

**Bangladesh Statement at the Second Committee virtual meeting on
Agenda Item 26: Agriculture development, food security and nutrition**

16 October 2020, 10-12 AM, Virtual

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Madam Chair,

I thank you for giving me the floor.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statements delivered by Guyana on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Today's meeting coincides with the commemoration of the World Food Day. On this auspicious occasion, I commend FAO and WFP for their efforts. And I congratulate WFP for winning this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

Madam Chair,

The global efforts for achieving a world without hunger have gone seriously off-track. The latest State of Food Security and Nutrition report by the FAO identifies a staggering 690 million people living in hunger across the world. And this has gone up by 60 million since 2015. Over and above this, the COVID-19 pandemic has put between 83 and 132 million more people on high risk of falling into hunger trap. If we cannot stop this, the number will cross 840 million by 2030.

Madam Chair,

The contribution of the agriculture sector to Bangladesh's GDP is 13.61%. And it employs the biggest share of our labour force. Our Government has adopted many bold policies to transform the agriculture sector and achieve food self-sufficiency. In turn, it contributed to promoting rural development, empowering the marginalized people, and protecting smallholder farmers. And that has had a transformative impact in creating diversified value-chains in food industry, employment generations, and poverty eradication. Bangladesh is currently the 4th largest producer of rice and the third largest producer of fresh water fish.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit our agricultural sector hard. For tackling its immediate impact, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has provided special stimulus package worth USD 2.29 billion dollars as soft loans to farmers. Our national budget expanded social safety nets to ensure food security for the marginalized people. Other support measures include waiving of taxes, prioritized customs clearance of agro-commodities, and temporary food storage facilities.

Madam Chair,

We are preparing for the UN Food System summit to be held next year. We look forward to engaging with other partners in the lead up to the summit and beyond to chart out a transformative pathway to free millions of people from hunger.

Let me share some specific thoughts in this regard:

First, we need increased investments and targeted technology support from the developed countries for agricultural R&D to enhance productivity, and for effective food storage and distribution systems. For that it is imperative to leverage international cooperation frameworks including technology bank for LDCs, South-South and Triangular Cooperation etc.

Second, we must create a more efficient and reliable global food systems that would deliver safe, nutritious, and affordable food for all. It is imperative to eliminate trade restrictions and export subsidies by developed countries to create an open, functional, rules-based trading system.

Third, according to FAO, around 1/3rd of world food production is wasted or lost annually. It is critical to mobilize necessary financial and technological support to modernize food processing and storage facilities for preventing food wastage.

Finally, Climate change impacts including more frequent and extreme weather events have the potential to halt our success in agriculture and nutrition sector. We cannot falter in fulfilling our climate commitments including in the Paris Agreement for creating a more resilient Agriculture and food system.

I thank You.