

Parallel report to the 4th state report of the Republic of Paraguay
on the implementation of the International Pact on Economic,
Social and Cultural rights

Social Human Rights in Paraguay

Violations of Human Rights as a result of the Genetic-Modified Soya-Monocultures - the Right to Food and Health - **for Small Farmers and the Paraguayan Population**

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The information provided in this report focuses upon the consequences of a highly alarming global development: the use of genetically modified organism (GMO) in agriculture. Paraguay in particular is one of the most affected countries worldwide by this development! „Almost the whole soy-harvest of Paraguay is based on genetic-manipulated seeds, the cultivation of genetic cotton should be developed in future. US-agro-chemical companies like Monsanto and Cargill receive considerable tax advantages in Paraguay.“ (*„Paraguay: Cold revolt for group interests « amerika21.de – 28.06.2012)*

„**We fight for the life.**“ In Paraguay the opposition against the soy monocultures grows.“ (*Steffi Holz, 2009)*

**The price of the soy monocultures in South America –
Expulsion and hunger in Paraguay – full troughs and tanks in Europe**

„The soy farmers destroy the nature and the life of the people namely not only here in Paraguay,

but worldwide. We know that soy is exported to Europe. But nobody knows in Europe how soy is produced.“ *Small farmer Gerónimo Arévalo, Alto Paraná, Paraguay*

„Soy is in everyone's mouth and this daily in form of meat products and milk products, eggs, candy and ready-to-serve meals. European stockbreeding companies and fattening farms feed yearly 40 million tons of soybean meal. Besides, the protein containing bean becomes more and more important for the production of agrarian fuels. However, while local european consumers profit from cheap meat- and milk products and think about agrofuels, the soy cultivation in the countries of origin has high side effects. The small country Paraguay in the heart of South America climbed up during the last years to the worldwide fourth largest soy-exporter. However, the industrial soy cultivation in monoculture threatens the small farming agriculture, destroys the environment and poisons the rural population. The application of genetically modified soybean varieties walks along with massive pesticide application, poisoning persons and environment. The rapid soy-expansion aggravates the land conflict, anyway the most burning social problem in Paraguay, where 4% of the population dispose of 86% of the arable land. Even 90.000 families were forced to leave there country during the last decade, because they cannot compete with the soy farmers and do not bear the pesticide load any more.

The small farmers' unions, in which ten thousands are organised, defend themselves against the expulsion and offer resistance. With living walls they try to prevent sprayings with pesticides, land occupations are nothing unusual. The more the worldwide demand in soy rises, the more intensifies the situation also in Paraguay....

..... reports the little farmer and activist Esther Leiva from Paraguay (Organización Lucha por la Tierra (OLT), Espacio Unitario, Via Campesina) about the results of the soy cultivation in her country. Based on the current political situation in Paraguay ... the land conflict, the subject Genetic engineering in the agriculture, the results of the pesticide use, the threat of the little-farmers- life-style and questions of the food sovereignty move in the focus. Also closely related to this are the struggles of the social movements in Paraguay, which are very engaged, particularly in rural areas...“ (<http://www.asta.uni-potsdam.de/2011/05/der-preis-der-sojamonokulturen-in-suedamerika/>)

This means a massive violation of the economic, social and cultural human rights of the Paraguayan population!

We are very concerned about this development, which continues to grow by further steps envisaged by the government to step up the GMO-growing in the face of rising profits.

We ask the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to express its concern about the violations of the right to food - the drastic increase of poverty due to GM soy cultivation - and the right to health and integrity, which are dramatically violated through the use of GM soya and maize in Paraguay and to make recommendations to the Paraguayan government how to stop these violations of Human Rights immediately.

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1.) Introduction

„The advancing "soy front" drives the former small farmers of Paraguay before itself. Again and again the settlements of the without-country are removed. ... 116 million t were produced 2011 in the three South American countries, almost of it was genetic soy. In the 6-million country of Paraguay soy fields already put out three quarters of the whole agricultural area. Two years ago the agricultural production grew about incredible 50 percent.

However, not only Brazilian agribusiness companies profit from the boom, but also the agro multinationals Cargill, ADM.... “ (*Small farmer of Paraguay in the soy-stranglehold* , 1. June 2012)

„The green desert

The soybean demand of the industrial countries means hunger and displacement for the rural population of Paraguay. Even 90.000 families gave up her country during the last decade. They persist in illegal camps or end up in the slums of the capital Asunción. The winners of the soy boom are local Brazilian or also German big landowner, who profit from unlimited land acquisition, tax exemption on export and rising world market prices. ... On 2,7 million hectares soy is currently grown in Paraguay, and the cultivated area is growing in an uncontrolled manner. The soy expansion exacerbates the land conflict, ... the most urgent social problem. With about 80% of the arable land in the possession of two percent of the population Paraguay is among the countries with the most unfair land concentration worldwide.“ (*The feed blues 2.0, Agrarinfo may 2011 S. 1*)

„Raising Resistance – The price of the soy monocultures in South America

The film shows these magnificent, moving pictures, but particularly it shows the human face of a disaster for which we are all responsible... The documentary film Raising Resistance ... tells about the struggle of the Campesinos, the small farmers of Paraguay, against the increasingly aggressive GM-soy production spreading in the country and using this conflict it describes the

global impacts, the use of the most modern genetic engineering in the 21st century has on man and nature. It is a parable about displacing life, of people, and of the diversity of plants and crops. And about how resistance rises ...“ (*website to the film*)

