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Africa: De Schutter Highlights the Importance of a Rights-Based Approach to Food Security

BY OLIVIA ARNOW, 15 JUNE 2012

PRESS RELEASE

Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, spoke yesterday at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) about the "right to food." According to De Schutter, a rights-based approach is crucial in attaining global food security, particularly in developing nations.

Addressing recent developments in the right-to-food movements in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, De Schutter described the potential of a rights-based approach in replacing the current supply-and-demand model. This approach is not just about availability, but requires that we pay attention to both food accessibility and adequacy.

By regulating private actors and de-emphasizing state power, De Schutter believes that populations can protect their right to food. "I believe that accountability, participation, and empowerment are absolutely key ingredients in the success of food security strategies," he said.

"We are moving from a situation in which governments speak across populations to a triangular relationship in which civil society, the beneficiaries of support, are involved in designing policies which benefit them."

Olivia Arnow is a research intern with the Nourishing the Planet project.

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