

**74<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Second Committee**

**Agenda Item 24: Agriculture Development, Food Security and Nutrition**

**India Statement**

**by Mr. Siddharth Malik, First Secretary**

**11 October, 2019**

Mr. Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor. We thank the Secretary-General for his Reports under this agenda item. India associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chair,

Agricultural development is one of the most powerful and important tool to end extreme poverty, undernourishment and malnutrition. It is crucial for economic growth as it constitutes 1/3 of world GDP. Technological advancements in the field of agriculture have helped farmers and consumers by giving solutions to the problem of food security and nutrition, by cutting costs and increasing yields.

While there is enough food produced in the world today to feed the global population, yet millions go hungry every day.

Mr. Chair,

India, in the last seven decades has increased its food production by fivefold, and has successfully transitioned from a food deficient nation, to one that has achieved self sufficiency through Green revolution.

The increase in food production has been largely due to institutional efforts in raising the levels of technology used in agriculture through research and extension, investments in rural infrastructure and human capabilities, credit support, procurement at minimum support prices and the strengthening of supportive institutions. With these experiences, we have developed world-class institutions of research and training in agriculture, dairy and live stocks under every possible climatic condition.

There are, however, challenges to further improve agriculture productivity to meet the growing demand, introduce more sustainable farming practices, making available agriculture inputs at affordable cost, connecting farms to markets, increasing farm incomes and improving food distribution systems.

Mr. Chair,

We have set ourselves a goal of doubling farmers' income in India by 2022. The Indian government is taking several steps to meet the challenges to realize this dream.

Under the Prime Minister Farmer's Scheme (KISAN Yojana), an income support of Rs.6,000/- per year will be provided to eligible farmers, besides the support provided by states at the provincial level. This helps in supplementing the financial needs of farmers. For ensuring that benefits of these schemes reach the intended recipients, the biometric-based unique individual identification system called Aadhar linked with banking services and mobile phone technologies has been introduced and is proving to be a huge success.

The new crop insurance scheme, an insurance coverage and financial support is provided to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases. It encourages farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices and ensures flow of credit to the agriculture sector.

Mr. Chair,

We have deployed ICT to revolutionize the agriculture sector of India. We have launched Farmer's Portal, Mobile-based farmer advisory-SMS portal, toll free helpline, data centre and mobile apps for various breeds of crops. This has helped in disseminating valuable information regarding farming and sending crop-related advisories etc. through cell-phones directly to farmers.

We have strengthened the Lab to Land program in order to make research and techniques accessible at farmers' field and it is also being implemented at the level of Lab to Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurs to Farmers. In order to increase employment opportunities in agriculture, we are supporting more than 150 Agri Start-Ups. Recognizing the importance of local and domestic food markets for smallholders, National Agriculture Market (NAM) has been launched which is a pan-India electronic trading portal. E-NAM networks the existing small markets to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.

Mr. Chair,

We are taking steps to make agriculture, more sustainable, remunerative and climate resilient by promoting practices like Organic Farming and Zero Budget Natural Farming. A province in India, Sikkim is the world's first 100% organic state. According to World of Organic Agriculture Report, 2018, India is home to 30% of the total organic producers in the world.

Soil Health Cards are being provided to all farmers in the country to better match soil quality and crops being grown. India is aiming for 'Water to every field' in next two years by augmenting irrigation coverage through massive investments.

Mr. Chair,

We have launched the National Nutrition Mission, the world's largest nutrition program to make India malnutrition free by 2022. This will help in tackling the problem of under-nutrition, anemia, low birth-weight and stunting among children.

Mr. Chair,

Efforts to end hunger and malnutrition must be accelerated. In line with our steadfast commitment to South-South Cooperation, India remains dedicated to sharing its technical assistance to ensure food security in fellow developing countries for ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. I thank you.