„The ... expansion of the soy cultivation leads to negative impacts on the life of the population in Paraguay. Many people suffer from illnesses, caused by the chemical sprayings of the soy fields. Small farmers are expelled, so that even more soil can be used for soy cultivation. However, it stirs resistance.” (<http://www.oneworld.at/start.asp?ID=225336>)

„This bean is a bomb – she destroys our life basis“ (*mirror, 4th of May, 12*)

The GM agro-biotechnology accelerates the extinction of small farmers around the world. Deforestation, an increasing use of pesticides, destruction of livelihoods of indigenous peoples, small farmers and peasants, land concentration, slave labour, the rural exodus and increasing poverty in the countryside are the effects showing another side of an agro-industrial model of transgenic monoculture.

We have great hopes that the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights immediately help reverse the depopulation of country (uprooting), hunger and health damage suffered by the people, and enforce the people rights, that are established in the International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

2.) Situation in Paraguay – Reasons for the human right violations

From a total of six million inhabitants of Paraguay two million people represent the rural population.

„About 43% of the population lives in rural areas, about half of the population lives in poverty. 19% even in extreme poverty. They have a day less than 1.25 US dollars at disposal.“ (*Films for one world: Raising Resistance p. 3*).

„Paraguay has one of the most unequal distribution of land throughout Latin America: 77% of the arable land is concentrated in the hands of only one percent of the population“. (*Upside Down World / IPS, 18.3.08*).

„Thus, Paraguay is in terms of unfair land distribution in the first place worldwide“ (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay, p. 225 2009*)

"Paraguay is one of the most corrupt countries in the world ... In contrast, 44 percent of small-scale farmers have only one percent of the soils. The number of landless, small farmers and their families is estimated at 300.000. Either they have never owned land, were forcibly evicted from their soil or had to sell their land to expanding soybean farmers because of their precarious financial situation. Other small producers, who have been situated near industrially farmed gm-soy-plantations, gave up their plots because of the health impact of pesticide use. Organized landless people have been fighting for years for agrarian reform ... and request the return of illegally acquired lands. They also reject the monocultures off because they displace smallholder agriculture. " (*films for a world: Raising Resistance p.3 / 4*).

A large part of the country - namely 70% - belongs to foreign, primarily Brazilian landowners.

Since the mid-1960s the country was hit by a massive expansion of soy cultivation, which boomed in the late 1990s. In this case, genetically modified seeds were introduced by corporations such as Monsanto. Boosted by the demand for livestock feed and bio fuels, Paraguay developed for today's fourth largest exporter of soybeans, behind the USA, Brazil and Argentina. According to the Agriculture Ministry soy is grown on 2.4 million hectares, what makes 38% of the agricultural production of the country (IPS, 08/11/07). 80% of soy plantations are genetically manipulated. (*Latin America News* 393 March 07).

(<http://www.oneworld.at/start.asp?ID=225336>)

For the country in the heart of the South American continent, the soybean is the number one export product ... No agricultural product claimed in further increasingly more area. It has been even 2,6 million hectares in the recent growing season - and this with only 4.2 million hectares of arable agricultural land designated. And the soy front of the large landowners continues apace massive. This massive expansion of soy monocultures in Paraguay is often associated with land conflicts, human rights abuses, expulsions - and with agricultural poisons that are extensively sprayed onto the soy fields.

(<http://fdcl-berlin.de/aktuelles/2008/november-2008-sojarepublik-paraguay-der-widerstand-der-kleinbauern-gegen-die-sozialen-und-oekologischen-folgen-der-sojamonokulturen-in-paraguay/#c3600>)

"... that people give up on the rural areas and move away. Since years tens of thousands continuously migrated to the big cities of Paraguay ... From the streets in Asunción they are no longer indispensable: begging children, men and women, street vendors, prostitutes, garbage collectors with their self-built cars, which sort the waste of city dwellers to sell it in the recycling yard ... Many of them live in the slums on the peripheral city, which have grown in the past 15 years by about 75%. Bañado Sur is one of these swamps in the south of the capital. "The district... is now growing rapidly by campesinos, which are distributed by the soy." More than 60,000 people live here now ..." (Steffi Holz, *Paraguay* p. 244/245; 2009)

"... 78% of the soy animal feed in Europe is imported from Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. ... By the great demand within Europe - particularly from Germany - the climbing of soy production continues. For this, the companies would also cut down rainforests - with catastrophic consequences for the climate and the environment. ("*A crime against humanity*", *Miesbacher Merkur* 3.6.11 page 4)

"Soy from Paraguay - cultivated with high side effects for the local population:

The model of monoculture displaces the subsistence economy of the small farmers, which are more than half of the population. It intensifies the land conflict, destroys the social structure of the campesinos, threatens their livelihoods, and the regular use of pesticides in the predominantly genetically modified varieties makes sick to death." (Steffi Holz, *Paraguay* p. 247, 2009)

3.) Violation to the Right to Food (Art. 11)

This right is no longer guaranteed in Paraguay.

