from all corners of the world and was an excellent example of the increasing internationalization, sophistication and awareness that these national movements exhibit. The WFAR Final Declaration notes that the WFAR assembled "representatives from more than 200 peasant, workers’, women’s, indigenous peoples’, and human rights organizations, non-governmental organizations, and academic and public institutions from 70 countries and five continents” (FMRA, 2004).

Peasant movements from around the world were the most represented group during the Forum - ranging from highly organized and renowned movements like the MST to smaller, less-known movements such as the UNAC from Mozambique. South American movements appeared to have the strongest presence, bringing their views on highly unequal land distribution to the forefront of the forum. Asian movements from India, Bangladesh and the Philippines were also quite well represented and highlighted the problems of castes with regards to land. European

50 For a complete list of partners and funding institutions see the WFAR website, www.fmra.org
movements were not very active during the forum, with the exception of the highly organized Confederation Paysanne Française. African movements brought different perspectives to the forum, often highlighting the need for community land rights. Movements from Eastern Europe and North America were the least represented, thus exposing the need to strengthen ties and increase awareness of the interconnectedness of land problems in these regions.

The MST, and in general the Brazilian movements, were some of the most vocal and numerous movements attending the FMRA. The MST officially participated in only one plenary session, but its present was felt throughout the Forum, many movements noted that they were inspired by MST, and a documentary on the movement was shown. Jaime Amorim, a state coordinator of the MST, remarked during a plenary session entitled Struggles for land and natural resources and construction of alternatives that movements must pressure national governments while mobilizing against the World Bank and WTO. He also emphasized the need to develop new models of agriculture based on family farming and to carry these models through to policy. A common theme of the conference that Amorim touched upon was the harmful effects of export-oriented agricultural production on peasants.

Characteristically hostile during the Forum, the KMP participated plenary sessions and workshops. Danilo Ramos, the KMP Secretary-General, made one of the most impassioned presentations of the forum. He urged resistance to global imperialism, and proclaimed that “land reform must rely on peasant movements. Don’t rely on the government!” The KMP made the link between poverty and landlessness explicit, claiming that landlessness is the “root cause of poverty”. Many participants from the Philippines stressed the importance of local strategies because of the weakening of the state’s role.

Although not as ubiquitous as the MST or KMP during the Forum, the LPM, did hold a workshop entitled Solidarity faced with the violence against peasants in collaboration with the Brazilian CPT. The LPM’s involvement in this workshop demonstrates the movement’s concern over aggression from white landowners in South Africa, as mentioned in Chapter one.

The FAO was the only international organization to participate in the WFAR. The organization’s participation is important to highlight, as it confirms its willingness to dialogue with peasant movements and contribute to the international debate on agrarian and land reforms. Officially, the organization was represented by Paolo Groppo, an FAO the Land Tenure officer, who presented a workshop entitled The state and multilateral institutions and public policies. During the workshop, Groppo insisted on not focusing attention too narrowly on fighting the World Bank land reform policies, and drew attention to the various local and national actors that have profound impact on agrarian and land reforms. The World Bank according to Groppo
is not present everywhere there are land problems, with or without the World Bank, land problems will exist, and peasant movements must strive to redefine their battles. Groppo’s comments were symptomatic of the Forum’s tone, which was decidedly anti-World Bank; more on this will follow below. The FAO reiterated that it remains open to working with peasant movements, but that the movements must not become blinded to the other influences on land problems and the importance of the state’s role in land policy.

As more proof of the FAO’s interest in tackling the problems of agrarian and land reforms, the FAO used the WFAR as a platform for announcing a new World Conference on Agrarian Reform (FAO WCAR), along with the Director of the Brazilian INCRA, Rolf Hackbart. During the workshop entitled International Food Security Network, the INCRA director announced that he had spoken with the FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf and they had decided to hold the new FAO WCAR in Brazil in 2006, although the FAO has yet to announce the conference officially.

