

JOINT DECLARATION OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF BRICS MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE

DATE: 2017-06-19

1. We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa, met in Nanjing, China, for the Seventh Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture on 16 June 2017 which was held under the theme of "BRICS: Innovating and Sharing to Power Agriculture", and discussed issues of common interests on BRICS agricultural development and pointed the way forward for our agricultural cooperation.
2. BRICS countries cover vast territories and have large populations, and our importance for global governance is ever increasing. In the past 10 years, BRICS has become a major driving force for world economic development, with its share in world economy and trade rising from 12% to 23% and from 11% to 16% respectively.
3. Based on the Goa Declaration of the 8th BRICS Summit, we reiterate our commitment to further strengthen the agriculture cooperation. Joint mechanism of development of improved technologies, innovations and their sharing and enhancement of communication and coordination on major international and regional issues of common interest, such as productivity and profitability enhancement in BRICS countries, international trade, climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, food security and nutrition are imminent to promote further development of agriculture and safeguard and expand common interest.
4. We solemnly commit ourselves to implementing the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership, and deepening and expanding economic cooperation in agriculture. We are committed to enhancing multilateral coordination and oppose protectionism. In this sense, we aim to strengthen the rules-based multilateral trading system by consolidating the WTO at its core, upholding scientific principles, reinforcing the work of the international standard-setting bodies related to sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues and encouraging dialogue with a view to further reform the Agreement of Agriculture towards an open and non-discriminatory agricultural trade in line with the Doha Development objectives. Furthermore we stress the importance of a successful WTO Eleventh Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017.
5. We fully acknowledge the achievements of the BRICS agricultural cooperative mechanism which was initiated by the First Meeting of BRIC Ministers of Agriculture held by Russia in 2010. In the past five years, effective actions have been carried out under the Action Plan (2012-2016) for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries, namely the Meeting of Agricultural Experts Working Group on Agro-Products and Food Security in Brazil, the "Golden Autumn" Agricultural Exhibition in Russia to display farm produce of BRICS, BRICS Agribusiness Forum in Russia, the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform (ARP) initiated by India, the BRICS Agricultural Information Exchange System (BAIES) and the Report on BRICS Agricultural Development (2017) by China, and the BRICS Workshop on Agriculture and Climate Change held by South Africa.
6. Agriculture has strategic importance for stability. We actively support the global fight against hunger, encourage members to endorse at the highest level of policy framework and call on the international community to scale up assistance and support the United Nations, especially the Committee on World Food Security, in coordinating efforts to prevent crises from further deteriorating.
7. We emphasize the importance of food security and nutrition for all countries. It is essential to strengthen capacity building for food security and nutrition, particularly to improve access of the most vulnerable to food. We will take efforts to increase labor productivity of farmers, especially

that of smallholders, with technology and enhanced education and training, in order to boost food production and reduce food loss and waste.

8. We underline that making markets function better can contribute to reducing food price volatility and enhance food security. We will also improve conditions of food supply by facilitating trade of agricultural products and investment. We highly appreciate Brazil's "Zero Hunger Program", and call for commitment at the global level to reducing food loss and waste and to food production. We believe that sustainable food security needs to be built on support from social, economic and environmental dimensions.

9. We reiterate the importance of agriculture for the safety of food, resources and the ecosystem. We will align production growth with the carrying capacity of resource and environment to jointly strive for global agricultural sustainability. To promote the greening of agriculture of BRICS, we agree that sustainable agriculture should be extended to other countries to generate economic, social and ecological benefits in full, optimize agricultural ecosystems, and enhance the production of quality and affordable agricultural products.

10. We are committed to agricultural product safety and quality through the implementation of international standards developed by international standard-setting bodies in the sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade (TBT) issues, such as the Codex Alimentarius, OIE and IPPC.

11. We stress the need to strengthen agricultural sustainability by improving resource efficiency, conserving and protecting natural resources, and enhancing resilience of regions and ecological systems. We believe that greater sustainability in social, economic, agricultural and environmental terms should be achieved at the global, regional and country levels. We welcome the consensus reached at the 2017 G20 Agriculture Ministers Meeting on sustainable use of water resource.

12. We recognize that climate change has imposed threats on global food security, sustainable development and poverty elimination. We endorse climate-smart approaches to guide farming activities, commit to build and improve the adaptability of agriculture to climate change, continuously increase agricultural production and farming income, reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions when possible, and cooperate with international organizations in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). We recognize the importance of agriculture to climate change mitigation and sustainable agriculture will depend on the contribution of other sectors to climate change mitigation.

