



Farmers' Dialogue Uganda - mobilisation and public recognition

On Uganda's Independence Day, 9th October 2010, the Ugandan Farmers' Dialogue team marched with both the International and the Ugandan Farmers' Dialogue banners, in front of the President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, and his guests during the celebrations. The team received many of calls of appreciation.

It is important that Farmers' Dialogue teams do all they can to promote farming and mobilize people. It is planned that the next International Farmers' Dialogue will be held in Rwanda in 2012. The Rwandan team will need all the help we can give them to prepare and run the event. We know they can help us through all they have learnt over the past decade and the developments that are taking place in their country.

There are many people working to develop agriculture as a result of meeting Farmers' Dialogue. It is important that we circulate information about our work. Here in Uganda, we have hosted John and Mary Bond. John is the coordinator for the Caux Forum for Human Security which is aimed at changing the traditional dynamic of diplomacy by encouraging greater listening, collaboration and attention to past hurts. He was invited by the King of Bunyoro, one of the Ugandan kingdoms where oil has been discovered. The King, who had attended the 2010 Caux Forum, had asked for John's help as he works to ensure the oil is used for the benefit of all. During their visit John and Mary talked to our students at Namasuba College of Commerce and to political leaders and to farmers.

As a result of the Farmers' Dialogues in Uganda and Kenya Rosemary Namatsi from the Manor House Agricultural training centre in Kenya, which specialises in bio-intensive sustainable farming, has been in Uganda. She was invited by the Kawami Development Association and Namasuba College of Commerce, to take part in a programme run by the Farmers' Dialogue that aims to help small farmers at the Kawami Bio-Intensive Agricultural Centre. They are running a Farmers' Education Programme supervised by Carol Barazza, a former student of Manor House.

Sixteen farmers are involved in this programme, and it is expected that this group will visit Kenya to see Manor House and later to visit the Nyala milk cooperative in Ndaragwa, Kenya, at the invitation of Mr. Duncan Nduhiu. This project is now the largest milk collection scheme in Kenya. Farmers from Ndaragwa have also been invited to visit Manor House farm. Duncan Nduhiu and Jamil Ssebalu are making the arrangements that will include a visit to Mr. Julius Khakula and his team in Bungoma to learn from the work they are doing in their area.

The planned visit is being run without outside funding. This is our first farm study tour in a neighbouring country and we believe that what will be learnt will be very helpful to those taking part. The team would be grateful to receive any advice on how we could achieve the best results from this visit.

Jamil Ssebalu, for the Ugandan Farmers' Dialogue team