

**Message from Mr. Mamnoon Hussain**  
**President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

(On the occasion of World Food Day – 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2017)

The World Food Day that is being observed today worldwide with the theme “**Change the Future of Migration: Invest in Food Security and Rural Development**” renews our obligation to join hands with the international community, civil society organizations and the private sector to ensure global food security and eradicate hunger. I am pleased to learn that the Ministry of National Food Security & Research (NFS&R) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in collaboration with other UN agencies and partner organizations are celebrating the Day to highlight the significance of achieving self-sufficiency in food grains.

The theme of the Day envisions the adoption of a multidimensional approach for investing in food security and uplifting the rural livelihoods to control the migration patterns in the rural areas. This theme is very relevant in the current global scenario, where besides migration from rural to urban areas, the phenomenon of internally displaced persons (IDPs) within the country is also adversely affecting agricultural sustainability. Mass migrations across the borders are also creating imbalances in the supply and demand for the means of livelihood particularly food and water, thus creating new challenges in the delivery of services like shelter, hygiene and health. UN has to play a crucial role to assure that “Migration should be a choice, not a necessity” by squarely addressing the factors that create an inducement for migration.

It is heartening to note that Pakistan has made significant progress in food production over the last seventy years as it has witnessed considerable increase in the production of wheat and rice. The present Government is also focusing on the sustainable development of agriculture sector and in this regard has taken a number of measures for welfare of the farming community. Pakistan is now not only self-sufficient in both these food grains but it has also become an exporter of these commodities. Nevertheless, there is a need to diversify our cropping patterns to focus on other elements of the food basket like pulses, vegetables and oilseeds.

Food Security, in the context of population growth, is a major concern and millions of humans around the globe are in constant need of food and shelter. This is particularly true for Pakistan as it has been working in close coordination with UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in managing the Afghan refugees.

Pakistan is committed to achieve food security and alleviate poverty in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Appropriate strategies need to be devised to improve food security to offset the adverse impact of rural and cross border migration. Furthermore, a number of measures are being undertaken by the Government of Pakistan to address the issue of food insecurity as envisioned in Vision-2025.

I am confident that food security will continue to be one of the priority areas for our future public and private investments to achieve self-sufficiency and rural development. Let us once again renew our determination to ensure food availability for our people and to initiate interventions to overcome the future challenges.

**Pakistan Zindabad!**

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