

Human Rights, Food Sovereignty and Solidarity Economy

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This year we celebrate the Rural Coalition's 30th Anniversary and the 60th year of the Human Rights Declaration. All the human rights have the same importance. And they must be assured together. But today, I would like to underline only two: the right to the worthy work and the right to feeding. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights affirms that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." Today, however, 815 million people are living the drama of the hunger in the world. They do not have food in necessary amount, quality and regularity. Most of the time, to get food they are forced to submit indignity situations for the human being. On the other hand, Forbes magazines states that 1,125 of the richer people of the world withhold a agreed patrimony of US\$ 4.4 trillions, a superior value to the annual income of more than the half of the world population.

In his turn, the article 23 of the Declaration affirms that: "everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (...) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection." However today there are 195 million unemployed in the world. And the International Work Organization predicts that by the end of the current year this number will increase by 5 million unemployed people. A great part of these unemployed, after finding eventual occupation, are submitted to the precarious and indignities work relations to satisfy the basic necessities of the proper family and themselves.

This situation does not occur by chance, but because the way the society is organized, it affirms the interest of the profit above the human rights, above of the human dignity. Day by day this movement of exclusion is deeper. It occurs because of the followings aspects: the technological development has made it possible to produce more wealth that could be shared in a just way; it equally makes it possible to reduce the hours of working for all, generating a free time to well-live. But under the logic of concentration of wealth, this reduction of the alive work in the production, results in unemployment, time of no work, a time of exclusion.

Despite of the hunger in the world, the investors and speculators, to prevent increasing losses with the constant depreciation of the dollar and unreliability of certain applications of high risk that had entered recently in crisis, had moved investments for the futures market of commodities. They are raising the prices of oil, metallic commodities (gold, silver, etc) and of nourishing commodities, particularly of the 4 main grains of the world-wide feeding: rice, wheat, soy and corn. Great exporting companies, in turn, have delayed the celebration of contracts, waiting for the prices to raise even more. In fact, under the logic of the market, the hunger of hundreds of millions of excluded people does not exist as a demand, because they do not have money to satisfy their hunger. They do not exist for the market if they don't have something to offer in exchange to satisfy their necessities.

And thus, the negation of human rights, such as work and conditions of a worthy life for the families, moves millions of people in the entire world in migratory processes in search of better conditions of life.

But how can we assure such rights for all, guaranteeing work, food security and food sovereignty in our countries? Guaranteeing the deepening of the cohesion and social integration in the communities, of the populations in its territories?

Since the 70's, innumerable social movements and new forms of organization of production, trade, consumption, finances and technological development, have appeared in the entire world, centered in the accomplishment of the dignity of each person and in the maintenance of the balance of ecosystems.

From the 90's, these movements have started organizing collaborative networks among themselves in the fields of the culture, the politics and the economy. These collaborative and solidarity networks started to act in synergy in global actions, such as in the manifestations against the World Trade Organization's millennium round and in the accomplishment of World Social Forum. These collaborative networks, in the specific field of the solidarity economy, have been multiplied in the entire world, assuring conditions of worthy consumption and work for millions of people.

In Brazil, for example, the mapping of initiatives of solidarity economy that practice the self management and act in cooperation with other actors resulted in 22 thousand enterprises, with 1 million, 687 thousands workers and annual invoicing of USD 4.4 billions; 800 thousand ranks of work were created in the last 7 years; 46% of the enterprises participate of some network or forum of solidarity economy; 58% make alliances as popular, syndicate, communitarian and cultural movements.

We could say in conclusion that the unemployment and the subhuman conditions consumption are important factors in the current migratory process; that all the human rights have the same importance and must be assured in its whole; that the way to organize society which affirms the interest of the profit above of the human rights, above the dignity of a human being, is not ethically acceptable. And that for advancing in the accomplishment of these rights, we need to transform the social relations, so that it promotes the dignity of each person, assuring for all the economic, cultural and politics conditions for the ethical exercise of the public and private freedoms. Finally, the solidarity economy in the last decade generated millions of ranks of work in the entire world and is contributing to guarantee the food security for millions of people, either producing food, either distributing wealth produced in a just way, promoting the sustainable local development and the integration of the people in their communities, fortifying social links and creating alternatives for the human development of the people in their territories. As well as contributing to the reinforcement of the food sovereignty for the sustainable production and increasing of food offers inside each Country.