

Welcome note by

Mr. Hossein Mahdidoust, Chair and CEO, Supportive Fund of Investment Development in Agriculture (SFIDA), Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad, I.R. of Iran

Mr. Shafiqul Islam, Chairman of the Board of Directors of HLP Foundation, Bangladesh

Honorable Mr. Santanu Lahiri, think tank member, HLP Foundation

and other honorable participants from India, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Pakistan, Nepal and Australia

Good afternoon to you and my colleagues in Iran.

First of all, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, on the occasion of today, 12 September, I would like to congratulate the beginning of the HLP Convention program, which is the International Day of South-South Cooperation considered by UN, and I am happy that this three-day program starts on this important day.

In addition, I would like to thank the organizers of this convention for expressing interest in cooperation with SFIDA as part of the comprehensive HLP program for the exchange of experiences among the member states of the HLP Convention.

I believe that these meetings, as a means, can facilitate our cooperation in the field of sharing good experiences.

I am pleased to inform you that SFIDA is the main department of the Ministry of Agricultural-Jahad to financially support the agricultural activities of the private sector through 171 funds across the country that are directly connected to the producers of the agricultural sector.

49% of the capital of these funds belongs to SFIDA and the rest is private, so all funds are considered and operate as private companies.

The total capital of these funds is approximately 100 million dollars. These funds are classified geographically and technically, into six groups, including rural and nomadic women's funds, and today one of the women's funds called **Marvdasht Women's Fund** will present its experiences.

SFIDA is happy to share its experience with the member countries of the HLP Convention and sign a memorandum of cooperation with them.

We would also be happy if the HLP Convention could organize a field visit for its member countries or experts to Iran and our activities.

Finally, I hope this convention will lead to a good action plan that will lead to the strengthening of regional cooperation in the field of transfer of good practices.

Thanks