

Statement by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the 17th working Group of the Right of Peasants

Madam Chairperson,

Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement delivered by South Africa on behalf of Africa Group.

My delegation would like to congratulate, you, Madam Chairperson Rapporteur for your election to lead the working group. We strongly believe that your Stewardship will take the working group’s mandate steps forward. Ethiopia supports, in general, the provision of the UN declaration. We are also ready to negotiate the text point by point.

The highest percentage of the Ethiopian population live in rural area. As a result, the Ethiopian government has designed and implemented small holder Agricultural Development-led Economy as an inclusive development strategy to address the interest of the rural society and to transform the national economy. The Ethiopian government has already started reaping the fruitage of its decision, making agriculture the leading economic sector. The development of other sectors hinged upon achievements in the agricultural sector. The Ethiopian economic success of the last 12 consecutive years, is due to the past three successive five year peasant focused development plans, inter alia, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme, the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty, and the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP).

Agriculture, the highest source of GDP and employment in Ethiopia, is performed by Peasants. Thus, Land plays a pivotal role in the Ethiopian peasant’s life. Bearing this in mind, Ethiopian Government has designed a legal framework on Land acquisition, transfer, redistribution and consolidation programs.

In accordance with the Ethiopian land proclamation, Acquisition of rural land is free of charge and given for an indefinite period to peasants, pastoralists and semi-pastoralists who wish to be engaged in agriculture. With the support of the government, peasant farmers, pastoralists and semi-pastoralists can transfer their rural land-use rights through donation and inheritance to members of their family and can also lease part of their holdings to other farmers or investors for a specified period of time.

Furthermore, the Government is working to address the issues of expanding rural infrastructure (health, education, access to safe water, and rural roads), and improving smallholders’ access to the rural financial credits not only to protect and promote the rights of peasants but also to use the area as an engine for sustainable development .

Finally, we wish you all the best, Madam Chairperson Rapporteur, in your future endeavours.

Thank you