

Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chair!

I'm speaking on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Vice-chair,

In the preamble we found some other questions we would like to raise.

The first paragraph of the preamble mentions that peasants and other people working in rural areas are equal to all other people. We feel that this statement of preamble is not consistent throughout the text of the declaration, with some articles giving a feeling that some groups of people should be given special priorities to, for example, the use of natural resources and rights to land over others. If we are to consider giving positive discrimination to peasants and other people living and working in rural areas, with the understand that many of the rights described in articles are of great significance to the peasants and other people working in the rural areas, we would like to avoid any creation of new rights that would come at the cost of others' rights. This topic thus needs a thorough examination of existing situation and existing legal framework. That is the reason why this week we keep repeating about the importance to have a list of sources, which would show exactly what terms are taken out of what international human rights instruments and in order to avoid ambiguities.

The third paragraph in the preamble mentions harmonious practices of production that support Mother Earth. We would like to note that different countries and different cultures have a very broad understanding of what might be understood as harmonious practices. These understandings may vary from country to country, being even completely opposite at some points. We would like to see this term explained in detail, preferably by using agreed language. Furthermore, we would like to note that the term „Mother earth“, that gives legal personhood to the natural system, is not yet agreed upon in the international law.

The seventh paragraph of the preamble stresses several factors that make it difficult for small-scale fishers and fish workers to make their voices heard, and we would like to hear an explanation as to what are these several factors, and why the fishers are specifically highlighted, among others discussed in the draft declaration.

Mr. Vice-Chair, the last paragraph of the preamble speaks about the important role of the United Nations in promoting and protecting rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas. We would like to reiterate, that there are other organizations as well, which are specialized in dealing with these questions, such as, for example, Food and Agriculture organization, International Labour Organization and WIPO, which definitely should be consulted in the drafting process, as well as their role in promoting and protecting the rights of peasants should be recognized.

Thank you, Mr Vice-Chair.