The presence of the Brazilian government at the WFAR brought considerable attention to the effectiveness of Brazilian peasant movements for agrarian and land reforms. Miguel Rossetto, the Minister of Agrarian Development declared that “social movements are our colleagues” during the opening session of the Forum. Moreover, Hackbart stressed the importance of strengthening social movements and ensuring their independence, but also the need to dialogue with other actors in order to create effective agrarian and land policies. This message of dialogue was echoed by others during the forum, especially by the representative of the International Land Coalition.

Although the ILC was not officially represented at the WFAR, one member of the secretariat attended the forum, Annalisa Mauro - a Program Officer. The ILC’s attendance and participation in several workshops demonstrates its increasing efforts to establish links with peasant movements, as mentioned above. During the workshop on The state and multilateral institutions and public policies, Mauro commented on the role the ILC plays in creating a space for dialogue between policy makers and peasant groups. She also stated that collective power is the most important factor in reshaping agrarian and land policies. Moreover, she noted that international organizations are controlled by governments, and therefore, peasant movements should pressure their governments to increase the democracy within these organizations.

The Via Campesina had a powerful presence during the forum. During the opening session of the conference, the members of Via Campesina performed a "mística" - a small ceremony in honor of Mother Earth. Chants of "Reforma Agraria Ya!" and "Globalicemos la Lucha, Globalicemos la Esperanza" filled the assembly halls during many of the plenary sessions and workshops. It is difficult to estimate how many members of Via Campesina were present, but
many prominent Via Campesina leaders spoke throughout the forum - José Bové from France, Rafael Alegria from Honduras (the current International Secretary), Hector Mondragon from Colombia, and Paul Nicholson from Spain, for example.

The message delivered by the members of Via Campesina was very homogenous: remove the WTO and World Bank from agriculture, struggle for food sovereignty, and strengthen international peasant alliance against neoliberal policies. The WFAR served to rally Via Campesina members, and as Hector Mondragón said, the WFAR showed that the movements are not alone. The alliance used the forum to expound its holistic view of land and the needs of small farmers to resist the increasing liberalization of agriculture. The Via Campesina’s idea of agrarian reform that includes support, credit, and training for peasants - along with land redistribution, was repeated during the Forum. An Ecuadorian Via Campesina member reminded participants that land does not belong to man, and agrarian reform is not just about agriculture, it is a re-conception of man’s use of natural resources. Perhaps unfortunately, the alliance repeated too often the calls against the World Bank, without proposing enough solutions or strategies. More on strategies and proposals will follow.

FIAN also played a major role during the forum, participating and leading many workshops. Agrarian reform as a human right was the organization’s main message. Jonas Vanreusel of FIAN Belgium represented the organization in several workshops focusing on the international nature of agrarian reform. During the International Food Security Network workshop, Vanreusel noted the importance of family farms for ensuring access to land for young farmers. Regarding international organizations, FIAN noted that they are pressing for a conference with the World Bank, and that the network continually brings cases of land related human rights abuses to the United Nations.

3.3 WFAR Central Issues

The World Bank was one of the most attacked international organizations during the WFAR. Repeatedly, representatives from peasant movements and other participants attacked the organization, blaming it for counter-agrarian reforms and increased land concentration. Marcel Resende (former director of INCRA and current Via Campesina activist) remarked that the World Bank policies implemented in Brazil were a direct response to the successes of the MST. Moreover, he urged movements to share their experiences in order not to be misled by the World Bank. Members of the workshop on Asian agrarian reform declared that the World Bank MLAR is leading to the disenfranchisement of citizens. Moreover, the Gender workshop stressed that women’s land rights cannot be achieved through MLAR because it is biased.
towards men. Peter Rosset asserted that the World Bank had taken over the term agrarian reform and that it is using the same policies in over forty countries, thus not adapting to local conditions. Rafael Alegria of Via Campesina remarked that the World Bank won’t admit its failure, and so peasant movements must battle to discredit the organization’s involvement in land reform. Rosset noted, however, that the Land Policy Paper from 2003 ”is truly a remarkable statement from the Bank, and I believe that this signals the impact the [Via Campesina] movement is having” (interview: 2004).

