

# UN-States Food Systems Pre-Summit, 2021 (Statement from Pakistan)

Member State: Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
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Excellency UN Secretary General, Antonio Gutres;  
Global Leads on UNFSS 2021 Action Tracks,  
Representative Member States including Academicians, Researchers, Businesses,  
Civil Society Organizations, Youth and Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamo-Allaikum and Good Morning to You All

Today, I am extremely honored and privileged while recording Pakistan Statement for UNFSS-2021 pre-Summit event as Federal Minister/Secretary from Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Everyone on the globe begins his day with breakfast and ends up with the dinner by consuming food produced by billions of poor farmers living in numerous food production systems. With a population of around 225 million people, Pakistan is the 5th most-populated nation on the planet with a growth rate of 1.8 percent. Catering national food and nutritional security is the constitutional responsibility of the state.

Pakistan's Food trade balance has been negative for the last many years and the state of food insecurity has led to nutritional insecurity causing malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies among children, adolescents and the mothers. The country spends billions of Dollars on the import of edible oils and pulses and now wheat has been added to this list in past two years.

On food production side, the country is facing a long list of challenges, water shortage, land quality degradation and vulnerability to climate related shocks and stresses. There are ten major agro-ecologies in the country and each one has its region specific production and marketing problems. Pakistan's agricultural R&D mainly revolve around five major crops (wheat, rice, cotton, sugarcane and maize) in which cycles of over and under production is almost a regular phenomenon. The marketing and value chains could not be developed to support the production of other crops like pulses, fruits, vegetables and medicinal herbs. Our rangelands spread over more than 45 million hectares provide grazing facilities to cattle, sheep and the livelihoods of many rural dwellers. The carrying capacity of these rangelands is also declining overtime due to low R&D investment and vulnerability of climate change, particularly by the rainfall patterns.

Pakistan attributes special importance to food and nutritional security. Our Ministry of National Food Security and Research is perhaps the first federal level ministry established in the name of food security. Prime Minister, Imran Khan attaches special importance to achieve sustainable food and nutritional security at all levels ranging from national to regional and household to individual level in the country. We clearly understand that without tackling food and nutritional insecurity, Pakistan will be unable to achieve the targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Now, I would like to draw the attention towards a robust process followed by Pakistan to prepare for the participation in the Pre-Summit as a 1<sup>st</sup> step and eventually the Summit final event. My ministry initiated the preparation for UNFSS 2021 Summit with a high-level meeting convened in February 2021. The country teams of international organizations like FAO, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), IFAD and WFP were taken on board in March 2021, an independent secretariat was established at Pakistan Agricultural Research Centre (PARC) – the apex organization in Pakistan's Agricultural Research System. Under the able leadership of Chairman PARC Pakistan UNFSS Secretariat decided to work on all the five action tracks and started consultations with the Global Leadership teams on each Action Track. On domestic front, high level experts were engaged and entrusted to desk reviews to come up with initial drafts of the

working papers on these Action Tracks were enclosed herewith for your reference. IARC

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