13. We acknowledge the importance of stronger surveillance and early warning systems to prevent and reduce natural and man-made disasters and food crises for agricultural development in all countries.

14. We place great importance on technology innovation and are committed to advancing innovation on the fronts of food security, sustainable agriculture, and resource and environmental improvement. We value agricultural technology innovation as an important approach to ensuring sustainable food security. We will continue to promote research in and application of technologies that can increase production, improve quality and save water, and will develop cutting-edge technologies such as biotechnology and new resilient farming systems. We will share achievements of technology innovation, strengthen exchanges and mutual learning of innovations on smart agriculture, biotechnology and nanotechnology. We will sign agreements of scientific and technological cooperation, explore new modalities of cooperation, and create fresh momentum for agricultural development.

15. We have made much progress in mechanisms of exchange on agricultural information. The Basic Agricultural Information Exchange System (BAIES) and the Agricultural Research Platform (ARP), in particular, has provided new platform for deeper agricultural cooperation and better information sharing between BRICS.

16. We should build on existing information liaison mechanisms to set up stable teams of liaison officers, and identify information technology supporters and members of expert teams. Agriculture-related information will be exchanged annually to update BRICS basic agricultural database, and the online version of the BAIES will be developed to provide online information sharing. The country that chairs will oversee this process.

17. We acknowledge the considerable achievements made and challenges faced by developing countries in poverty alleviation. We will enhance infrastructures and public services, improve working and living conditions in rural areas, and promote distinctive local crops, livestock and processing business in poor areas, to allow for better self-development in poor areas of BRICS. We stand ready to share successful experience and models of poverty alleviation, in a joint effort to tackle the issue of poverty reduction facing other countries.

18. We are committed to expanding the trade of crops, livestock, fisheries and particularly agricultural products with high added value. We will expand agricultural market access in order to boost economic and social benefits to farmers, herdsman, fishermen, foresters and other rural residents. We will promote further discussions on the particularities of agricultural trade, especially SPS issues. We welcome holding business fora on agriculture aiming at promoting trade and investment and enhancing transnational cooperation between BRICS agro-businesses. We also welcome suggestions from the business fora to governments in order to enhance trade and improve investment environment.

19. We will promote in-depth cooperation in agricultural investment. Recognizing the broad prospects for cooperation in the comprehensive development of agricultural products, farming and transportation infrastructure, and the establishment of agro-trade zones and logistics centers, we will promote in-depth agricultural cooperation between BRICS and other countries. We support efforts to promote mutual agricultural investment, maintain openness and inclusiveness, and seek common agricultural development.

20. We believe that, cooperation in agricultural trade and investment is an important channel for BRICS to achieve mutually beneficial, all-win, sustainable and inclusive growth.. Strengthened agricultural cooperation among BRICS is important for ensuring global food security and stable agricultural development, eradicating poverty, and achieving the UN SDGs. We are committed to facilitating investment and trade by various means including exhibitions and fora, and to encouraging and supporting enterprise participation in trade promotion activities held by BRICS members.

21. We invite international financial institutions to provide significant financial support for the agricultural cooperation and sustainable agricultural development of BRICS, and to contribute to the global agricultural market and the agricultural growth of developing countries and emerging markets.

22. Cooperation between BRICS members is inclusive. We will prioritize the development of bioindustry, agro-processing, investment and trade in farm produce, and agricultural service.

23. We acknowledge the achievements of South-South Cooperation, and continue to enhance agricultural cooperation among BRICS Countries.

24. We note the progress of Africa's Agenda 2063 in facilitating rapid growth across sectors in Africa, especially in promoting economic diversification, expediting agricultural transformation, upgrading agro-processing capacity, and realizing self-sufficiency of food.

25. We recognize the importance of reinforcing coordination and collaboration under multilateral mechanisms. We will continue to strengthen communication and coordination within major international institutions and cooperative frameworks including the G20, the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization.

26. We have reviewed and approved the Action Plan 2017-2020 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries which will steer further cooperation among BRICS members with identified priorities and detailed programs.

27. We express our gratitude to the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China for organizing and hosting the Seventh Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture, and we pledge our support and encouragement to the Republic of South Africa, which will be hosting the next meeting in 2018.

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