



DECLARATION

II CHINA- CELAC MINISTERIAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 24, 2021

We, agricultural ministers or representatives of the People's Republic of China and the member states of the Community of the Latin-American and Caribbean States (CELAC), centering upon the theme "*To bring the China-CELAC Agricultural Cooperation up to a Higher Level in the Post-COVID Era*", virtually met on February 24, 2021 Mexico City time (February 25th, Beijing time) to celebrate the II China-CELAC Ministerial Forum on Agriculture. At the forum, we delved into challenges and opportunities facing global agriculture in the post-pandemic era, as well as paths and approaches to achieve a higher-level China-CELAC agricultural cooperation in terms of science and technology, trade, investment and human resources.

We recall the First China-CELAC Agricultural Ministers Forum in June of 2013 in Beijing as a success, which enabled us to put in place sound mechanisms for strengthening China-CELAC agricultural cooperation and initiate platforms for dialogue and cooperation between government agencies, science and technology institutes and businesses. Since the forum, China and CELAC countries have achieved fruitful outcomes from the exchange visits of professionals, exchange of science and technology, mutual investments, agro-trade, and human resource development cooperation, substantially contributing to their economic growth and improving livelihoods of their people.

We recognize that the world is undergoing momentous changes unseen in a century. The rapid advance of the new round of technological revolution and industrial transformation, and profound crises such as the global pandemic of COVID-19 represent new challenges and opportunities for agricultural development around the globe. The II China-CELAC Ministerial Forum on Agriculture sets the stage for discussing cooperation plans, building collaborative platforms and sharing outcomes. It will help China and CELAC countries to take advantage of opportunities and rise to risks and challenges together, assist sustainable agricultural growth for reciprocity and win-win outcomes, and contribute to China-CELAC joint efforts for a higher level of partnership for the common future of present and coming generations.

We acknowledge that China and CELAC countries share strong complementarity in agricultural sectors, and thus have immense potential and great promise for cooperation. Comparative advantages in market demands, resource endowment, product mix, capital structure, and technology signify that, closer cooperation will meet our countries' fundamental interests, favor socioeconomic development and benefit our peoples.

We acknowledge the importance of an inter-governmental mechanism of smooth communication and negotiation in taking our agricultural cooperation forward. We agree to fully leverage the role of various mechanisms, including the China-CELAC Forum, China-CELAC Ministerial Forum on Agriculture, China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum, and joint agricultural committees and working groups on bilateral fronts, to provide macro-guidance and coordination on identifying promising areas of cooperation, adopting innovative cooperation approaches, developing pragmatic action plans and fostering effective agenda implementation.

We acknowledge that technology innovation holds the key to agricultural modernization, and international cooperation in science and technology is a major trend. We stress the importance for China and CELAC countries to more actively merge into global innovation networks, and enhance their innovation capabilities in agricultural science and technology in open cooperation. We support the efforts to establish joint Research and Development (R&D) centers, laboratories and other platforms where our countries can jointly implement targeted innovation programs in areas of common interest; including breeding of superior varieties, biotechnology, farmland protection, small and family farming, agricultural machinery, safety and quality control of agro-products, agricultural and rural environmental management, reduction of food loss and waste, intensive processing, sustainable agriculture, and digital agriculture. We encourage our countries to set up joint agricultural demonstration parks, centers and farms to showcase and disseminate advanced practical technologies in such fields as crop, forage and livestock production, aquaculture and agro-processing.

We recognize agro-trade cooperation as an important engine boosting economic dynamism and vitality. We will work together to expand agro-trade, stimulate the adoption of measures based on science, promote agricultural investment and foster deep integration of agricultural industries, and supply and value chains of China and CELAC countries. We will expand the China-CELAC agro-trade, improve its structure through greater trade facilitation, and trade promotion activities guided by the principles of free trade, non-discrimination, fair competition and transparency. We will boost China-CELAC mutual investment in agriculture and explore new growth opportunities by improving business environment and organizing investment connection events.

We acknowledge that human resource plays a fundamental role in strengthening agricultural development. We agree to prioritize the establishment of an agricultural technology demonstration and training site that can reach out to the entire region, and particularly to Central America and the Caribbean, and are committed to advancing cooperation in human resources training and development. We encourage efforts to hold agricultural policy and technology-training courses conduct seminars on agricultural science and technology, exchange experts and professionals and implement joint postgraduate education programs with a view to enhancing the capabilities and competence of agricultural producers and management personnel.

We express concerns over the new challenges and threats posed by COVID-19 to the food security around the world and commit to cooperate closely and launch effective actions to strengthen the overall capacity of agricultural and food production, support the well-functioning of the food supply chain and ensure food security and safety in the region. We call on all countries to mount an active and science-based COVID-19 response, bolster support for agricultural and rural development and strive to safeguard global food security. All countries should put people's lives first, and adopt science-based and appropriate testing and control measures to protect people's health and ensure food safety.

We reiterate the importance of multilateralism, safeguarding the World Trade Organization-centered multilateral trading regime and the UN-centered international system and upholding the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits by all countries to make international economy more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial for all. We agree to explore ways of agricultural cooperation and policy coordination within the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Organization for Animal Health, the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the World Trade Organization in particular through the achievement of meaningful results for the agricultural sector in the next ministerial conference, and other relevant multilateral frameworks, including efforts to intensify south-south cooperation in agriculture, support the UN Food Systems Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity-CBD and the International Conference on the Reduction of Food Loss hosted by China.

The ministers of Agriculture attending this Forum are from the following Countries: China, Mexico, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentine, Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.