

New strategy to empower the people, dismantle corporate influence



Newly elected president of FIAN International. Photo by: Alex del Rey/FIAN International

Convening in Nepal, FIAN representatives the world over identified the current struggles for the right to food and nutrition and strategized about building people's power.

On the occasion of the FIAN International's Council meeting, celebrated every three years, fifty delegates from across regions gathered in Kathmandu, Nepal, and identified current challenges, both emerging and long-known, that leave millions hungry and malnourished, while driving our world to destruction. To face such a test, FIAN International launches a revamped strategy, under the leadership of a newly elected president, Sarba Raj Khadka

New emerging and long-known challenges

In their conclusions, the incursion of transnational, private corporate interests –also known as “corporate capture”- is degrading regional and national food systems, democratic governance and the human rights system itself. With the corporate sector increasing financial control and commodification of land, seeds, food, and water, access beyond business influence is almost becoming a mirage.

On another note, while governments are retreating from their duties and obligations, authoritarian and repressive regimes are on the rise. This results in the shrinking of policy spaces for civil society and increasing criminalization of their social and political struggles –so too the appalling impunity of human rights violators. As echoed by the delegates, the ecological integrity and social fabric that support healthy and sustainable food systems needs to be restored and democracy rebuilt.

New strategy for challenging times

With this context in mind, FIAN International and sections around the world committed, in a new Strategic Plan, to working towards adequate food and nutrition and healthy diets in sustainable and localized food systems. Strengthening peoples' sovereignty over these systems as well as over natural resources, while fighting against all patterns that lead to climate and eco-destruction, will also be key goals for the organization in the coming years.

Increasingly obstructing local and national patterns of food production, markets and economies, corporate power needs to be pulled to pieces. It is crucial that FIAN International keeps working towards establishing binding mechanisms to regulate corporations and other business interests. Hand in hand with this aim, the organization will work to end the dismantling of democracy and human rights, both individual and collective, and the criminalization of social and political struggles and actors.

Newly elected president

After more than six years of exceptional commitment and service, the presidency of Anita Klum (Sweden) has come to an end. "Anita dedicated passionately to strengthening our national sections and making our internal structures more accountable and participatory. That's perhaps the reason why many new groups wish to join FIAN," says Sofia Monsalve, FIAN International's Secretary General.

Taking office at a time where human rights movements are growing and being strengthened in the Asian continent - and where much will be at stake in the future for the wider global movement, the newly elected president, Sarba Raj Khadka, has long accompanied FIAN in its journey. In addition to being founding General Secretary and Chairperson of FIAN Nepal, Dr, Khadka has been a very proactive member of FIAN International's Board in the last years. "I feel very honored to be elected as the new president. I look forward to contributing to supporting the struggles for the right to food and nutrition, under the premises of our strategy to dismantle corporate power, while strengthening people's sovereignty," he states.