

Statement of the Republic of Turkey.

“The COVID-19 crisis has been the most critical pandemic that has been faced in recent years in the World and has brought the services and activities to a halt but food security is essential and obliged to continue. For food security; seed sector plays a vital role in the crisis time to sustain the delivery of seed to farmers in order to protect the supply chain. The governments, seed companies and farmers has to sustain seed production, cleaning, packaging, laboratory work, distribution and trade of seed. The farmers work is critical to ensure the growth of crops during the planting season to prevent any food shortages in the long run. In that context farmers need stable access to quality and sufficient seeds and other essential agricultural inputs in order to produce healthy crops. Moreover, seed is a globally traded agricultural product, policy makers should create an enabling environment for trade in line with the relevant international agreements to ensure food security. Therefore, seed trade can fuel transformation of food systems. Increasing seed trade volume will enhance intergovernmental collaboration.

The impact analysis and risk assessment of the pandemic on the seed sector is a key attempt in order to identify how to mitigate the impact of pandemic on seed sector. In order to identify the impacts of Covid-19 in the seed sector a TAIEX event will be organized in Turkey in 2021. An assessment report which will be a useful and unique guidance for agricultural organizations, Turkish government and EU institutions on how to enact adequate policies and measures that can mitigate the impact of the virus on seed supply and trade for building resilience of farmers will be the main output of the event.

Seeds play a vital role in agriculture as the starting point and as a way to introduce new varieties from research institutions to farmers. Also modern growing techniques and optimum input use for further improvement in yield should be more promoted.

Climate change negatively affects plant physiology metabolism, soil fertility, carbon sequestration, microbial activity and bio-diversity. So, more research and investment in increasing crop resilience should be made.”