



Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations at the Plenary of the Second Committee of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Agenda item 24, Agriculture development, food security and nutrition (11 October 2019, CR-2, UNHQs)

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

At the outset, I would like to align with the statements delivered by the State of Palestine, as the Chair of the G77, and Malawi, as the Chair of LDCs.

I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his report on this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an organic link between ending hunger and malnutrition and sustainable development. We are deeply concerned at the findings of the Secretary General's Report that global hunger is on the rise and with the current trend the SDG 2 will not be met by 2030. Sustainable agriculture and food systems are fundamental to achieve this target. I appreciate Secretary General for introducing a definition of food system that goes beyond value chains to the food environments that shape the actions of all relevant actors. We cannot agree more that we need to revitalize our efforts to create inclusive, eco and climate friendly, nutrition-driven, sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems to reverse the global hunger trend.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh has achieved remarkable successes under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by adopting bold policies aiming at transforming the agriculture sector, promoting rural development, empowering the marginalized people and protecting smallholder farmers and small-scale producers within local food systems. We have been making efforts to produce and popularize the environment-friendly agricultural products.

Mr. Chairman,

In this session, I would like to draw your attention to the issue of natural fibres which our farmers harvest in million tons from a wide range of plants and animals. In 2018, 32 million tons of natural fibres such as jute, cotton, and sisal were produced. The contribution of these fibres to society and economy has been vital to the lives of millions of people across the world.

We all are concerned about the impacts of increasing degradation of our environment and climate change. Our lives and livelihood are under constant threats posed by multifarious pollutions. Many recognized scientific researches indicate that artificial fibres keep contributing to the environmental degradation of our planet.

On the contrary, the natural fibres are eco and climate friendly and can play a significant role in enhancing our actions against climate change. For example, the use of biodegradable jute bags can be an effective substitute of polybags. With the use of improved technology, natural fibres can be used to make other products important for our economy.

It is a matter of concern that over the past half century, natural fibres have lost that place of preference in our clothing, household furnishings, industries and agriculture by man-made fibres such as acrylic, nylon, polyester and polypropylene, thanks to the less expense involved with these synthetics. Moreover, rampant use of plastic products and polythene bags have made things worse in land and oceans. This situation has impacted the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on natural fibre production and processing.

Mr. Chairman,

Enough has not been done to make people aware about the benefits of the use of natural fibres as substitutes of artificial fibres. A resolution of the General Assembly in this regard is required to signal our commitment to protect our environment through the use of natural fibres. This has prompted Bangladesh to table a draft resolution entitled “Use of Natural Fibres such as Jute and Sisal” in the Second Committee for its consideration during the 74th General Assembly.

The resolution aims at raising global awareness of the importance of natural fibres not only to producers and industry, but also to consumers for a better choice in saving our environment.

I hope that member states will find this resolution helpful for promoting a cause critically important to protect our environment and accelerate sustainable development.

I would like to take the opportunity to invite all member states to actively participate in the negotiations starting on this draft resolution on 17 October 2019 at the Conference Room C at 1:15 pm and extend support for its adoption by consensus.

Mr. Chairman,

Before I conclude, let me highlight that cooperation from our development partners for more trade, investment and technology transfer in the agriculture sector is vital for agriculture development, food security and nutrition for countries like Bangladesh.

Thank you.