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## **48<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Council September – October 2021**

### **General Debate Item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention.**

We commend the efforts of the Council on mainstreaming human rights into practices of UN system entities and other multilateral organizations. While trade liberalization is believed to foster sustainable growth and increase welfare across nations, the WTO stringent rules on market price support do not always fit for purpose to transform our agri-food systems and contribute to the Four Betters: Better nutrition, better production, better environment and a better life.

However, without going above WTO's '*de minimis*' rule of 10%, many governments would be obliged to push millions of smallholder farmers into poverty. The alternative would be to invite big agri-corporations and let them swallow family farms leading to a race to the bottom in social protection, real income generation opportunities and long-term financial security of millions of small farmers.

As the main international organ for the promotion and protection of human rights, this Council should push WTO to recognize the primacy of human rights in all trade agreements. Those that fail the human rights compliance check should be renegotiated and rectified to ensure that public interest is not overridden by profit maximization of investors and transnational corporations.

To have confidence that a WTO with a rules-based international trade system can genuinely offer opportunities for all member countries, the Human Rights Council should urge WTO to be more cognizant of human rights of ordinary people.