



**Statement by Ambassador Usman Jadoon,  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UN  
at the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum on “Feeding the Future: Youth  
and Sustainable Food Systems for All”**

**(17 April 2024)**

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## **Madam President,**

Food systems remain highly vulnerable to shocks and interruptions arising from conflicts, climate change, supply chain disruptions, and economic contraction. These factors, combined with growing global inequities, challenge the capacity of existing food systems to deliver nutritious, safe and affordable diets for all.

2. By all indications, the above-mentioned crises are going to exacerbate – to the detriment of our youth and or future generations. Therefore, it is important to establish food systems which are protected from exogenous shocks and disruptions.

3. With 220 million people, Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world, over 60% of population is young. Agriculture is Pakistan’s largest sector, accounting for 38 percent of the labour force and contributing around 22 percent to our GDP.

4. Yet, because of climate change, and inadequate investment, there has been a steady deterioration in our ability to produce. In 2022, Pakistan suffered one of the worst climate induced disasters. A spring heat-wave shrivelled harvests, followed by unprecedented summer floods drowning them. 4.4 million acres of standing crops were inundated. From food self-sufficient, we became food deficient, without even the ability to plant for the next season due to the standing water. This disaster made us realize the extreme vulnerability of food systems and the growing challenges that climate vulnerable countries, such as Pakistan, face today.

5. One would expect that a country which has suffered such massive pandemic and climate impacts would have been automatically included in any mechanism set up for international support. Yet, we were deeply disappointed to discover that we were not eligible for the IMF “food shock window”, nor its Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT). Therefore, developing countries like Pakistan agree with UN Secretary-General that the IFA requires to be reformed, to make it more equitable and responsive to the needs of developing world, especially for the implementation of SDG 2 for ending world hunger.

6. Pakistan has considerable potential in the agriculture sector and could play an important role in building the global food supply chains. Yet, due to the cascading crises, Pakistan suffered from high food prices in the international market. Given our experience, we support the FAO in creating a facility with broader and people-centric criteria, responsive to the plight of developing countries. International assistance must be linked to the sustainability of countries facing food insecurity. Such a comprehensive approach, which addresses emergencies, but also long-term prospects, challenges and potential, would be the best way to secure food security for our youth in the future.

**I thank you.**