

## **As delivered**

### **Country Statement of the Minister for NFS&R**

HIS EXCELLENCY SIKANDAR HAYAT KHAN BOSAN, MINISTER FOR NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY AND RESEARCH OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

**Honorable Director General FAO,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies & Gentlemen,  
Good Evening,**

It is a pleasure to address this august gathering. The current Session of the FAO Conference is of immense importance as it provides us an opportunity to share and discuss issues of food and agriculture which effect the world today.

The theme of this year's Conference draws focus towards the important issues of climate change, food security and sustainable agricultural productivity. Today, the world is faced with renewed challenges posed by inclement weather, natural disasters, drought and flooding. To overcome these challenges we need to adopt climate change mitigation strategies and work for implementing the various measures to overcome these challenges. In addition, we also need to focus our energies towards implementations of the 2030 Sustainable Development goals.

**Excellencies,**

I would like to appreciate FAO's partnership with Pakistan over the last 60 years. The two share a long history of rich cooperation in knowledge sharing and technological exchanges. Pakistan's collaboration with the FAO has assisted us to develop and modernize its agricultural sector. I fondly recall the visit of the Director General FAO to Pakistan in 2016 which enabled us to identify new avenues of cooperation in future.

I take this opportunity to endorse the recommendations of the FAO Council following its review of the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and program

of work and budget 2018-2019. I firmly believe that these would address the challenges posed today to the food & agriculture sector globally. The alignment of FAO's Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is also welcome. Pakistan supports the reviewed Strategic Framework of FAO.

### **Excellencies,**

Pakistan's economy is mainly dependent on agriculture, which remains its mainstay and life-line. Agriculture contributes over 20% to our national GDP and also maintains its important role as the raw material provider to our agro-based industries and employs more than 45% of our labour force. This sector has huge potentials for future growth and development. However, rapid fragmentation of land has caused increase in a number of small and marginalized farms which, together with the changing climate scenario, pose major challenges to the future of our agricultural sector.

It is heartening to see that today Pakistan is surplus in many agricultural commodities including wheat, rice, sugar, maize, potato and many horticultural commodities like citrus and mango. The livestock and dairy sector of Pakistan has also shown tremendous growth during recent years. Development of most modern livestock farms has enabled us to produce quality livestock. We have given priority to improve sanitary & phyto-sanitary (SPS) regulations that have enabled successful export of our agricultural commodities to many countries during the last four years.

### **Excellencies,**

Food Security is one of the key priority areas for the Government of Pakistan and is also part of the Government's Vision-2025. A National Food Security Policy is being formulated to institutionalize the policy framework for food security at all levels.

Our major focus is to support small farmers and promote small scale innovative technologies, value addition and value chain development in the country. The Federal authority in coordination with provincial governments, international research organizations and development partners aims to launch initiatives to promote these activities.

Today, we aim to promote betterment of small farmers through Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and provide safe and nutritious food to our local and foreign consumers.

### **Excellencies,**

I am convinced that FAO will continue to pursue its goals of international agricultural development with the active support of its members and other development partners.

I want to assure the Director General of our support to the work of FAO and the initiatives of the new Country Head in Pakistan.

**Thank you all.**