"A crime against humanity"

"The issue of soy monocultures in South America has reached a worldwide dimension, that affects all areas of life ... she painted a black picture of conditions in her home country Paraguay. It had now become to a "green desert" - because of the huge soybean acreage. That would probably be still tolerable for her and 15,000 activists in Paraguay, but not the circumstances. Since 2000 big companies grow GM crops ... The problem is that the responsible - 80 percent come from abroad - use fertilizers for that, destroying all other plants except the soy bean. Since the poisons are also sprayed from airplanes, they settled down by the winds on the fields of the small farmers, who hardly grow soybeans traditionally. The poison parches the harvest and deprives livelihoods of the locals. Anyway many of them do not have any more land - approximately a third of the population lives in poverty." (*"A crime against humanity", Fr. 3.6.11 Miesbacher Merkur*).

Social and environmental impacts

The economic model of Paraguay is mainly based on the monoculture cultivation of soybeans for export and reduces the acreage for other plants. Traditional industries such as timber, livestock and cotton production were displaced by the soybean industry. In contrast to the labor-intensive cultivation of cotton and different crops, the heavily mechanized cultivation of soybean caused high unemployment in the country. Also the subsistence agriculture of the campesinos (small farmers) has been increasingly marginalized. Because an increasing number of people no longer find their daily livelihood, many flock to the cities, where they settle in the slums forming an urban underclass.

A further consequence of soy cultivation is the active expulsion of campesinos from their fields, which serves the goal of expanding the acreage. To this purpose, the landowners put up paramilitary units and release them to the residents of the communities. In many cases, the state intervened on the side of the big landowners and sends military and police. Since the first soy boom about 100.000 campesinos have been displaced from their land and countless indigenous communities resettled (*Toward Freedom, 09/25/08*). Between 1989 and 2005, in Paraguay 75 campesinos has been killed (*ila 312 February 08*). In other cases, the soy companies try to buy or lease the land from the campesinos, what leads to conflicts within the communities, because many campesinos vehemently fight back against the spread of soybean cultivation.

In order to gain the area necessary for soy cultivation, a massive process of deforestation was set in motion. Instead of the previously lush forests, today green soy deserts dominate the image. The sprayed chemicals deposit on once fertile soils. (*IPS, 11/08/07*).
(<http://www.oneworld.at/start.asp?ID=225336>)

"For a just world. Without poverty. Country for the youth in Paraguay!"

Farmers need access to land! What sounds logical, in Paraguay it's no longer a matter of course: Dolores Peralta and Luis Olmedo Curuguay are two of a total of 260 young people, which their arable land was stolen in 2012. Since then they fight for their rights – until now without success.

It's about land attributable to the farmers lawfully, but that is now used by agribusiness for large-scale cultivation of soy. The case is heard again at November 17th 2014. That is why we are now calling for President Horacio Cartes, to promote for the young people of Curuguaty and give them the land back, which is attributable to them.

We ask the president of Paraguay ..:

- To return the arable land of Curuguaty to the young farmers, so that they can provide for themselves and their families
- To promote also in future for the ensuring of the public resources of Paraguay and not to lease farmland to Companies for monoculture cultivation”

(<https://www.oxfam.de/mitmachen/paraguay-land> - *Oxfam: country for the youth in Paraguay!*)

„Food sovereignty in danger

Monsanto and Co., contaminate illegally the traditional maize seeds by smuggled GM maize, driving the farmers unintentionally in the dependence of the seed companies, because GM maize cannot be reused as seed (farmers traditionally use each year a portion of their harvest for re-planting in the next year) - the seed must be bought new by the big companies every year. "Maize is the basic food of our population... this is an attack on the culture of the indigenous people and campesinos and their food sovereignty" (<http://www.taz.de/!99622/> "attack on the indigenous culture" 08/15/12).

"More and more people move to the cities, because they cannot stand the poison any more or lose their land, because they have become indebted by soybean cultivation. In the capital Asunción they struggle as street vendors and garbage recyclers, through prostitution or begging. Only 90.000 families gave of their land during the last decade.

Business with soy is worthwhile for some few, thanks to unlimited land acquisition, tax exemption on export and rising world market prices. Approximately 300 US dollar gets a producer per ton. In 2008, six million tons were harvested from this ... And so arise in the fertile soil of Paraguay further gigantic monocultures destroying jobs instead of creating new ones. They displace the peasant agriculture and with it the traditional model of subsistence.

This exacerbates the land conflict, which is already the most urgent social problem in Paraguay, which shows with about 80% of arable land owned by two percent of the population one of the most unequal country concentrations worldwide.

With the election of the Democrat and former bishop Fernando Lugo in 2008, stopping the 61-year autocratic rule of the conservative Colorado Party, the smallholders hoped for fundamental reforms. But their situation has not improved and they fight in numerous associations and organizations furthermore for agrarian reform and a self-determined agriculture- and food-policies in Paraguay.

"We know very well, that there is a big business behind the industrial soy production, but for the small producers, it is neither profitable nor sustainable, because it destroys the environment and therefore our livelihood. Our future can only lie in an agriculture, which defends life. And we are

fighting for it, "says Geronimo Arévalo. (*"Poison for the people. In Paraguay, the resistance to the soybean monocultures grows"* Steffi Holz, 19.1.11)

"Worldwide demand for soy has increased in recent years and the need for land for cultivation grows. For it forests are being cut down, driving out of the inhabiting indigenous, and small-farming arable land must yield monocultures.

