

ONE WORLD AWARD

Legau, Germany

September 8, 2017

Acceptance Speech

My fellow friends, brothers and sisters from around the world!

It is with great honour that I stand before you today. 14 years ago, when we began the organic campaign in our Himalayan province of Sikkim in India, little did I know that years down the line, people and communities would be driving an organic revolution, in different parts of the globe. Today, I feel immensely honoured to be in your company, and to be in solidarity with you, in striving to make the world a better place through organic agriculture.

It was in 2003 when we made a declaration in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly to turn Sikkim into a completely organic state. After 12 years of consistent work, we were declared the first organic State of the Country by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on January 18th, 2016.

Our initiatives in Sikkim are led by the belief that clean air, water and appropriate climate are fundamental human rights, and ensuring these for the people is not a question of politics; it is a moral obligation. I also realize that governments alone cannot address this universal crisis. People, communities and governments must work together to overcome the dangers of a fast developing world.

It is a matter of great pride for the people of Sikkim and India, that our humble endeavour from a Himalayan state has been recognized by the famed International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement. I am thankful to the

distinguished Jury members for judging me as one of the Grand Prix Winners for the One World Award 2017.

As a recipient of this award, I feel a deep sense of responsibility that comes with this recognition. I am immensely grateful and deeply encouraged by this honour to work even more in furthering our vision of a safe and healthy world.

I also want to extend my hearty congratulations to the winners and OWA Laureates of 2017, and I thank you for your commitment and dedicated service to the world.

Last but not the least, I want to thank the people of Sikkim, for taking on the challenge completely, and working tirelessly towards transforming our state into the first organic state in the world. This recognition is for you!

Thank you Hon'ble Dr. Müller, Mr Joseph Wilhelm, Jury Members, Mr Bernward, the Rapunzel and IFOAM family, for this prestigious recognition. I am very grateful and I accept this honour with immense gratitude.

Thank you!