Civil Society in the Global Food Arena

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Section A

History of Food Structures
Earth Summit

- From 4 through 6 June 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) will take place in Rio de Janeiro.

- Also referred to as the Rio+20 or the Earth Summit 2012 due to the initial conference held in Rio in 1992, the objectives of the Summit are:
  - To secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development
  - To assess progress towards internationally agreed goals on sustainable development
  - To address new and emerging challenges

- The Summit will also focus on two specific themes: a green economy in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development, and an institutional framework for sustainable development.
The 37th Session of the Committee on World Food Security will be held from 17 to 22 October 2011 in Rome
Founding of FAO

There were three major steps in the founding of FAO

1. 1943: the holding of the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture, at Hot Springs, Virginia

2. The setting up of a United Nations Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture to make the necessary preparations for FAO’s formal establishment

3. 1945: the holding in Quebec of the First Session of the FAO Conference, at which the process of formation of the Organization was completed
The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations is based in Rome, Italy.

In July, 1960, the FAO launched the Freedom from Hunger Campaign.

It was one of the first UN efforts to collaborate with the non-governmental sector in a structured program.
Food Security

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.
Food Sovereignty

- Food sovereignty: La Via Campesina
Food Sovereignty

- Food sovereignty seeks to reclaim sovereignty over decision making on agricultural and food security policy, challenges the imbalances and inequities in current global rules on agricultural trade, and draws a common position for peasant farmers in the developed and developing world.
The first 15 years of the FHC included three world food congresses

- One in Washington, D.C., in 1963, and one in the Hague in 1970 (these were people’s gatherings, not intergovernmental meetings)

- The 1974 World Food Conference was an intergovernmental meeting in response to the food crisis of 1972-1973. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) held a parallel meeting.
The NGO forum diagnosed the causes of the food crisis as political and structural.
The World Food Crisis gave the NGO community motivation for further deepening of their own analysis and advocacy, but they themselves in the 70s didn’t awaken to their own need to build links with people’s movements on whose behalf they advocated.
The World Food Summit of 1996 and the NGO Forum for Food Security were completely separate events held at the same time, one metro stop apart from each other, in Rome.
“Nothing about Us, Without Us”

International Day of Disabled Persons, 2004

The theme has been generalized to include farmers, women, indigenous peoples, youth, and others who have decided to speak for themselves and to participate in governance.
The Forum Declaration identifies as causes of food insecurity those tendencies which the official declaration presents as solutions: liberalization of agricultural trade, concentration of farms and capitalist intensification of production, strengthened role of transnational corporations in the food chain.