



PRESS RELEASE

## **2 years after the events that took place in Rosarno, the struggle for the respect of farmers and seasonal workers rights continues**

(BRUSSELS, January 11<sup>th</sup>) On January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the African workers employed to harvest citrus fruit in Rosarno, Italy expressed their anger.

This legitimate revolt was triggered by racism, unacceptable working and housing conditions and unpaid wages. It shocked public opinion by highlighting the situations of unsustainable exploitation of the workers.

The mobilization of African workers has increased solidarity between the small-scale farmers who no longer have any income and farm workers. It has also created favorable conditions for the self-organization of the workers. This action has led to the granting of residence and entrepreneurship permits in Rome, and in Nardo in August 2011 to the longest ever seasonal workers' strike in Italy to demand better working and pay conditions.

For years the farmers' unions that are members of the European Coordination Via Campesina and associations or agricultural workers' unions have been struggling together to impose the acceptance of peasant farming, agro-ecological practice and solidarity. *(This is the specific case of the campaign "SOS Rosarno" which involves migrant workers, small-scale farmers whose livelihoods have been destroyed by supermarkets, small retailers and consumers).*

### **What is the current situation in Rosarno?:**

Nothing has really changed in spite of the declarations made by the State and local institutions! The population continues to work for starvation wages, under duress and mercilessly driven by their task-masters.

**And elsewhere?:** The situation is worsening throughout Europe. Liberal policies are responsible for the increased acceleration of the rate at which small farms are disappearing, and the exploitation of workers in all areas of production has continued to increase. All areas of production are now affected.

Now, during the Commemoration week of the Rosarno events, we continue to refuse to participate in a fratricidal war between the world's poor and continue to fight to jointly build an alternative to the liberal productivist policies that are destroying the rural world.

### **We demand:**

- The abolition of national immigration laws that consider immigrants simply as a problem to be solved or a means of production that has to be dealt with;
- The regularisation of their situation for all migrants who have no work or residents permits throughout Italy
- The creation of a publicly run system to receive all seasonal workers;
- A system of public employment in agriculture in order to end illegal recruitment;
- The inclusion of criteria for assessing the respect of workers' rights in production specifications, with a penalty of exclusion for non-respect.
- A radical overhaul of the CAP: conditions that would help the social and ecological sustainability of production, support peasant agriculture, and establish a specific support scheme for small farms.
- Guaranteed prices for agricultural produce that properly cover production and wage costs.
- The implementation of land reform to facilitate access to land for young people and small-scale farmers in general.

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