Herbicides: Poison for man and environment

In order to increase the yield, genetically engineered crops are grown being resistant to the herbicide glyphosate. But the plant-poison is not selective. It destroys weeds next to the soy fields and also the crops on neighboring parcels of small-scale producers.

The extensive cultivation of GM soya has fatal effects on biodiversity and the health of the rural population. The plantings leach the soil, accelerate their erosion and herbicide residues poison the waters. Glyphosate is particularly toxic for insects, amphibians and fishes (*films for one world: Raising Resistance p. 4/5*).

"... Esteban knows about the negative consequences that the soybeans bring for the environment: "By engineered agriculture, the soil compacted more and more. Water cannot penetrate, instead the rain flooded off the surface, so that the fertility declines. The leached chemicals pollute the rivers. "...

Finally a social effect of soy is, that many children are malnourished, because many families do not grow enough for their own need and would not have enough to eat as a result of this lack of self-sufficiency. "The problem is that there is no functioning agricultural model for the campesinos and no national market for their food. The cultivation of soy appears then as an alternative to earn some money." But the original production chains are destroyed by it. And the profits retain the seeds companies. "The soy production is worthwhile only for large producers," he notes. "The small farmers make losses and sooner or later forced to abandon their land." (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay, p. 221, 2009*)

"... the half of the Paraguayan population are subsistence farmers, who should own the land which they plant as self-caterer. 300.000 landless families have no access to arable land." Malnutrition and hunger are prevalent among the rural population. Against this background, land occupations are not an organized business of a few with trying to enrich themselves personally, but the expression of an existential situation." (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay p. 225, 2009*)

"We know very well the fact that behind the industrial soy production there is a big business, but for the small producers it is neither profitable nor sustainable, because it destroys the environment and therefore our livelihood. They have no interest in helping us; they want us out of the way. However, our future can only lie in an agriculture, which defends life without destroying nature. And we fight for it, "he says.

The soy expansion means less space for the subsistence of small farmers and the loss of natural diversity through monoculture and environmental impact. In many places the livelihoods of farmers have been destroyed or threatened. (*Smallholder Jeronimo Arevalo, Member of ASAGRAPA in "Paraguay" by Steffi Holz, p. 228, 2009*).

Exports instead of self-sufficiency

Surfaces for self-cultivation are reduced. The jungle is cut down in large quantities for new industrial cultivation's land. Many times the inhabitants of these forests and small farmers are

evicted from their land by the "force" of great businessman in agriculture, or are killed to obtain more arable land for themselves. There is rarely compensation payments, refunds etc., as only in a few cases and often only with international help of human right organizations on site, a legal prosecution is possible, that most still goes out in favor of the landowners, because the jurisdiction is often made from its own ranks and the State earns on soybean exports.

GM crops make self-cultivation impossible and poison the water supply

By splashing the fields with herbicides, mostly from airplanes, the neighboring fields and villages are sprayed with, what leads to heavy health defects for persons and animals and destroys all other plants.

"In the countryside the consequences of soya bean monoculture have been much more disastrous. The traditional agricultural communities near the large soya bean plantations are heavily affected ... the farmers - after long-term cultivation of different vegetables for their own use - found the whole yield destroyed after the neighboring fields ... have been sprayed, a pesticide, which damages all plants out of the special GM-plants from Monsanto, which are "pesticide-resistant". A study from 2003 shows that the spraying has not only destroyed their fields. Their chicken died and other animals above all horses suffered damages." (*TIME Questions No. 43 v. 31.10.05 "Can there be in a world with "gene food" Peace? " by FW Engdahl*).

Life is no longer possible for small producers near the areas, where GM soya is grown. There is also a terrible poisoning of water sources. But people still depend on water, drink the contaminated water and suffers, among others, from regularly fever and other terminal diseases. (*We feed the world*)

This shows that the future of agriculture must be found very clearly in organic agriculture and not in the cultivation of genetically modified plants. The Paraguayan government must immediately stop the rural exodus and the expropriation of land, provide sufficient land and seeds for the own production of the population, before producing for export and strictly prohibit the spraying of pesticides close to residential areas of the locals - to ensure the livelihood of its people and put an immediate end to poverty and malnutrition.

Article 11 (2):

a)"To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge ... and by developing or reforming agrarian systems ... with the aim of maximizing the development and use of natural resources "

"... Let us speak about how life has changed in the last 20 or 30 years also here and the forest was almost completely cleared. The soybean has spread everywhere surrounding the municipalities completely. "The use of many pesticides threatens the people living in it," says ZEPI." (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay p. 219, 2009*)

We also have to add that for many years now the jungle ...has been eliminated to install new soybean growing areas... The forest population is thus deprived of their livelihood, they have deducted only option now as landless in the slums of large cities. The World Bank is financing the road to promote forest degradation and soybean cultivation. (*"Nosotros alimenatmos al mundo" /*

"We feed the world"). The use of natural resources and the livelihood of the inhabitants are so irrevocably destroyed in favor of the profits of a few large agribusinesses. In addition, the use of pesticides, which have contaminated everything and makes the soil infertile.

