

Closing Speech

by

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on the occasion of the Dispatch of Experts on Rice Sector  
Development Programme Kick-Off Meeting

18 March 2022

Zoom Meeting

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, let us express our gratitude to Almighty God for allowing us to conclude this important kick-off meeting on rice sector development. I would like to thank Mr. Ronny Mucharam for facilitating the Kick-Off Meeting. It is a pleasure and an honour to return to this platform, and after your lengthy hour of discussion today, I hope I am able to keep you awake and interested rather than thinking about the break that may be waiting for you at the end of this session. 😊

It gives me great pleasure to have speakers from the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia and CV. Karya Hidup Sentosa-"KHS." Each of them is working on an important but distinct topic related to the "Dispatch of Experts on Rice Sector Development" programme, and I believe that there are significant benefits to collaboration between government institution and private sector, as demonstrated by the speakers today.

Respected friends,

I'd like to take this opportunity to reiterate my earlier statement, which was supported by the speakers and confirmed in discussions, that the "Dispatch of Experts on Rice Sector Development" programme is an excellent opportunity to investigate ways to strengthen ties between Indonesia, West Africa, and the NAM Centre by improving, strengthening, and modernising West Africa's agricultural output base in order to achieve rice security.

Please allow me to highlight the NAM Centre's perspective and steps for implementing the Dispatch of Experts programme in this closing session, so that those present can leave this virtual room with a clearer picture of the NAM Centre's expectations in relation to rice sector development.

First, the NAM Centre is committed to assist West Africa in implementing projects to expand, strengthen, and modernise the rice product base.

Second, in order to ensure the long-term viability of the 50 harvesters that Manobi Africa will purchase from CV. KHS, the NAM Centre will provide capacity building assistance in Senegal for tractor operation, maintenance and assembly, and rice management.

Third, NAM Centre and CV. KHS will send two machine tool experts and two agricultural experts to Senegal, specifically rice plant management.

Four, the NAM Centre is prepared to strengthen coordination not only with experts who will be dispatched, but also with Manobi Africa, in order to ensure the successful implementation of the Dispatch of Experts programme.

Participants,

The NAM Centre is well aware that, in West Africa, with a population of over 419 million people and a growing economy, the agricultural sector's role is becoming increasingly important. Population growth and economic progress are always accompanied by increased food demands, both for domestic consumption and to secure foreign exchange. The agricultural sector is obligated to contribute in order to meet these needs and advance the region.

I believe that the agricultural sector will be able to fulfil its roles and functions in assisting West African development and meeting food needs. The conversion of manual rice cultivation to mechanised rice cultivation will increase productivity and welfare, potentially making it one of the West African community's life support systems.

The agricultural sector will be able to carry out its roles and make an increasingly real contribution that is pro-welfare and pro-

growth through coordination, synergy, and partnerships among governments, development agencies, and private sectors.

I hope that this explanation clarifies the NAM Centre's readiness on the issues discussed at today's kick-off meeting.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.