

**WELCOME ADDRESS TO MR. SIKANDAR HAYAT BOSAN**  
[Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Livestock]

AT CONCLUDING SESSION

by

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It is of great pleasure to have Mr. Sikandar Hayat Bosan (Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Livestock) on this auspicious event of the closing ceremony of the First International Conference on Mango and Date Palm: Culture and Export.

We are thankful to our worthy Federal Minister for sparing time to grace this occasion out of his over occupied schedule.

Honorable Minister; the concept of this conference was conceived about 4 months ago with a vision: “Production for Global Market”, in view of the changing global scenario regarding Horticultural produce quality, food safety and competitiveness.

A great deals of efforts lead to the successful holding of the conference; although time was too short for the international delegates to participate in the conference. By virtue of fortune and impetus of targeted efforts made by Prof. Dr M. Ibrahim (who is not with us due to illness), Dr Aman Ullah Malik, Asstt. Prof. Hort. and his team resulted into the participation of our resource persons like Dr. Ping Lu, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO- Australia), Dr. Samir H. Al Shakir (Technical Director, Emirate Date Factory, UAE) and other eminent scientists from Iran and Sultanate of Oman.

Honorable Minister, this conference is unique in a way that it is the first ever initiative of its kind, to bring together international and national experts and resource persons from industry, academia, and various stakeholders to discuss the issues regarding breeding, production management, harvest, storage, food certification, marketing, and export of these fruits. Need for better plant protection has been emphasized in the conference particularly in a declaring scenario of mango orchard. Food safety laws in perspective of WTO, and SPS measure, HACCP certification has been discussed, which is to play an important role in improving export of these fruit.

Hidden harvest i.e. Post harvest losses are too high in our fresh fruit trade; we are loosing more than 100 million dollars worth of mango and date fruits annually, while we are exporting only worth 46 million dollars of mango and date fruits. This area has the potential to improve our export and profitability. It was discussed that how to minimize the losses and have increment in our foreign exchange earning. A list of recommendations has been developed which will be presented very shortly for your kind information.

This conference is really a great opportunity for academia, scientists, researchers, farmers and industrialists to share the ideas and thoughts under one roof. May I suggest that we should inculcate maximum out of this opportunity as it is well said such opportunities are very rare in their occurrence.

Although due to time constraints and procedural regulations the delegation from India, could not attend the conference (we got clearance today after-noon), however they have submitted their papers as such contributing to the International Conference. Overall the First International Conference on Mango and Date palm: Culture and Export is a success and will serve a long way to steering mango and date industry towards sustainability and profitability.

With these words I thank honorable Federal Minister for his participation.