In short, it is clear that genetic engineering is NOT the right method to improve the situation of agriculture and food security in the world, but rather is a method that destroys natural resources, biodiversity and minimizes the quantity and quality of food production.

"A lie in the propaganda of the GMO industry was unmasked: it is not true that GMOs need less pesticides but the truth is that GMOs need more pesticides year by year." (*"More pesticides are sprayed over GMOs", by scientific study in Benbrook Ökologo 1 / 2004, p.2*). An increase of 50 – 60 % is found. (*"uneconomical in the long run" by Klaus Faissner in "Danger Genetic Engineering", p.234*).

b) "in order to ensure a fair distribution of food in the world according to needs, considering the problems of the food exporting and importing countries "

As already mentioned, the Paraguayan government places more and more on export, the possibility of self-sufficiency of the Paraguayan becomes increasingly destroyed. Economic inequality is increasing and the large agricultural corporations benefit by putting on the destructive soybean culture ...

Europe imports 90% of its soy from overseas. The soy is increasingly used here to feed the animals or for the cars driving with biodiesel - and return starve in Paraguay increasingly people. Our maize and wheat is burnt increasingly for district heating or, however, our surfaces lie fallow – subsidized by the EU— instead used for food or as animal feed. Our own farms each year drastically decrease, because of the huge volume of imports the own cultivation becomes unprofitable here. The taxpayer must carry the consequences - for growing unemployment, etc.

This distribution system harms the local farmers around the world. The agro-corporations are the only winners - also here in Europe. If local farmers produce for their own supply or to offer for their community or their country, they could all be winners.

The first experiences in Paraguay, Argentine, Brazil, India, Canada and other countries show exactly the same development: genetic engineering produces hunger.

CONCLUSION: In order to ensure Food Sovereignty and Food Security of our people, we must improve the social and environmental production conditions. A short-term increase of yields through technical means is the wrong way - it destroys the environment, cultures of villages and the possibility of living and eating with dignity. A destroyed ecosystem cannot feed future generations..... A sustainable protection of the food needs an agriculture, which preserves the natural bases: healthy and fertile grounds, clean water as well as a huge number of plants and animals.“ (www.greenpeace.de/themen/genetechnik/ „Genetic engineering – no hope for the starving“ from the 10/1/2004).

In order to improve methods of production, better distribution of food and to allow the use of natural resources effectively and ensure long term continuity of life and their use, we demand to the Paraguayan government

- to reduce the GM-soy-cultivation in favor of land for the own-cultivation of the population
- to stop the deforestation
- to advocate on their foreign policy to renounce of genetic engineering in agriculture and food production as a way of solving hunger in the world
- and force a fair distribution of land and available food.

4.) Violation to the Right to Health (Art. 12)

In Paraguay different small farmer's organizations and the remained small-farmer- municipalities offer resistance against these life-menacing sprayings with field poisons, which are sprayed extensive on the soy fields: If the wind for adjoining living small farmer's families stands bad, they are sprayed with.

In view of more than 70 percent of genetically manipulated soy in Paraguay - other estimates go out to 90 percent - one of the most-sprayed field poisons is the 'Roundup' from the house of the chemical multinational Monsanto. However, also the other agro chemistry multinationals, Bayer and Syngenta, produce and market herbicides and pesticides in big style - also in Paraguay.

„Because the gigantic areas under cultivation often border immediately on schools and human settlements, it would come increasingly to heavy health damages with the population ... under it infections, allergies, physical deformities and even cancer illnesses. Many of the used pesticides are forbidden in Europe. With us they are used unabashed. This is in the long term an attempt against the humanity.“ (*An attempt against the humanity, 3rd of June 11*)

„Numerous people leave their country, however, also on account of the unhealthy consequences of the field-sprayings with chemicals, which cause cancer, allergic reactions, respiratory problems and feeling of sickness. Women complain about miscarriages, deformities with fetuses and the death of many children. The situation is still aggravated by the fact that the rural regions hardly have access to adequate medical care.“ (*Upside Down World / IPS, 18.3.08 und IPS, 8.11.07*). (<http://www.oneworld.at/start.asp?ID=225336>)

„Many children are born with deformities. For families there is no more guarantee that their children are born healthy ... The plant protection agent is injurious, not only to plants, but also to people. The genetic engineering destroys us. Ourselves, our food and our environment.“ (*The genetic engineering destroys us“ taz 10.04.12*).

„In Paraguay different small farmer's organizations and the remained small-farmers- municipalities offer to resistance against these life-menacing sprayings with field poisons and the massive expansion of the wide soy monocultures – especially in recent months the social conflict has worsened considerably.

The small farmers union of Alto Paraná (ASAGRAPA) is one of the organizations from the soy region, which leads and accompanies this fight actively. In this context ASAGRAPA started the

campaign "Stop the sprayings: Defense of communities and life" in December 2007 together with further organizations" (*"Paren de fumigar en defensa de la comunidad y de la vida?"*).
(<http://fdcl-berlin.de/aktuelles/2008/november-2008-sojarepublik-paraguay-der-widerstand-der-kleinbauern-gegen-die-sozialen-und-oekologischen-folgen-der-sojamonokulturen-in-paraguay/#c3600>)

„The huge genetic soy monocultures fatally affect not only the biodiversity, but also on the health of the rural population: Because of the growing resistance of weed against the Monsanto herbicide Roundup or his Chinese Imitate it is sprayed more and more, thousands of small farmers are poisoned by the swaths or remains in brooks. Juana Cuba from the landless settlement experienced a stillbirth. "This may be due to the sprays", assumes the 31-year-old.

