

Joint Declaration of the Second Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development

Chengdu, China, October 30, 2011

1. In the spirit of the "Sanya Declaration" of the Third BRICS Leaders Meeting, we, the Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development 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 Chengdu of China for the Second Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development on October 30, 2011. Having adopted the theme of "Making Joint Efforts for World Food Security", the Meeting pointed out direction of cooperation through in-depth discussion on issues of common interests and concerns.
2. BRICS countries have actively implemented the Moscow Declaration signed at the First Meeting of BRIC Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development in 2010, conducted pragmatic cooperation, and adopted tangible measures to boost domestic agricultural productivity, which has played a positive role in promoting food security and maintaining economic stability. BRICS countries have become an important force to deal with financial crisis and promote global economic recovery.
3. BRICS countries represent 43% of world population and 18% of global trade, commanding significant global influence. We are committed to enhancing the coordination and communication with international and regional organizations, including G20, FAO, WFP, OIE, CGIAR, etc, with the goal of concerted views of the international community on food security, climate change, environmental protection, trade promotion and other hot topics in the field of global food and agriculture, and continuing to make joint efforts for world food security.
4. Agriculture is a strategic sector with a close bearing on social stability. As emerging economies, we fully understand the concerns of African countries over food security, and sympathize with their afflictions in this respect, particularly the sufferings of the Horn of Africa from the most serious draught and food deficit in the past 6 decades. We actively support the global endeavor to combat hunger, and call on the international community to make all efforts to further enhance aid, and support the United Nations in playing a coordinating role in preventing further deterioration of the crisis, especially through the FAO's Committee on World Food Security (CSF). Meanwhile, we are committed to making best efforts to help African countries improve their food production capacity so as to enhance food security, particularly among smallholder farmers, through technical cooperation, policy dialogue, agricultural technology demonstration and transfer, personnel training, agricultural infrastructure construction and food aid, among others.
5. We reiterate that the cooperation between BRICS countries is inclusive by nature. We will actively enhance the coordination and cooperation with other countries in the field of agriculture jointly striving for the reduction of poverty-stricken population with a view to realizing the UN MDGs and promoting world stability, prosperity and development.
6. We focused our discussion on priority areas of future agricultural cooperation and effective ways to assist other developing countries to achieve food security. We hold the view that, despite differences among BRICS countries and varied characteristics of our agricultural sectors, there are complementarities among us. Therefore, the enhancement of agricultural cooperation among BRICS countries is of great significance for ensuring

global food security and sustainable agricultural development, eradicating poverty and achieving the UN MDGs.

7. In recent years, the international market of agricultural products has been mainly affected by natural disasters, use of food for production of biofuel, speculations and price transmission. As a result, the price of agricultural products fluctuated violently at a high level. The tight supply-demand relation has posed grave threats to food security and social stability of some developing countries, especially the low-income, food-deficit countries. We reiterate our commitment to carry out closer cooperation on food security within BRICS, and will further explore ways to provide more accurate long-term market forecast for food producers and purchasers to reduce excessive speculative activities. We also call for developed countries to phase out trade-distorting subsidies and barriers.

8. We believe that stable and robust agricultural development of the BRICS countries is of great significance to world food security. We are committed to developing agriculture actively, strengthening coordination and cooperation, as well as helping other developing countries to improve food productivity while ensuring domestic food security and generation of income and jobs in rural areas, paying particular attention to smallholder farmers, women and youth, so as to make joint efforts to improve world food security.

9. We reiterate that we will strengthen capacity building for food security and, in particular, improve food access for the most vulnerable population. Therefore, we are committed to increasing comprehensive food productivity of farmers including smallholders by relying on scientific research and technology transfer, creating favorable environment for investment and sustainable utilization of agricultural resources, and promoting agricultural products trade to improve food access.

10. As an important source of energy for human beings, bio-energy is environment-friendly and renewable in nature. We agree to develop bio-energy while ensuring food security by giving consideration to the factors of energy demand, environmental protection and sustainable development. We take note of FAO's analytical framework of Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS), as one of the instruments that may play a role in assisting the development of national bio-energy policy compatible with the national strategies of poverty reduction, rural development, local energy and food security. We acknowledge the importance of R&D on advanced new processes for the production of bio-fuels and the use of new, non-food and other plant raw materials for bio-fuel production as well as energy efficiency.

11. Sustainable agriculture reduces the chemical input by using renewable resources and it protects resources, improves environment and enhances food production and quality while promoting development. We will advance sustainable agriculture in an effort to achieve the sustainable use of natural resources, land, water resources, and bio-diversity in particular.

