

Statement
by
D-8 Secretary General Dr. Seyed Ali Mohammad Mousavi at the
The Senior Official Meeting for The 5th Agricultural Ministerial Meeting on Food Security
2 December 2014, Istanbul - Turkey

*Distinguished
Chairman,
Distinguished
Delegates, Ladies and
Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, I would like to welcome you all to **the Senior Official Meeting for the 5th Agricultural Ministerial Meeting on Food Security**. It is my great honor to be with you at the opening of this important Meeting.

First, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to government of the Republic of Turkey, especially to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey, for this well-prepared Meeting providing us with a very comfortable venue in the historical city of Istanbul. I would also like to express my appreciation to all delegates for their presence and for their contribution during Working Group Meetings.

Distinguished Delegates,

In the new era, the agricultural sector is facing challenges due scarce resources, greater demand, and higher risks and volatility of the price of agricultural goods. This will be exacerbated as the growing population demands more food and nearly double today's levels by 2050.

The effective ways to address these challenges among other requires, improving input technologies and increasing farmer capabilities. The technical know-how of global institutions must be combined with the resourceful acumen of local entrepreneurs to inspire new breakthroughs in agricultural sector.

The agricultural development is pre-requisite for economic development and provides livelihood for major part of the D-8 population. The share of agriculture in GDP is around 20% at the end of 2013. In addition, it is worth to mention that the average share of agricultural employment in total is about 35.5%, which means that agriculture is not just about food

production, but a very important mean of broad-based income generation as well.

Distinguished Delegates,

Let me now turn to a brief overall on our cooperation in the field of agricultural cooperation. D-8, as you all know, held its last Agricultural Ministerial Meeting on Food Security on 4-6 December 2013 in Abuja, Nigeria. At this meeting, we tried to utilize existing modalities in order to increase agricultural cooperation as well as promote sustainable agricultural growth in D-8 Member States, through creating an enabling environment that encourages public and private investment in agriculture and agro-based industry as well as raising productivity in agricultural sector.

Regarding the works of the Working Groups, I believe that the agendas of this meeting is properly reflecting the momentum of our collective endeavors in this field and provides a good objective for the meeting today. Just to refresh our memory and also to focus attention on the issues before us, I would like highlight progress from previous agricultural meetings, particularly in our working groups, which are in need of close follow-up by the D-8 Member States, inter alia, as follows:

1. ***Working Group on Fertilizer.*** D-8 Member States should implement common strategies toward the sufficiency of production, supply and distribution of quality fertilizers in D-8 Member States. In this regard, I would like to urge D-8 fertilizer stakeholders to take active participation in formulating the structure and strengthening function of the D-8 Fertilizer Association (D8FA) in order to accelerate common project under fertilizer sector.
2. ***Working Group on Seed Bank.*** D-8 Member States are encouraged to establish the tri-level seed bank for supporting the supply of high quality seeds and the diversity of plant genetic resources to expedite formulating collaborative research and development programs between D-8 private and public sector stakeholders.
3. ***Working Group on Animal Feed.*** D-8 Member States should exchange their information and experience on capacity building and cooperation in research and development in order to find appropriated technologies in improving the quality local feedstuffs. In addition, I would like to urge, once again, Member Countries to submit their information on trade and production of animal feed to the Animal Feed Information Center (www.d8-afic.org) and to the D-8 Secretariat.
4. ***Working Group on Marine Affairs and Fisheries.*** D-8 Member States should strengthen collaborative efforts on technology transfer, capacity building programme, intra-trade in fisheries, fish health management, fish quality and database system, and promoting eco-marine tourism as the main areas of cooperation.
5. ***Working Group on Standard on Trade.*** D-8 Member States should explore the

possibility on having harmonization standards and regulations of agriculture and fisheries products through capacity building and technical cooperation along the chain of agriculture and food production, processing, marketing and distribution.

With above in mind, I believe that this is the high time for us to streamline our works under Working Groups and to articulate all decisions into tangible projects. I am of the view that our Working Groups have had proper modality to scratch project proposals along with its proper feasibility studies and action plan. Once again, I would like to emphasize that we should indeed seize the opportunity to energize our collective efforts for the enhancement of agricultural cooperation, in particular the works of our Working Groups activities.

Distinguished Delegates,

I am confident that through our constructive cooperation we will succeed in reaping the fruits of our endeavors in the near future in the agricultural sector. Moreover, I am also of the firm belief that private sector active engagement in our collective agricultural cooperation will play a significant role in improving the situation by leaps and bounds, with clear positive impact on the state of distribution of income and wealth in the D-8 Member States. We should certainly take it upon us to work towards this end - both individually and collectively.

Coming to the end of my remarks, let me underline that I find reassuring the growing agricultural sector in D-8 countries should be supported by investment, transfer technology and effective food supply chains, feasibility study on nutrition, and food systems transformation. My last word would be to urge all of you to focus on developing a good set of concrete project proposals, as part and parcel of a workable action plan for the effectiveness and enhancement of our agricultural cooperation.

Finally, once again, I am grateful to the government of the Republic of Turkey, especially to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey for the warm hospitality extended to us and excellent arrangements made for this meeting.

I thank you very much for your attention and wish all of you every success in this meeting.