The conclusions of the workshop entitled Proposals or existing alternatives of agrarian reform labeled the World Bank a ”common enemy”. The final declaration of the WFAR asserts that ”the agro-export model is entrenched by the structural adjustment programs of the World Bank and IMF, and the free trade regime imposed by the WTO” (FMRA, 2004:2). Moreover, the document writes that the ”market based land policies, promoted by the World Bank and bilateral donors have led to heavy indebtedness among poor small scale producers and resulted in re-concentration of land in the hands of traditional and modern elites”(FMRA, 2004:2).

A common refrain heard throughout the Forum was the removal of the WTO from agriculture. The Forum Final Document states that the signatory organizations should ”work to get the WTO and other trade and investment agreements out of food and agriculture!” (FMRA, 2004:3). José Bové, speaking during plenary session, called for the removal of the WTO from agriculture, because it does not represent the ”interests of the majority”. Rafael Alegria called on members to mobilize against the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong in 2005.

Family farming was repeatedly invoked during the Forum. Participants noted that family farming is the most sustainable and peasant-friendly agricultural system. INCRA Director, Hackbart, noted that there is a need to strengthen policies that favor family farming. The Final Document emphasizes the benefits of family agriculture noting that it ”prioritizes local production of food for local and national markets, negates dumping, and uses sustainable production practices based on local knowledge” (2004:1). Jonas Vanreusel remarked that agrarian reforms need to be focused around the family farming model. This sentiment was repeated by many representatives from Brazil. Alberto Boch of CONTAG emphasized the role of family farming in the development of an alternative model of agrarian reform.

Finally, the issue of food sovereignty was central to the WFAR. Many participants see food sovereignty as an overarching concept towards a more equitable agricultural model. Food sovereignty, as explained above and as invoked during the Forum, retains the national character of agriculture. The Final Document notes that the alternative agrarian reform policies must be based on the ”principles of human rights and peoples’ food sovereignty”
(2004:1). Moreover the document calls on peasant movements to "work together to build successful examples of peoples’ food sovereignty at local and national levels" (2004:4). The conclusions of the Gender Workshop declare that to ensure equality in agriculture, the goal of agrarian reform must be food sovereignty.

3.4 Strategies and Proposals

As Michel Merlet stated during the final plenary session of the Forum, it is easy to denounce policies and organizations, but it is difficult (though necessary) to make proposals for change. Although the Forum was dominated by denunciations, there were several proposals and strategies proposed.

The conclusions of the workshop entitled Alliances and strategies of action for agrarian reform presented by Alberto Boch noted the importance of strengthening alliances between peasant movements. It was also determined that movements and their alliances must interact with international organizations - starting at the local level. Clear objectives for agrarian reform policies must also be determined, according to the workshop participants.

Linking rural land problems to urban poverty was a recurrent theme throughout the Forum. During a plenary session, Marcel Mazoyer noted that the peasant movements must “turn toward urban allies” and make agrarian reform a cause for “humanity”. Mazoyer expanded on this idea saying that “the peasant movements need a majority and institutional support, agrarian reform is not carried out just from land occupations...” (interview:2004). In other words, agrarian reform is a political matter and implementing agrarian and land reforms necessitates allies throughout the country.

