

Remarks by Dr. Yutong Li, Head of CSAM

6th Member Meeting of the Regional Council of Agricultural Machinery Associations in Asia and the Pacific (ReCAMA)

Monday, 23 Nov 2020
(14:00 – 16:00 hrs Beijing time/GMT+8)

Distinguished representatives of ReCAMA member associations,

Dear friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning / Good afternoon!

On behalf of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP-CSAM), it gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the 6th Member Meeting of the Regional Council of Agricultural Machinery Associations in Asia and the Pacific (ReCAMA).

It is unfortunate that due to the Covid-19 situation, the 6th Member Meeting could not be hosted by the Russian Association of Specialized Machinery and Equipment Manufacturers - the current Chair Association of ReCAMA - in Moscow, Russian Federation, as initially planned. Nonetheless, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Russian Association of Specialized Machinery and Equipment Manufacturers for their offer and commitment to host the meeting in the Russian Federation, and for their overall support to the ReCAMA network during the past year.

In the span of one year, Covid-19 has hit almost every corner of the world. The adverse impacts of the pandemic on the agricultural sector, which supports food as well as livelihoods, merits urgent attention. As is so often the case with crisis, the pandemic has hit the poor and the vulnerable especially hard. The United Nations has recently estimated that between 83 and 132 million people may be added to the ranks of the undernourished globally in 2020 due to the pandemic. This is of serious concern for the region as Asia is home to 381 million undernourished people which still represents the majority of the world's undernourished.¹ Needless to say, we need to leverage all

¹ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO (2020). The State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World 2020. Transforming Food Systems for Affordable Healthy Diets.

available opportunities and be innovative to combat this crisis. All stakeholders, including the private sector, must play their due part in this endeavour.

As you know, ReCAMA is a regional networking platform with the aim to support the member associations to better promote sustainable agricultural mechanization and facilitate regional collaboration and intraregional trade and investment in Asia and the Pacific. The organization of the 6th ReCAMA Member Meeting is timely in the backdrop of such a challenging period, when we have the opportunity to come together to discuss issues with common interests including how to converge regional efforts of the private sector to recover from the pandemic and build resilience.

In all these years, we have witnessed how ReCAMA has become a vibrant and close-knit community where information is shared, partnerships are developed, and regional trade and investment is facilitated through a range of activities including tailored trainings and study tours, engaging business-matching activities, and demand-driven research.

All these efforts have borne fruit. According to a recent survey conducted by CSAM, the ReCAMA initiative has encouraged or facilitated business opportunities worth around USD 29 million among members. Furthermore, ReCAMA was cited by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as a good practice in the third volume of its global publication titled 'Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development'.

I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all of you today. These achievements are truly a result of your continued and enthusiastic engagement in ReCAMA, and your contribution towards our common goal to promote sustainable agricultural mechanization in the region. It is because of your dedication and support that ReCAMA has become a successful flagship initiative of CSAM.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I believe many more achievements lie ahead of ReCAMA, and let us today renew our commitment to work together to further strengthen this network. I very much look forward to hearing your valuable insights and perspectives at this meeting for the future development of ReCAMA and for achieving its important mission.

Thank you.