Because their situation often seems hopeless, more and more farmers are committed to nonviolent actions in Paraguay. Their struggle against the seemingly all-powerful agribusiness is impressive illuminated in the documentary Raising Resistance, which started off just in cinemas. "Our young people have been politicized," says the protagonist Jeronimo Arévalos, "the number of those who are opposed to genetic engineering and the injection of poison, is increasing."
(<http://derstandard.at/1338558425432/Agrobusiness-Paraguays-Kleinbauern-im-Soja-Wuergegriff>)

"There are women like the small farmer Juana Gonzalez, whose peanut harvest is decomposed internally by the aggressive pesticides agrochemicals, or the boy from her village: a bath in the contaminated brook has cost him the eyesight." (*"This bean is a bomb" Mirror, May 4, 2012*)

"Headache, rash, abdominal pain and diarrhea, nausea with vomiting and deformities are only some of the side effects that she enumerates. There are no protective green stripes, which are actually required by law for large producers: "They don't want to reduce their acreage planted, but every inch plant only with soy." In San Pedro, many farmers are already sensitized of this problem. They organize demonstrations and try to stop spraying the fields with living walls in the way. But the Brazilian soybean growers are supported by police and military and are hiring armed security forces to intimidate whole communities and activists threaten. "For them, we are cockroaches," said Lucia... "But if we give up and leave our country - what remains to us at all?" she asks.

"For the rural population the arable poisons mean a slow death," confirms Dr. Silvia Gonzalez from the Research Institute CEIDRA the long-term effects of agents, which are carried by the wind for miles. At a meeting, she discussed which chemicals, pesticides, fungicides, etc. come in Paraguay for use and that they have long been banned in Europe as a carcinogen. She tries to improve legal guidelines for the protection of the rural population, but the agricultural lobby in parliament always boycotted such bills with the argument that there is adequate protection. Even in acute cases such as the death of eleven year old Silvino Talavera, who was sprayed two times in a row of pesticide in 2003, deny soy entrepreneurs their responsibility, "Evidences are always required for which the death was caused, and finally they proclaim then, that the parties concerned died on malnutrition, diarrhea or fever - what exactly are the symptoms, that are caused by agricultural poisons. But it is very difficult to prove cause and effect scientifically. Paraguay is a poor country. Such studies take a long time, and meanwhile many people die."
(*„Gift fürs Volk. In Paraguay wächst der Widerstand gegen die Sojamonokulturen“ Steffi Holz, 19.1.11 Seite 2*)

"... There are aircraft noise heard, and when he looked at the sky, a propeller plane was approaching, spraying something in the air." Terrified screams the nun and ethnologist in the

handset they should run away all at once and seek refuge in the houses. But a part of the inhabitants cannot bring itself in security any more. Several women and men are delivered with strong symptoms of intoxication to the hospital, without knowing what pesticide was sprayed from the air.

There are nationwide horrified protests and demonstrations in Asunción. Raquel Peralta makes a complaint and obtained an official investigation to determine the chemical. But the Brazilians would not have to expect real sanctions, she says bitterly. They could also easily buy free of any penalties. "It's a real war," she describes the process of soy producers throughout whole Paraguay to expel the indigenous population by using chemistry targeted. The fact that they itself simply acquire indigenous land, clear forests and cultivate land illegally, is a sad reality." (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay p. 231, 2009*).

Herbicides: poison for humans and the environment...With the increasing cultivation of GM soya in South America, the use of herbicides has increased dramatically. The US company Monsanto GM sells soya seed only in conjunction with the herbicide Round-Up (active ingredient glyphosate). Due to the growing resistance of weeds to Roundup and its imitations, the use of herbicides increases.

Regularly the fields with the highly toxic agricultural chemicals by plane, backpack canister or tractors are sprayed. Residents tell of health problems such as vomiting and respiratory and skin diseases to rising cancer rates in children, miscarriages and birth defects" (*films for one world: Raising Resistance P. 4/5*).

"Over the years, he can see how this vicious cycle is further boosted, because as weeds and pests develop resistance, more and more poison is necessary. A worrying consequence he also sees every day in school: as a result of pesticides applied, where residents are regularly exposed to, many students could not see well or hear. The number of deformities and mental retarded children has increased in the last 20 years." (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay, p. 221, 2009*)

"... ?"soy violates human rights" ... We want to produce, without killing and eating without dying" ... Two representatives of the National Institute for Indigenous, INDI, describe the Situation of some communities of Aba'í in the south of Paraguay, which are surrounded by soy. Twelve people died a few months ago as the result of poisoning by sprays, but nothing was done for the protection of the municipalities, because they have no lobby. "Every day more and more compañeros in Paraguay die from the effects of poisoning with pesticides, without being noticed by the public."

