

36thFAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

Statement from Honourable Mohinder Ray Yadav, Mnister of Agriculture and Livestock
Development of Nepal

.....

Chairperson of 36thFAO regional Conference for Asia and Pacific,

Excellences,

Director General of FAO,

Assistant Director General of FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen

.....

I have the honour to make a brief statement on agriculture and food security status, priorities, collaboration and emerging issues in Nepal in this 36th FAO regional conference for Asia and the Pacific.

The agricultural sector, which accounts for a quarter of the country's gross domestic product, has been playing a significant role in food and nutrition security, improving living standards, reducing poverty and income inequality among rural farming population.

Increasing competition with imported food items, insufficient infrastructure and capacity for quality promotion, climate change and tendency to keep the farm land barren in hilly and mountainous areas, we have not been able to reap the benefits available from opportunities. The recent increasing physical and technological integration between rural and urban areas, wide participation of private sector and easy access to consumers have created new opportunities for commercialization and diversification of agriculture sector.

In addition, climate change has negatively affected the livelihoods of small farmers due to water scarcity and outbreaks of new diseases and insects.

Ladies and Gentleman,

In Nepal with the adoption of federalism, three levels of governance system is in operation. In this context, the working system has been restructured to make more robust and participatory agricultural extension and development services at the local levels.

Nepal has been prioritizing issues such as food and nutrition security, women-friendly technology development and digital marketing with a focus on climate change resilience in various policies and

programs. Recently, with the technical assistance of FAO, Nepal has approved the Climate Smart Agriculture Investment Plan and is in the process of implementation. We expect the necessary resource mobilization and technical assistance in its implementation.

Due to the global epidemic of Covid 19, youths who are looking for opportunities at home and abroad have been taken as an important opportunity for agricultural commercialization through the promotion of modern and digital agricultural technology.

We would like to propose a special initiative in the Asia-Pacific region to improve the agricultural system in countries similar to geographical diversity of Nepal.

Considering the economic impact of cross-border animal diseases as a major obstacle to trade promotion, fast spreading diseases like avian influenza and other diseases are appearing in Nepal from time to time. It seems necessary to bring national and regional capacity development programs in action to control such diseases.

Similarly, one health policy needs to be established as a regional and national priority. Special initiatives in capacity building, are needed to institutionalize one health strategy recently adopted by Nepal.

In order to ensure food and nutrition security, I request the member countries to make it a regional priority to assist in the exchange of high quality genetic material of plants and livestock in coordination and cooperation of various international organizations.

Since no single agency can bear the challenges of agricultural development, the hand-in-hand (Hand in Hand Initiative) pilot implementation with the support of FAO can be a worthwhile endeavor in this campaign.

Mr. Chairman

As an active member of the FAO, Nepal continues to receive technical and strategic assistance from the FAO for various programs and projects for agriculture and rural development. In the future too, we look forward to the necessary technical assistance in formulating and implementing certain programs to address the challenges mentioned above, including Nepal's commitment to climate change resilience and the Food System Summit.

Mr. Chairman

I would like to reiterate Nepal has adopted a strategy and concept of focusing on national level efforts, including international cooperation and regional coordination, for the implementation of national goals and international commitments of agricultural development. In this context, Nepal has full support of the agendas set by this regional conference based on the direction of achieving the above objectives.

Excellency's, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, Finally, on behalf of the Government of Nepal, I wish this conference a complete success.

Thank you.