The need for local strategies was mentioned several times during the forum, by peasant movements and by the representatives of the FAO and ILC. A representative of a Nicaraguan peasant movement noted that they had success through pressuring governments, both left and right leaning. Bernard Founou, a researcher from Senegal, asserted that the peasant movements present in the forum must not exaggerate the power of international organizations such as the World Bank - especially when the state remains so powerful. A representative from Cameroon, during the final plenary session, followed-up on this idea by proposing a strategy of raising-awareness of local officials to the land problems suffered by the peasantry, as often they wield considerable power in decentralized countries.
Luciano Borquez remarked that the Via Campesina strategy of unwavering opposition to the World Bank is not sufficient. He believes that the strategies vis-à-vis international organizations, in particular the World Bank, should not be black or white. Rather he insists that it is the job of the movements to make the World Bank to change course, because there are people inside that can be convinced. He said, “it is easy to say no to the World Bank, but it is more complex than that” (interview:2004) [author’s translation].

Regarding international organizations, Henry Saragih, an Indonesian member of the Via Campesina, called upon the FAO, the UN and the UN Human Rights Commission to support the implementation agrarian reform policies throughout the world. Many participants noted that the FAO is one of the few international organizations open to dialogue with peasant movements. When asked about participating in the potential WCAR, Sofia Monsalve of FIAN noted that the conference must analyze the rules of procedure and expressed worries about legitimizing the conference through their presence (author:2004). Peter Rosset echoed this sentiments saying, “a second WCAR could be useful, but movements will have to judge the way it is organized to decide if it is better to inside or outside (protesting)” (interview: 2004).

Monsalve did mention, however, that the FAO has been an important opening for organizations dealing with agrarian reform (author, 2004). Hector Mondragón of Via Campesina echoed this statement and said that peasant movements have had good relations with the FAO, except for the dispute over biotechnology (author:2004). Paolo Groppo noted that peasant movements need allies in international organizations. He remarked that the employees of the FAO, for example, are free to think, and in other organizations this holds true as well. Marcel Mazoyer noted that:

“peasant movements should collaborate with the FAO, because in the FAO there is enough experience and awareness that...the game is not lost at the FAO, the proof is that Diouf - the Director-General - accepted to have a new world conference on agrarian reform...this is the first result of the WPAR” (interview) [author’s translation].

Chapter Conclusion

The World Forum on Agrarian Reform, by bringing together activists, peasants, academics, and their various movements provided a space for debate on agrarian and land reforms. Although the Forum was dominated by criticism, several important strategies and proposals were elaborated. The issues of food sovereignty, removing the WTO from agriculture, and promoting family farming played important roles during the Forum. The relationship between peasant
movements and international organizations, which was detailed earlier in this paper, held true during the Forum. Only one international organization was present, and most peasant movements took the opportunity to decry World Bank land policies.

Perhaps the numbers of participants involved and the very local nature of agrarian and land problems pushed the Forum to oversimplify. Regardless, the Forum allowed peasant movements from very different regions of the world to exchange their experiences, histories, and proposals for implementing agrarian and land reforms. The contacts and relationships that were made during the Forum can serve to strengthen international alliances, but clearer propositions and ways forward could have been developed.
Conclusion

Agrarian and land reform are complex issues involving many actors and interests. This paper examined the roles that the many non-state actors play in implementing and influencing such reforms, as well as analyzing the relationship between the actors. Peasant movements, which are in many cases the symptom of social injustice and historical land inequalities, have shown to be increasingly sophisticated and able to adapt to the newly international political environment. The LPM, MST and KMP have shown to be some of the most prominent movements internationalizing their campaigns for agrarian and land reforms. The international organizations created following the Second World War have increased their influence globally and in particular in developing countries. Often the policy advice of the World Bank and FAO or the trade agreements determined in WTO negotiations induce deep change in domestic policy, affecting, in particular, the rural poor. While the world economic and political arena is continuously evolving, peasant movements - who are working to resolve essentially local problems - have responded by creating broad international alliances struggling for a different world agricultural system. These international alliances for agrarian and land reforms, such as the Via Campesina and ILC are a recent phenomenon linking previously disconnected local peasant organizations with other movements and in some cases directly with international organizations.

