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# The "New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition"

## A threat to local populations in Africa

Family farmers and small-holders are the main investors in African agriculture, collectively producing about 70% of the food in Africa and providing about 60% of employment in rural Africa. They need to be at the core of efforts to combat food and nutrition insecurity and be given a strong voice when it comes to building agro-ecological farming systems based on food sovereignty and local production systems, with local control over land, fisheries, forests, seeds and knowledge.

The *New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition* (New Alliance), a large public-private partnership launched in 2012 by the G8 and aiming to boost private investment in agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, in fact works against the objective of improving the lives of millions of local family farmers and small-holders. It promotes corporate-led, input-dependent agriculture and has been heavily criticised by civil society organisations around the world which have highlighted the risks it poses to local communities and the environment.

**EU support despite many open questions**

The EU is involved in the New Alliance to the tune of €1.2bn and leads on the cooperation frameworks with Malawi and Ivory Coast. In both countries civil society has been criticising the lack of information available to affected local populations about the New Alliance. Furthermore, several studies have highlighted the risks of land grabbing or the social, environmental and economic risks associated with the expansion of tobacco production in Malawi.

Given the EU's involvement in the initiative as well as the risks this public-private partnership poses to food sovereignty and the fight against poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa, the European Parliament's development committee today adopted its report on the New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security (New Alliance) and took a critical stance towards this initiative. This report, by Greens/EFA MEP Maria Heubuch calls on the EU to fundamentally review its participation in this New Alliance and to address all deficiencies outlined in the report.

**Land rights particularly endangered**

Key demands include:
- Stricter regulation and monitoring of public-private partnerships
- Independent accountability mechanism, including an appeal mechanism for local people

- Compliance with the FAO's Tenure Guidelines
- Ex-ante impact assessments on land rights
- Full transparency of all funding granted to private sector companies
- Increased investments in agro-ecological practices

Prior to the adoption of the report, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Olivier de Schutter, was commissioned by the European Parliament to produce a study on the risks and benefits of this New Alliance. Focusing on the areas of governance and ownership, land rights, contract farming, seed sector reforms, nutrition and gender, the study concludes that the New Alliance is "seriously deficient in a number of areas".

This report, by Greens/EFA MEPs in the development committee is largely based on the study's recommendations. **Maria Heubuch** concludes: *"Big companies such as Monsanto, Cargill and Unilever are primarily working for profit. It's difficult to see what sort of sustainable development benefits the support of such big multinationals through the New Alliance brings for the local populations, including smallholders and family farmers. Particularly when the latter have been largely excluded from the decision-making process related to this initiative. We need a genuine change of direction in agricultural and development policy. Everyone should have the means and opportunities to choose what kind of food they want to grow and consume. Agro-ecological practices, access to local markets and resources as well as a fair price for goods delivered are crucial if smallholders and family farmers are to have a chance of seeing genuine improvements in their lives."*

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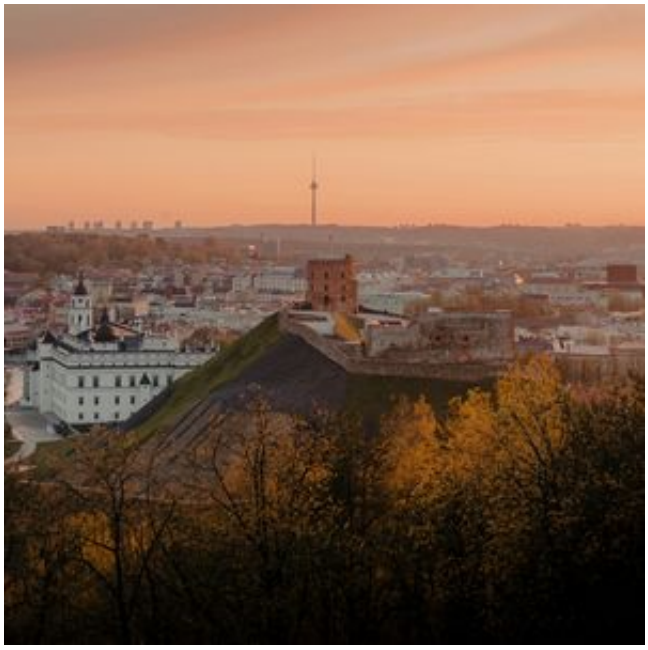
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