12. Climate change is exerting increasing impact on eco-system, agriculture, water resource, social and economic development, as well as people's livelihood. We share common concerns over the negative impact of climate change on agriculture, in particular, over the damage to agricultural production by extreme weather events. We note that agriculture faces triple challenges simultaneously in achieving food security, adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emission, which requires a sustainable way to promote resources utilization efficiency, improve productivity and enhance adaptability of agricultural systems, especially for small-holder farmers. Therefore, we should cooperate in research, development and application of technologies that can adapt to climate change while increasing agricultural production.

13. We recognize the significance and role of bio-mass energy for socio-economic development in rural areas and mitigation of effects of climate change globally. We, therefore, will unleash each others' advantages and strengthen cooperation in utilization of waste to develop bio-mass energy, e.g., biogas, so as to promote a virtuous ecological cycle, alleviate the damage to forest, reduce soil erosion, improve soil fertility through proper use of fertilizer and preserve bio-diversity.

14. We reiterate that the international community should promptly establish effective technology transfer and dissemination mechanism, facilitate technology sharing, and ensure that the developing countries can afford environment friendly technologies in accordance with principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. We emphasize climate change should be addressed under the framework of sustainable agricultural development.

15. As big agricultural countries, all BRICS countries enjoy a long history and abundant achievements in traditional agricultural techniques. The application of advanced agricultural technologies exemplified by the "green revolution" has substantially driven up food production and led to profound changes in agricultural sector across the world. With the increasingly complicated international agricultural and food situations and climate changes nowadays, it requires the application of modern agricultural technologies to ensure food security across the world. We undertake to intensify the exchange and cooperation in areas including advanced technologies, equipments and technical human resources with social inclusion, to improve the overall agricultural technology capacity of countries.

16. We undertake to learn and introduce advanced technologies from each other and work jointly for agricultural technology innovations. We will intensify our efforts in developing high-quality, high-yield and stress-resistant crops, boost water-saving, farmland protection and clean production, and promote environment-friendly and resource-saving agriculture, stressing the importance of both modern and traditional agriculture for sustainability.

17. We fully recognize the significant role of biotechnology in bolstering sustainable agriculture and food processing industry. When properly combined with other technologies and the traditional knowledge in food and agricultural production, biotechnology can greatly contribute to meeting the demand of the ever growing and urbanized population. Therefore, we shall strengthen exchange and cooperation in the biotechnology sector.

18. We agree to carry out agricultural human resources exchanges in a variety of forms, including establishing research and development centers and joint laboratories, creating cooperation platforms, implementing joint research projects, organizing exchange visits and adopting joint post-graduate programs, through which strengths of every member in agricultural research will be put into best use to facilitate technical exchange and develop human resources that excel in modern agricultural technologies, contributing to technology advances and agricultural development across the world.

19. To strengthen our dialogue and exchange in key areas of agricultural research and technologies, we agree to establish the "BRICS Strategic Alliance for Agricultural Research and Technology Cooperation", which will pool our efforts in addressing major challenges faced by the world in agricultural technologies. The Alliance will receive guidance and support from the agricultural ministries of the countries.

20. Driven by the growing population, excessive volatility of food prices in short terms and climate change, among other factors, food security will demonstrate an increasingly complex picture. We recognize that the sharing of timely and accurate data on agricultural

products supply and demand as well as on population growth is an effective approach to addressing food price volatility and mitigating global food security problems. We encourage the sharing of information concerning common problems faced by BRICS countries in agricultural development; the establishment of information sharing mechanism to exchange basic agricultural data on a regular basis; the construction of an agricultural information and digital agriculture platform; and the gradual enrichment and improvement of the food security information system based on transparent principles.

21. We agree to share information on, inter alia, price and output of agricultural products, and constantly improve the reliability, accuracy, timeliness and comparability of the data on production and consumption of agricultural products.

22. We are deeply convinced that cooperation in agricultural trade and investment serves as a vital channel for win-win outcome and common development. We undertake to boost business investment and trade cooperation by means of, inter alia, exhibition and forum on trade and investment, encourage and support the participation of enterprises in economic and trade promotion events organized by BRICS countries.

23. We are of the view that regulated cooperation can improve not only efficiency but also effectiveness. Therefore, we approved the Working Procedures for Agricultural Cooperation Working Group of BRICS Countries to establish a regulated agricultural cooperation mechanism.

24. For a closer BRICS agricultural cooperation with more clearly defined targets and higher effectiveness, we adopted the Action Plan 2012-2016 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries, which identified five priority areas and direction of cooperation. Each area will be coordinated by one country respectively.

25. The Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of South Africa gratefully support the Republic of India to host the next meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development.

26. All parties celebrated the success of the 2nd Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development, and the other four parties expressed gratitude to China and highly appreciated its efforts for hosting this meeting.

Source: University of Toronto – BRICS Information centre
<http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/111030-agriculture.html>