

**Statement**  
**by**  
**Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam**  
**D-8 Secretary General**  
**at the Seventh D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Food Security for**  
**Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture: Key issues for D-8 Member States**  
Virtually held on 13 January 2022

**His Excellency, Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque,**  
**Chairman and Minister of Agriculture of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,**

**Hono'able Ministers/Heads of Delegations of D-8 Member States,**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I feel greatly delighted to welcome you all to this Ministerial Session of the 7<sup>th</sup> D-8 Agricultural Ministerial Meeting on Food Security and Agriculture tagged: **“Promotion of Climate Smart Agriculture: Key Issues for D-8 Member States.”**

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates from Member States, let me begin my address by informing you that this event is my major assignment I would take part in since my assumption of duty as Secretary General on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January this year. On behalf of the D- 8 Secretariat, I would like to warmly welcome all Ministers, Heads of Delegations and Delegates from the D-8 Member States to this all-important meeting. Permit me to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, especially the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for this well-prepared Meeting.

As you are all aware, Agriculture and Food Security is one of the major planks of our Economic Cooperation at D-8 Organization and this gathering underscore the importance Member States attach to this crucial sector in our quest for sustainable development. I wish to express my profound thanks to all Member States for having spared their time to participate at this event.

We are also immensely grateful to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) for supporting this second thematic meeting on Agriculture and Food Security. Our gratitude also goes to all our Development Partners who have remained committed to the advancement of our development agenda since the establishment of the organization nearly 25 years ago.

**Hono'able Ministers of D-8 Member States,**  
**Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On average, contribution of all D-8 Member States' agricultural sector to the GDP growth is around 14% at the end of 2020. It is expected that D-8 agricultural activity

would achieve at least 25% annualized pace. This indicates a quite significant level of contribution by the agricultural sector to the total GDP of D-8 countries. It is for this reason therefore that agriculture has been listed as one of our priority areas of cooperation, as it is one of the sectors that generate employment and income and remains one of the major drivers of innovation and growth in our respective countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of agri-food systems to shocks, and stresses, and has led to increased global food insecurity and malnutrition. Therefore, we must strengthen our cooperation through effective collaboration between public and private stakeholders, promote agricultural investment and improve our supply chain mechanism. We must adopt new technologies and food transformation systems such as Climate Smart Agriculture, to make our agri-food systems more resilient, efficient, sustainable, and inclusive.

**Hono'able Ministers of D-8 Member States,  
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Given the ideas we have generated from previous meetings on using agriculture and food security in our plans for achieving the 2030 UN goals for sustainable development, I am optimistic that the Dhaka Initiatives that we will adopt at this meeting will further reaffirm our commitment to pursue agricultural cooperation and subsequently implement tangible projects that could benefit the target groups of D-8 Member States. The D-8 Research Centre for Agriculture and Food security in Faisalabad, Pakistan provides us an excellent opportunity to further the agenda agreed upon at this meeting.

We are equally hopeful that the Dhaka Initiatives will also provide useful guidance for our experts to address issues in implementing the proposed projects, including through collaboration with international and regional organizations such as Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT).

**Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At this juncture, I want to use this opportunity to thank all our participants, once again, for their unwavering commitment and also our resource persons for the quality of their presentations. What we look forward to is the adoption of the outcome of documents arising from this meeting and their implementation by Member States.

In concluding my remarks, **Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates**, I would like to urge our Member States to continue to place agriculture and food security on our priority development agenda and to pursue it vigorously at all levels and sub sectors, including Climate Smart Agriculture.

I believe the time is now to focus on agricultural projects in very concrete terms to sustain agricultural growth among the member countries. Our experts and officials must come up with tangible feasibility studies, viable action plans and concrete projects to put into action the decision and recommendations of this Ministerial Meeting. I strongly

believe that through our constructive cooperation, we will soon be reaping the fruits of our efforts.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and through you, also thank the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting this important meeting. I wish all of you success in your endeavors and deliberations.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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