

CSM Plenary Statement on SOFA

15 October 2018 – Nasmin Choudhury, CSM Youth Constituency (India)

I come from India and witness to ravaging impacts of forced migration. Our villages are empty of young boys and youth. Schools have only girls as boys are forced to migrate to cities, and even further to the Gulf countries to chase their dream of overcoming poverty. I also bring attention to our sisters and brothers from other regions and continents, most of whom are small scale food producers from Pacific Islands, and Africa have to move due to the devastating impact of climate change; either rising sea levels, drought, floods among a range of impacts. In Latin America, and across the globe land, resources and territories of local communities are being grabbed by large investors, thousands being evicted from their lands and forced to seek menial labor in urban areas. The protracted crisis, war and conflict in the Middle-East has also left millions forced to seek safety and join the ever-bloating ranks of refugees in Europe. This is not the future we chose as youth!

Migration among youth has been a major concern of the Youth constituency. We state with much emphasis: Migration is not a choice! It is the consequence of conflicts, violation of our rights, of the right to food, of women rights, of indigenous peoples rights, of workers rights, of peasant's rights. It is the consequence of climate change, raising inequalities, globalisation based on resource grabbing. I repeat: We don't see our future in such a world.

Those who have survived the way of enforced migration, often face in the host countries the same situation of discrimination, exploitation, impoverishment, acute insecurity including food insecurity, living as clandestines, not even been recognized as women and men. They end producing food in rich countries in undecent – even slave-like - conditions, or they are chased in cities where food is being distributed.

In the migration process, youth gets disconnected from their traditional knowledge of livelihood – agriculture, fishing, among others at the same time detachment from their culture puts them to a major emotional crisis. Women and girls are trafficked and pushed into sex work while migrating.

This also is not the future we want!

What is the future we inspire to? Nothing that is different from the common man or woman. A life of dignity, living in our communities, nourishing not only families, our communities but also our Mother Planet. In name of the youth constituency our expectations to the CFS are high to realize our rights and have a world free from hunger. A recommitment of all of us is required to give us a future that is based on decent livelihood, dignity, a world free of conflict, war and equity and equality among all societies around the world.