Though the relationship between international organizations and peasant movements is not entirely friendly, the two sets of actors have an interest in engaging each other in campaigns for agrarian and land reforms. Peasant movement strategies vis-à-vis international organizations were explored in this paper. Strategy proposals and central issues for influencing international organizations were developed as well and it was argued that movements could advance their very local causes by allying with interested international organizations. Few international organizations besides the FAO have shown a willingness to include peasant movements in their policy considerations, but awareness raising campaigns and research could persuade others to change positions.

The World Forum on Agrarian Reform presented an important example of the internationalization of peasant movement struggles for agrarian and land reforms. Although only one international organization was present, the Forum provided an excellent opportunity to observe the relationship between movements and international organizations. It also provided several proposals and strategies for influencing agrarian and land reforms. Changing international and national agrarian systems and rectifying centuries of land inequalities are challenging propositions. The WFAR showed that contemporary peasant movements understand these challenges as they continue to evolve and internationalize their struggles.
Interviews and Correspondence

Interviews were conducted with the following people during the WFAR they are denoted (interview: 2004)

Luciano Concheiro Borquez is professor of Agrarian Economics, Rural Development and Peasant Studies of the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana Unidad Xochimilco in Mexico. He is the author of, among other works, Los Mercados de Tierras en México (FAO, 1994) and Ajuste estructural, políticas de liberalización y mercado de tierras en México (FAO, 1996)

Marcel Mazoyer is a professor of comparative agriculture and agricultural development at the Institut agronomique Paris-Grignon. His book, Histoire des agricultures du monde coauthored with Laurence Roudart, is an important text that not only explains the development of agricultural systems, but also puts the evolution of agriculture in a socio-political and cultural context, with analysis of the current trends in agricultural production. Mazoyer is at the forefront of a movement for an alternative to agricultural trade regime which has over the last decades lowered agricultural prices artificially and to the detriment of the peasantry. In his work for the FAO, he outlined his view of a changed international trade regime that groups countries into trade blocs that share common agricultural productivity. Trade should be regulated, according to Mazoyer, and globalization should be “carefully considered, organized and regulated” (2001). The goal of which is to raise agricultural prices and promote sustainable, peasant-friendly agriculture.

Peter Rosset is one of the most well known activist/researchers dealing with agrarian and land reforms and food sovereignty. Kingsnorth calls him “one of the world’s foremost authorities on land and land reform” (2003:248). Currently working in Chiapas Mexico, Rosset has spent his career working for an equitable distribution of land for the poor and alternatives to commercial farming. Among other positions, Rosset was co-director of FoodFirst and a professor at Stanford University. (Interview conducted by email)

Other personal conversations and correspondence are denoted by (author:2004):

Jun Borras - Fellow at the Institute of Social Studies - The Hague
Hector Mondragón - Via Campesina - Colombia
Sofia Monsalve - FIAN
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Distribution of recovered benam lands, vested lands and fallow lands made cultivable among peasants is an important task of peasant movement. It does not mean however that by saying this I am disregarding the need or am trying to underplay the importance of effecting the one task of peasant movement which calls for recovering and distributing among agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants all benam lands above ceiling limits which are illegally kept under occupation by big jotedars or former zemindars-[5], or allotting those lands which are vested in government but have been app International Accounting Rate Reform: The Role of International Organizations and Implications for Developing Countries By Collins, Katherine Law and Policy in International Business, Vol. 31, No. 3, Spring 2000. Read preview Overview. Globalizing Land and Food in Zimbabwe: Implications for Southern Africa By Thompson, Carol B. African Studies Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 2-3, Fall-Winter 2003. PRPEER-REVIEWED PERIODICAL. Peer-reviewed publications on Questia are publications containing articles which were subject to evaluation for accuracy and substance by professional peers of the article’s a...Â Political Movements. Questia is operated by Cengage Learning. Copyright © 2019.