



Indigenous and Peasant Farmers in Felipe Carrillo Puerto

Mobilization Agreed
Sunday, September 26th, 2010

By Jesus Vazquez

Members of indigenous organizations coming from Kenya, Philippine, Bolivia, Brazil, US and Mexico, coordinated by the National Union of Autonomous Regional Peasants' Organizations (UNORCA) and the International Forum on Globalization represented by Victor Menotti, agreed this weekend in Felipe Carrillo Puerto to carry out social mobilizations in order to pressure governments around the world to comply with international treaties and agreements related to the prevention of global warming.

With the attendance of 60 leaders, women and men from the Zona Maya, the convening began with a prayer and followed by the planting of five sacred *ceiba* trees. In Hotel Esquivel in the Zona Maya, the environmentalist, Victor Menotti, installed a workshop with thorough translation; they began the dialogue and exchange of experiences between representatives of the indigenous people of the world.

Victor Menotti, who has participated in other environmental convening (Cochabamba, Bolivia and The United Nations Climate Change Conference Cop 15 in Copenhagen, Denmark), said that the forum is very important because we all have an interest in projecting our voices into the process to highlight the strong impact of climate change.

On the other hand, the technical director of forest cooperatives of the Zona Maya, based in Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Victoria Santos, assured that in the United Nations' COP16 Climate Conference, to be held in Cancun from November 29th to

December 10th, peasants and indigenous people will be present as they were in the year 2003. Today more than ever, they need to be heard so that the local as well as the international community know that they are present with proposals.

She also pointed out that all countries seek recognition of indigenous rights of how they have lived since ancient times, because they have received the least support.

In Felipe Carrillo Puerto, there are 20 indigenous groups and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation REDD is a key element in any global climate solution since nearly 20 percent of global carbon emissions come from tropical deforestation (as much as China and U.S. separately).

Also, the chairperson of the UN United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues of the Philippines (UNPFII), Victoria Tauli Corpuz, who is an indigenous with the most important position in the UN, said that she will participate in the negotiations of COP 16, looking for the incorporation of indigenous people's rights into the final arrangements to recognize the traditional knowledge of indigenous people who have to manage their forest and everything related to the habitats they inhabit.

Tauli Corpuz said there is already a basic text on indigenous peoples' right and "we want to ensure that text is there and that governments allow people's participation in key decisions for the conservation of the environment". Regarding the events that will take place at COP16, she said it was a good exercise to lobby governments.

She also noted that this meeting with Mayans and activists from other countries was interesting because REDD is a subject that should be discussed urgently with governments, adding that her country and indigenous people are the most affected because the population live in mountains and are affected by the arrival of typhoons and hurricanes.