

RED POR UNA AMERICA LATINA LIBRE DE TRANSGENICOS



Canciller de la Pontificia Academia de Ciencias Sociales
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Dear Msgr Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo

We are very concern to known that on September 23th, in the Gregorian University in Rome took place a conference sponsored by the Embassy of US in the Holy See and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. The theme of the conference was "Feeding a Hungry World: The Moral Imperative of Biotechnology ". We know that all the speakers maintained a totally favourable position towards genetically modified food, and they indicated that they are the only practical way to solve the problem of hunger in the world, ignoring that hunger is being aggravated, exactly by the cultivation of GM crops, and that besides, there are serious health, ethics and moral implications in the use of these technologies.

The agrobiotechnology is part of the package of structural adjustment that force our countries to use our better lands to grow cash crops for the payment of the external debt that weighs on all our countries. GM crops are not designed to solve the hunger of the poor. In countries like Argentina, the economic model based on the genetically modified soy, has produced severe impacts, including the expansion of large sale monocultures, the degradation of the soil, the loss of biodiversity, and an agricultural model without farmers, what has generated hunger and poverty in the country. The biotechnology has also produced a fast process of concentration of the land.

With genetically modify seeds a process of privatization of the life is being crown, and just in few hands. The producer loses the control on their seeds, because they hold intellectual property rights, what reinforces the monopoly of those large multinational corporations that have developed and trade these seeds.

Intending to feed to the hungry with genetically modified food, is to expose to the most vulnerable population, with low level of malnutrition, to food that have not been appropriate evaluated for the human beings. Already, there are several evidences of the impacts of GMO food in human health. The risk of eating genetically modified food will be greater in these immune depressed human populations.

Hunger in the world can be solved only through Food Sovereignty, exercised by the people at the local, regional and national level. Food Sovereignty should be based not only in the increase of the food production, but in the economic and physical access to nutritious and healthy food, based on self-sufficiency. To achieve this aim, it is important to control the productive process, in an autonomous way, and to promote and recover traditional practices and technologies that assure biodiversity conservation and protection of national and local production. Access to water, land, genetic resources and fair markets must be granted to achieve Food Sovereignty.

Right now, the big producers of food are delivering GMOs as food aid to feed those with food shortage. They are given this food to the same victims of the prevailing economic



model. This is not solidarity with those who suffers hunger, because they are delivering products, which have been questioned around the world, and is rejected by many people, especially in developed countries. The hunger should receive the best food, it should be culturally adequate, but by above all, food aid should not undermine Food Sovereignty.

There is sufficient independent scientific literature on the risks of GMOs at socioeconomic, environmental and in human health level, so we do not need to add more, and we are sure you are aware of most of existent scientific evidences which show that GMO are not save.

Por otra parte, la iglesia no puede desconocer los cuestionamientos de orden ético relacionados con la manipulación de la vida. Avalar, aceptar o permitir que las empresas jueguen al papel de "El Creador", provocará un sismo en los cimientos de la iglesia.

Furthermore, the church cannot ignore the ethical implications related to the manipulation of life. To support, accept or allow that private companies play the role of "The Creator", will remove the foundation of the Church.

In dubio pro natura
In dubio pro salute
In dubio pro popolo
In dubio pro vita

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