An employee of the NGO Age Vida gives an overview of the most common agro-chemicals and their side effects. 65 of the in Paraguay registered products 65 were among the risk classes 1A and 1B, which are assigned to the red zone that means the most dangerous substances. It is estimated that in Paraguay every year more than 24 million liters of pesticides reach the soil. Particularly fatal were the effects of pesticides on the food chain through their long persistence in soil, air pollution and water contamination. The increase in allergies, skin rashes, digestive problems, respiratory, hormonal disorders, damage to the central nervous system, miscarriages, birth defects in fetuses and newborns and cancers associated with pesticide use are supported by international studies.

Most of the herbicides used in Paraguay have long been banned in Europe as carcinogenic, and many of them, such as DDT, are also to be seen on the Index in Paraguay. Paradoxically although

the introduction of certain herbicides is prohibited, but not the trade with it; a situation that favors smuggling. "The real problem is not, that there are no laws, but that they are not being kept and that there are no controls ..." (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay p. 243, 2009*)

“The active ingredient glyphosate

Carrasco, director of the Laboratory of Molecular Embryology of the Medical University of Buenos Aires, has demonstrated, along with colleagues from Great Britain, Brazil, Argentina and the United States, that particularly the main active ingredient, glyphosate, in "Roundup" is highly problematic. Even at a concentration below the usual amounts for fumigation in agriculture, has shown deformities in animal embryos...

The study was initiated because the investigators were alarmed by the high rate of birth defects in agricultural areas, where GM soya is grown. "Those of us in the laboratory determined results fit exactly with the undesirable developments, that are seen in people who were exposed to glyphosate during pregnancy," said Carrasco" (*"spray with an increase in birth defects implicated in" DNR v. 2:05:11*)

A recent French study at the University of Caen shows even now, that residues of glyphosate are detectable in most GM food and feed on the market today, can be harmful and even fatal in human cells - even at very low levels. "Despite a dilution 100.000fold the insert resulted in a complete death of cells in 24 hours, blocked the vesicular breathing and caused DNA damages." (*14:01:09 Global 2000*)

These facts also show, that the use of GM crops as GM soy involves violations of the Human Right to health - and should be stopped immediately by the government!

5.) Violations of the Rights of People concerning self-determination (Article 1)

Section 1: "All People have the right to self-determination"

Section 2: "All people may, for their own purposes, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources - in no case may a people be deprived of their means of existence!"

Monoculture promotes desertification of soils and loss of fertility. The deforestation destroys the basis of life of the indigenous people, small farmers and rural people. The expulsions, with the result of the exodus of small farmers in the suburbs of large cities, do the rest to increase poverty and steal the resources of the nation.

In the last years, especially the growing areas of soybean threatened forest types in South America and promoted its destruction ... What is needed is a guarantee of access by indigenous and rural residents to own land, which provides them. (*Eat the food ... enjoy! GeN December 2004*)

"Those who use glyphosate as an herbicide change not only our environment, soil and water - they change our complete lives." The scientist makes clear: "This type of soy production changes everything. It changes the culture, social networks; it changes the whole life, everyday life. The soil is contaminated, the water is contaminated, and there are no butterflies, no birds. ... The animals in the local communities are being poisoned" ("*From frogs, chicken-eggs and man*" *GeN from October 2010*)

"... They denounce ... the unjust distribution of land, the exploitation of natural resources by foreign companies and the poisoning of the earth" to. (*Steffi Holz, Paraguay p. 233, 2009*).

"Already today, about half of the maize crop is produced with genetically modified seeds ... because the seed is easy to smuggle into the country. ... Soon Monsanto can legalize his seed and further expand in peace ... And Paraguayan smallholder fears, that with the legalization accelerates the contamination of their traditional seeds by genetically engineered and they get involuntarily in the dependence of the seed companies. GM-maize can be used in contrast to genetically modified soy or wheat not again as seeds." ([Http://www.taz.de/!99622/](http://www.taz.de/!99622/) "attack on the indigenous culture" 8/15/12)

Farmers fear gravely soil contamination

Although Paraguay is one of the small states of South America, the State is a lucrative market for Monsanto and other international seed companies. Alone in maize Paraguay ranks with a cultivated area of good 700,000 hectares and an annual production of over three million tons below the first ten producer countries worldwide. Though the soy bean with 25 percent of the export dominates in 2009, however, with maize still 233 million US dollars were moved. In both cases, genetically modified varieties are on the rise: According to the Agriculture Organization of RAP-AL about 80 percent of GM varieties in the case of three million hectares of soybean acreage covered. For maize, this rate would represent about 50 percent, says Tomás Zayas, the Chairman of the Agriculture Association of Paraguay Alto Paraná.

How many farmers in the South American country Zayas fears now a massive advance of GM seed giants in Paraguay. Monsanto will be able "to legalize and expand" his varieties changed in the genotype, citing the Paraguayan NGO Investigaciones Sociales Base (Base-IS) the association leader. Above all, the small and medium-sized producers fear a contamination of farmland and existing plantations. A mixing of the gene pool would be devastating, especially for corn farmers, because the changed seed produces only one time plants.

Farmers threaten in the face of a limited fertility of traditional seed by uncontrolled crossbred transgenic types of falling into a creeping dependence of the US seed producers. Just in 2003, studies had demonstrated in several states in Mexico such wild introgression of BT-corn varieties of the producer Novartis / Syngenta and Aventis / Bayer. As a result severe deformities of the transgenic wild types were observed. Many of these effects were detected in the economy area in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) also from the Interstate Commission for Environmental Cooperation.

