

Community Alliance for Global Justice

presents

"DISARMING GATES":

Participatory Theater at the Gates Foundation

Global Action Against the United Nations Food Systems Summit

Did you know?

Bill Gates controls not only land, financial flows, and policy in the US and around the world--he and his foundation have also amassed an enormous and undemocratic influence on global food and agricultural policy.

FRIDAY July 16, 12-1pm PDT

440 5th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98109

- The Gates Foundation has been criticized by agrarian social movements around the world.
- In a recent Op-ed criticizing Gates, representatives from the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) welcomed "investment in agriculture on our continent" but "in a form that is democratic and responsive to the people at the heart of agriculture, not as a top-down force that ends up concentrating power and profit into the hands of a small number of multinational companies."

This participatory theater and protest is organized as part of an international call to action in opposition to the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) in September 2021 and the pre-Summit dialogues from July 26-28 in Rome.

- Numerous grassroots organizations oppose the Summit's pro-corporate agenda and will organize multiple, decentralized counter-events in response.
- The Gates Foundation and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) are influential actors in promoting corporate and industrial agriculture at the Summit.
- AGRA's President Agnes Kalibata was appointed chair of the UNFSS--a choice that was criticized in a letter to the UN General Secretary by 176 civil society organizations in 83 countries, followed by a statement signed by over 500 organizations, academics, and social movements.

***"But they're helping feed the world...
What's so bad about that?"***



It's undemocratic...

- The UN Food Systems Summit has sidelined civil society in appointing representatives and recruiting participants.
- The Gates Foundation has long been criticized for its governance structure, with a board composed primarily of family members and founders. Furthermore, there is no democratic mechanism for the wider public to have a say in how the Foundation's assets--worth billions of dollars and sheltered from taxation through philanthropy laws--are disbursed toward public ends.

It doesn't work in all contexts...

- The International Assessment of Agricultural Science, Knowledge, and Technology for Development, commissioned by the UN and the World Bank and involving collaboration among 400 scientists from around the world, found that industrial agriculture and GMOs were not "silver bullet" solutions to world hunger. Instead, the report recommended more holistic and context-specific approaches to agricultural development.
- In a 2019 report, the UN High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition similarly opposed a "one-size-fits-all" approach, demonstrating the need for diverse agricultural innovations (including agroecology) and different pathways to sustainable food systems transformation.

It can be bad for jobs...

- The first Green Revolution relied on high-yielding seed varieties, chemical inputs, and irrigation--all of which were sustained by massive government subsidies (some funded directly by the United States during the Cold War). Farm subsidies are not fiscally sustainable in the long-term, and are often only available to large-scale producers of commodity crops. This has led to long-term problems resulting from economic dependence on export crops and insufficient development of non-agricultural employment.

It's bad for the climate...

- Global food systems generate approximately one-third of all greenhouse gases. Agricultural activities within the farm gate account for 20 percent of total anthropogenic emissions. Although harder to quantify, industrial agriculture also has significant upstream (e.g. from manufacturing chemical fertilizers) and downstream (e.g. from food processing and transportation) contributions to emissions.

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