

Statement by the Honorable Minister, Advocate Md. Qamrul Islam MP, Ministry of Food, Bangladesh

His Excellency the Chairperson of the Conference,
Director General of FAO,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

First, on behalf of the people of Bangladesh, I would like to extend greetings to all of you. Also, our heartiest congratulations to Mr. José Graziano da Silva for being re-elected the Director General of FAO for another 4 years.

As we all know, the year 2015 marks the end of Millennium Development Goals and adoption of Sustainable Development Goals. Bangladesh has achieved the targets of many of the MDGs, including MDG 1 on eradicating poverty and hunger.

In terms of food security, Bangladesh is well secured than any time before. Resilience and hard work of our farmers have turned Bangladesh to a rice exporting country. This year we have exported 25 thousands metric tons of rice to Sri Lanka. Right now we have the capacity to export two hundred thousand metric tons of rice which is a remarkable achievement in food production. When our population was 70 million in seventies, we had to import huge amount of food. Now the population is more than 150 million, but we produce enough food to feed this huge population. It has been possible due to the prudent policy of the present government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. After formation of the Government for the second time in 2009, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attached top most priority with food production. We initiated programmes to provide farmers with agriculture inputs at minimum cost such as fertilizer, irrigation, quality seeds and most importantly easy bank loan on time. Even during the political turmoil and natural calamity we ensured adequate supply of agriculture inputs to the farmers. As a result sustained upward trend in rice production has been achieved. Again, this year we have bumper production in rice.

Mr. Chairperson

With reference to the Second International Conference on Nutrition, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to ensure food and nutrition security for its people, especially the most vulnerable groups of mothers and young children. We deeply appreciate the continuous technical and financial support of FAO and development partners for

developing and implementing the strategic framework to address the food and nutrition security. Bangladesh aims to be a middle income country by 2021 with achieving the target of sustainable food and nutrition security for all.

Mr. Chairperson

Last month we have organized a High-level Meeting on, “South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Financing for Development in the South and Technology Transfer”. We do believe South-South and Triangular Cooperation could be an effective cooperation framework for agricultural development and food production across the world. FAO can play catalytic role in facilitating knowledge and technology transfer in agriculture.

Mr Chairperson

Based on our experience, we feel the need of more FAO project and programme which would have direct impacts on farmers. For example, skill development, sharing information and knowledge on agriculture, introducing energy efficient food processing and storage system, local weather forecasting system, marketing facility and joining global value chain are the areas where we need more FAO interventions. In this connection, we find the climate smart agriculture is a good initiative. Nutrition security is still a huge challenge in our country as the child stunting levels are still over 36% in Bangladesh. The project called 'Managing the Under-nutrition Challenge' is being implemented to address this challenge. Continued support of FAO to capacity building activities for nutrition-sensitive programmes in Bangladesh is fundamental.

In conclusion, as a densely populated country Bangladesh is facing a huge challenge of climate change. We have been awarded by FAO for reaching the target 1.c of the MDG One. Our efforts will not stop until our all people have full access to safe and nutritious food. In terms of resource and technology constraints we have limitations in finishing this task. Bangladesh is keen to initiate [Zero Hunger Challenge](#). We expect that FAO and other development partners will continuously be with us towards the progressive realization of Right to Food and Zero Hunger Challenge.

I thank you Mr. Chairperson.