



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

#### **THE 6<sup>th</sup> D-8 MINISTERIAL MEETING ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY WAS HELD SUCCESSFULLY ON VIRTUAL PLATFORM FROM 15-16 DECEMBER 2020**

**15-16 DECEMBER 2020**

*The High-Level Experts and the 6<sup>th</sup> D-8 Agriculture Ministerial Meetings were held virtually from 15-16 December, 2020, hosted by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan*

The meeting of the High-Level Experts from the D-8 Member States and the 6<sup>th</sup> D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Food Security were held on virtual platform. The events were hosted by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with participation of ministers and senior officials from the Member States, Secretary-General and officials of the D-8 Secretariat, representatives of relevant institutions and partners of the D-8 Organization such as the D-8 Chamber of Commerce and Industry (D-8 CCI).

Furthermore, FAO, IFAD and IsDB were invited to the meetings. The main theme of the meetings was ‘Sustainable Agro-Industry Development and Smallholder Farmer Integration in the Global Value Chains: Key Issues for D-8 Member States’.

The first meeting, which took place on 15<sup>th</sup> December, was held among the High-Level Experts from the D-8 Member States and other representatives from partners of the D-8 Organization. The meeting ended with the finalization of the Islamabad Initiatives for adoption by the Ministerial meeting.

On the second day of the meeting, the Ministers of Agriculture and Food Security and representatives from D-8 Member States gathered in order to discuss and adopt the outcomes of the High-Level Experts Meeting and the Islamabad Initiatives on Agriculture and Food Security.

The Meeting started with welcome remarks by the Honourable Federal Minister of National Food Security and Research of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H.E. Syed Fakhar Imam and opening remarks by the D-8 Secretary-General, H.E. Ambassador Dato’ Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari.



In his welcome remarks, the Honourable Minister of Pakistan and Chair of the meeting reeled out statistical data regarding the agriculture and food security sector of Pakistan. He also mentioned that digital agriculture platforms need to be developed in order to provide effective and efficient agro-business activities. In addition, he stressed that D-8 Member States need to share experiences and ideas in agriculture and food security in order to augment their capacity and mitigate the challenges facing the sector.

On his part, the D-8 Secretary-General stressed the importance of Agriculture and Food Security as a sectoral track of cooperation for the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation. He expressed optimism that the Islamabad Initiatives that was adopted at the meeting will further reaffirm commitment to pursue agricultural cooperation and subsequently implement tangible projects that will benefit the target groups of D-8 Member States. He also stressed that agriculture and food security should occupy priority position in the development agenda of D-8 members and success should be pursued vigorously in all sub-sectors.

Remarks were also made by the Honourable Ministers / Heads of the Delegation of the D-8 Member States.

Furthermore, the crucial importance of cooperation among D-8 Member States and information and experience sharing between relevant institutions and bodies of D-8 Countries for overcoming the obstacles in agricultural activities were reiterated by the Ministers / Heads of the Delegation of the D-8 Member States who attended the meeting.

In addition to the remarks on the importance of cooperation, the Ministers / Heads of Delegation of the D-8 Member States briefed the meeting regarding projects and initiatives as well as success stories of their respective countries in agriculture and food security sector.

Thereafter, the Ministerial Declaration – Islamabad Initiatives - was adopted by the meeting. In the declaration, the Ministers of Agriculture and Food Security and the Heads of Delegations welcomed the establishment of the D-8 Research Center for Agriculture and Food Security located in Faisalabad, Pakistan. They also agreed to work towards promoting Agribusiness and Global Value Chains in the D-8 Member States and to establish the D-8 Agriculture Global Value Chain (GVC) Center of Excellence.

Furthermore, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation encouraged the sharing of information concerning common problems faced by D-8 Member States in agricultural development as well as preparing a workable action-plan that will monitor the activities and projects under agricultural cooperation and greatly enhance the level of coordination and networking and active involvement of stakeholders in respective Working Groups in order to follow up and ensure timely implementation of decisions.



In addition to aforementioned decisions contained in Islamabad Initiatives, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation agreed on the activities to be embarked upon in order to boost trade and investments in the agricultural sector. These include participation in exhibitions and trade fairs. The governments and stakeholders in D-8 Member States are also encouraged to promote Agriculture, Knowledge, Science and Technology (AKST), nutrition, standards and strategies along with relevant investments. Moreover, D-8 Member States vowed to identify profitable opportunities for partnerships between and among the D-8, IsDB, FAO and other potential partners in order to support sustainable agriculture and agro-industry development.

The meeting ended with closing remarks delivered by the representative of the stakeholders of D-8 Organization, the D-8 Secretary-General and the Minister of National Food Security and Research of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Istanbul, 17 December 2020