

Joint Declaration of the Twelfth Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture

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 virtually on 8 June 2022 for the Twelfth Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture held under the theme “Strengthening BRICS Cooperation for Coordinated Agricultural and Rural Development”.
2. We acknowledge that as major emerging markets, BRICS countries are also pillars of global food security and nutrition as their large agricultural sectors produce over 1/3 of the world’s food commodities. Building resilient sustainable food systems in the post-COVID-19 era requires every BRICS member to take a part.
3. We reiterate the importance of food security and nutrition for all countries. We are therefore committed to improving food production and overall agricultural productivity as well as rural development. We call for special focus on small holders and vulnerable groups as well as greater assistance to key groups in need of help.
4. We agree that the threats posed by climate change to food systems require BRICS countries to further raise the level of effort and create synergy to increase the resilience of food systems. To this end, BRICS countries need to increase the adaptive capacity of the food and agricultural production systems work together to effectively monitor, forecast and provide early warnings for extreme weather, and explore ways to promote and implement climate resilient approaches for sustainable agriculture.
5. We acknowledge the key role of digital agriculture in improving sustainable agricultural productive efficiency and farmers’ income. BRICS countries will promote further integration of digital technologies with agricultural industries, and will support and encourage innovation and wider application of digital technology, and pilot cooperation modes that are beneficial to all stakeholders.
6. We support the development of research programs agreed under the framework of the BRICS Agriculture Research Platform in accomplishing their established goals, and reiterate our support to the Basic Agriculture Information Exchange System and BRICS Agriculture Research Platform to promote cooperation in the areas of agricultural research, extension, technology transfer, exchange of information and policy, best practice sharing, training and capacity building. We recognize agricultural research institutes of BRICS countries as key players in agro-technology cooperation. BRICS countries shall endeavor to facilitate sharing of innovation and research results draw on strengths from each other, and launch

collaborative research on key technologies with a view to enhancing technological innovation capacity of BRICS countries, further reducing poverty and achieving sustainable agricultural development. BRICS countries shall further step up agro-technology cooperation, seek to adopt new modes of agro-technology cooperation, and join their strengths for contribution to sustainable agricultural development.

7. We reiterate the importance of upgrading agricultural value chains and the need to increase investment at all stages of food value chains. We express our intention to support the growth of rural e-commerce, intensify cooperation on agricultural brand building, and exchange of e-commerce experience, and promote cross-border e-commerce for agricultural products to expand industrial chains and upgrade value chains.
8. We will encourage to mainstream agro-biodiversity, develop practical and effective measures for agro-biodiversity conservation and call for more concrete actions on the conservation of crop varieties. Furthermore, we will work together to eliminate the threats that undermine agro-biodiversity and step up exploration of approaches for the control of major invasive species.
9. We will further improve natural resource efficiency, including through promoting water-saving irrigation technologies, intensify efforts on non-point source pollution control and foster development in the recycling of agricultural waste and straw, for a resilient and sustainable agriculture and sustainable use of natural resources.
10. We fully recognize the importance of protection of agricultural land for ensuring food security and nutrition. We will promote soil health management and its practices, and foster the sharing of policies, technologies and information on conservation, utilization and improvement of soils. Incentives will also be introduced to encourage the private sector, research institutes and farmers in cropland protection.
11. We acknowledge the enormous contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food security and nutrition in BRICS countries. We express our support to increase cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture with a focus on enhancing food security and nutrition, working in greater synergy and bolstering information, technology and experience sharing to drive the economic growth and prosperity of the fishery sector, and pursuing closer economic cooperation for ensuring people's livelihoods.
12. BRICS countries possess distinct wisdom of farming. Preserving and building on valuable traditional farming practices is essential for achieving sustainability in agriculture, raising farmers' income, enhancing smallholders' livelihoods and promoting rural revitalization and development.
13. We recognize the importance of reducing food loss and waste as a means to strengthen food security and nutrition. The BRICS countries shall endeavor to

reduce post-harvest losses and advocate nutritionally-balanced and science-based eating habits. We encourage agro-technology research and development by businesses and research institutions, with an aim to mechanize all production steps, optimize seed use, reduce food loss during production and processing, and elevate the level of food loss reduction during storage and transportation through promoting innovation and digital technologies.

14. We reiterate the importance of effectively curbing the spread of animal and plant diseases and plant pests. We will continue to participate actively in setting the international standards of Codex Alimentarius, the International Plant Protection Convention, and the OIE. The BRICS will maintain communication, increase investment and technical support and achieve relative goals outlined in the Action Plan 2021-2024 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries.
15. We reaffirm that the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core is pivotal to defending a free, equitable, open, non-discriminative, transparent and predictable trading environment. We will stay committed to supporting WTO reforms, particularly those of improving its operation and dispute settlement mechanism.
16. We will enhance communication and coordination regarding agricultural negotiation within the BRICS towards the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference.
17. We reiterate our commitment to support accelerating the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement so that a streamlined, coordinated, transparent, and foreseeable trading environment may be created for agricultural trade among the BRICS, and our commitment to explore, where conditions permit, possibilities to expand intra-BRICS trade.
18. We will continue to encourage BRICS agro-businesses to enhance their dialogues and exchange of information on trade and investment, promote trade and investment facilitation, and encourage agro-businesses to participate in trade fairs, business fora and other trade promotion activities held by BRICS countries. We recognize that trade in agricultural services is important as it provides convenient and professional solutions for people working in agricultural sectors worldwide, and will play a more prominent role in future international trade and economic cooperation.
19. We acknowledge that strengthening infrastructure and improving public services in rural areas are essential to promoting comprehensive rural revitalization and accelerating agricultural and rural modernization. We will work to improve basic services in rural areas, make rural areas more suitable for living and starting businesses and deliver more development gains to farmers. We also expect the private sector to increase investment in developing rural infrastructure with science and technology innovations. BRICS countries shall enhance experience exchange and mutual learning in the field of poverty alleviation and rural development, and join hands for sustainable development. We commend the

convening of the BRICS Symposium on Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation.

20. We note that South-South Cooperation in agriculture has played a positive role in enhancing the food production capacity of developing countries. In particular, such cooperation is an important avenue for helping host countries with human resource and institutional capacity building, technical assistance and best practice sharing regarding food security and nutrition, poverty alleviation and sustainable agriculture. To realize the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, we stand ready to further BRICS cooperation to enlist more support for agricultural South-South Cooperation on poverty alleviation and food security.
21. We shall endeavor to fulfill the objectives of the Action Plan 2021-2024 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries through cooperation and collaboration. We endorse the BRICS Strategy on Food Security Cooperation. We express our gratitude to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China for organizing and hosting the 12th Meeting of BRICS Agriculture Ministers, and have every confidence in the Republic of South Africa, which will be hosting the next meeting in 2023.