



# MILLET NETWORK OF INDIA

# 101, Kishan Residency, Street No 5, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh – 500 016,  
Ph: 040 27764577 / 27764722, [www.milletindia.org](http://www.milletindia.org)

29<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Shri Pranab Mukherjee  
Finance Minister of India  
New Delhi  
Tel: 011 23092810

## Sub: Comments and Suggestions on Draft Food Security Bill

Respected Shri Mukherjee,

It is with keen interest that we read the Hindustan Times newspaper dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010 (*copy attached for your reference*) that a confidential note from your office stating that the draft Food Security Bill does not fulfill the promises of the congress election manifesto. The article reports that the three-page note was handed to the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) after it was brought to notice by UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi to reconsider a draft Food Security Bill.

We deeply appreciate this position taken by the congress led UPA government that the National Food Security Act must ensure food for all, addressing the concerns of availability, access and absorption. Further it is extremely encouraging to note that the UPA under the leadership of Smt. Sonia Gandhi believes that the Public Distribution System (PDS) needs to be reformed through inclusion of grains that are locally bought and should also accommodate grains such as jowar, bajra and other millets.

We would like to bring to your attention that in February 2010, prior to the commencement of the Budget session of the Parliament we have written a detailed letter to you with regards to the urgent need to create space for India's millet based agriculture in the 12<sup>th</sup> financial plan and budget (2010-11) as a commitment to International Year of Biodiversity. We do hope that you have received this letter. If not we would be happy to share it with you once again.

On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010, we have also written to Mrs. Gandhi highlighting the importance of millets in our food and farming systems. A copy of this letter is attached for your reference.

With this note, we are sending you our specific comments on the Draft Food Security Bill which are primarily with the purpose of integrating local biodiverse and millet based farming systems into our the mechanisms proposed. These have been typed on to the existing draft in track changes mode. We are not sure whether Planning Commission and other officials would be retaining the present format of the Bill during the revisions and rewriting. However, our main purpose to send this note to your esteemed selves is so that some of the key issues with regards to biodiverse farming, livelihoods and

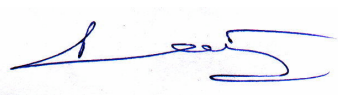
nutritional security are addressed in any national level legislation seeking to address Food Security.

We look forward to your intervention at this critical time when climate change issues require local and grounded responses. Millets crops bring with them not just the promise to address the food security concerns but also present a significant solution as they are very own indigenous C4 crops [crops which are climate change compliant]. These crops have within their cultivation carbon fixing properties. Further, in the light of growing water shortage, millet crops with their use of minimal or no water bring with them a revolutionary solution to addressing and mitigating the impacts of climate crisis on India's agricultural systems.

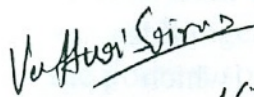
It would be our honour and pleasure to meet you in person along with millet farmers to discuss this further. We would be willing to do this in New Delhi or during any of your visits in Andhra Pradesh, where the MINI secretariat is currently located. In this light we seek an appointment from you to discuss this in person, where we can share our work and discuss the possibilities that rest with the future of millets in India.

We request you to also consider forwarding our comments to the members of the Planning Commission who are presently looking at the Draft Bill to indicate revisions; the information on which was also presented in the Hindustan Times article mentioned above.

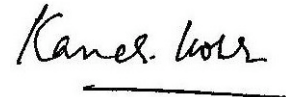
Sincerely,



PV Satheesh  
Convener



Vatturi Srinivas  
National Coordinator



Kanchi Kohli  
Campaign Advisor

CC:

1. Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, UPA, Indian National Congress, 24, Akbar Road, New Delhi - 110011 TEL : 91-11-23019080 , FAX : 91-11-23017047, [soniagandhi@sansad.nic.in](mailto:soniagandhi@sansad.nic.in)
2. Shri Sharad Pawar, Minister of Agriculture, Krishi Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi, Tel: 011 23783691, Fax: 23384129, [sharadpawar.sp@gmail.com](mailto:sharadpawar.sp@gmail.com)
3. Shri P Chidambaram, Minister for Home Affairs, North Block, Central Secretariat, New Delhi - 110 001, Tel: 011 23092462 / 23017256, Fax: 011 23792222 Email: [hm@nic.in](mailto:hm@nic.in)
4. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for Finance, Government of India, Tel: 011 23092810, Fax: 011 23093289, [pkm@sansad.nic.in](mailto:pkm@sansad.nic.in)
5. Shri A K Antony, Minister for Defence, South Block, New Delhi Tel: 011 23012286, Fax: 011 23015403 Email: [am@krishi.nic.in](mailto:am@krishi.nic.in)
6. Kumari Mamata Banerjee, Minister for Railways, Rail Bhavan, New Delhi, Tel: 011 23381213, Fax: 23387333, Email: [mr@rb.railnet.gov.in](mailto:mr@rb.railnet.gov.in)

7. Shri Dayanidhi Maran, Minister for Textiles, Udhog Bhawan, New Delhi Tel: 011 23063779, Fax: 011 23061575 / 044 24371616, Email: [mot\\_fb@nic.in](mailto:mot_fb@nic.in)
8. Shri Anand Sharma, Minister for Commerce & Industry, Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi - 110 107 Tel: 011 23061008, Fax: 011 23061492, Email: [cim@nic.in](mailto:cim@nic.in)
9. Dr C P Joshi, Minister for Rural Development, Krishi Bhavan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi - 110 001, Tel: 011 23782373, Fax: 011 23385466. Email: [minoffice@nic.in](mailto:minoffice@nic.in)
10. Prof.Abhiit Sen, Member, Planning Commission, Government of India, Yojana Bhavan, Sansad Marg, New Delhi -110001, Tel: 011 23096564 Fax: 011 2309 6565; Email: [abhijit.sen@nic.in](mailto:abhijit.sen@nic.in)
11. Shri N C Saxena, Supreme Court Commissioner, Office of the Commissioners of the Supreme Court (CWP 196/ 2001), B-102, Sarvodaya Enclave, New Delhi 110017 Phone: +91-11-26851335 / 9;Telefax:011-4182 9631, Email: [commissioners@vsnl.net](mailto:commissioners@vsnl.net) ; [nareshsaxena@hotmail.com](mailto:nareshsaxena@hotmail.com)

- Encl: 1. Food Security EGoM Draft Bill with Millet Network of India Comments  
2. Article in Hindustan Times dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010  
3. Letter to Smt. Sonia Gandhi dated 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010  
4. Letter to Shri Pranab Mukherjee in February 2010