With reference to these findings, the organization Base-IS now also warns against Paraguay in the medium and long-term consequences. Due to the change in the cultivation could "change the traditional indigenous and smallholder culture profoundly," it is said of this page. Activists fear above all, that indigenous seed varieties die out and get the small- and medium-sized producers in dependence on transnational corporations. Additional to these worries is the fear of the massive use of herbicides, which walks along with the cultivation of the maize places resistant to poison. (*"Paraguay gene-coup" Harald Neuber 23.08.2012*)

"Since 14 years, Pedro Peralta observes side effects of extensive soy monocultures. They wear out the soil, accelerate their erosion and poison the waters; (especially after rain the rivers and streams are red for several days). "Fish is no more there for a long time." However, "the strongest subsistence economy of the families is most affected," he explains further, "because the plants on their fields dry up and they themselves become ill." (*"Gift for the people. In Paraguay grows the resistance to the soy monocultures" p. 1*)

"... Since 1993 they exert themselves for a comprehensive agrarian reform a through which the land is to be distributed more equitably. "This territorial self-determination is a prerequisite for a self-determined agriculture and food policies in Paraguay" (Steffi Holz, Paraguay p. 239, 2009)

6.) Violations to the Right to Freedom of Science & Research (Art. 15)

Avoidance of approval procedures by the biotech industry:

Monsanto let in 2012 take up cotton in the register of the state seminal authority Senave. The farmers wanted to buy it - but the corresponding seed in the region did not exist for sale. "Only refined, but not certified seed would be imported from neighboring countries, Brazil and Argentina. Now threatens half of the planned sowing break away ... Now Paraguay's New President ... should cover by decree a "seed emergency" for cottonseed and so allow the purchase of previously non approved seed. ... So the usual minimum of two years running experimental- and study phase on possible effects to human health and the environment would be undermined elegantly." ([Http://www.taz.de/!99622/](http://www.taz.de/!99622/) "attack on the indigenous culture" 15.8. 12).

We urge the Paraguayan Government to provide for an objective, group-independent, user-friendly and accurate assessment of the effects of seeds standing in a queue for the licensing!

7.) Measures to ensure the Rights of Farmers, Peasants and Consumers

The following steps are necessary to ensure these rights:

- Self-sufficiency of the population make sure before exports:

"What can consumers do in Europe? Bernd Bornhorst from Catholic Relief Misereor, that supports organic agriculture for small farmers and Indians in Paraguay, calls for a general reduction of meat consumption and a fundamental change in the EU agricultural and trade policies. "The GM soya imports should be completely stopped", the development expert is convinced "

(<http://derstandard.at/1338558425432/Agrobusiness-Paraguays-Kleinbauern-im-Soja-Wuergegriff>)

- End of the use of pesticides / stop sprays / maintenance of protective measures

such as adequate distances between fields and barriers (e.g. bushes.) to avoid the drift of the sprayed chemicals. Insert implement controls with heavy fines and jail terms.

- **Introduction of an agrarian reform** is required to expropriate large land holdings and to transfer the ground to the Campesinos legally. Nationalization of all major agricultural export companies.

- **Override of land titles**, so the farmers get access to credit, seeds and technical assistance.

- **Introduction of organic farming on a small scale**, the possibility of a variety of cultivated crops for self-sufficiency and the community ownership of land in order to protect the Campesinos of isolation, land speculation and sprays.

- **Access to appropriate medical care**

- **National programs for Food Security and sovereignty over the resources**, that promotes sustainable agriculture with the goal of ending hunger.

- **Implementation of government promises:**

- a) prohibition of GM soya cultivation on public land
- b) Taxation of soy exports

(Resistance to soybean cultivation / Paraguay: small farmers vs. soybean industry sentences 2 and 3).

- **Observance of at least 2-year experimental- and study-phase about possible effects**, before seed is new admitted. No exceptions for GM-Seed of Monsanto and Co.

In summary, it is absolutely clear that the Paraguayan government fails to meet its obligations by signing the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The people of Paraguay is going through a great loss of cultural and food diversity, as a consequence of the "monoculture" imposed by what we call "the model of soybeans," by destroying the traditional foundations of food of our people, by deepening the banishment of thousands of families, rather than encouraging and deepening the cultures and the roots of communities, implementing and encouraging from the government policies to the planting of GM soy monocultures at the expense of production to meet local food needs.

As a consequence of this destructive system of life, biodiversity and culture, the Paraguayan people lose their food sovereignty every day. The health of our people, which is directly related to lifestyle and the pollutants to which they are exposed, day after day is degraded, since every time more and more forests are cut, the fields are planted with monoculture of high toxic inputs rather than the various forms of agriculture that used to coexist. All this can be defined as the depth of a model by the Paraguayan government that brings serious health damage, poverty, loss of diversity and culture, deforestation and pollution, increased hunger and rural exodus.

We ask the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to express their concern at the violations of the rights to food, health and integrity and our self-determination, which are dramatically violated by the intensification of monoculture transgenic model for export and we ask to act urgently to achieve the cessation of these injuries to our most basic Human Rights.