

Remarks by Ambassador Liu Jieyi at the Workshop on Juncao Technology Project of China-UN Peace and Development Trust Fund

Dear colleagues and friends,

It gives me great pleasure to attend this workshop on the Juncao project of the China-UN Peace and Development Trust Fund.

In September 2015, the UN Summit on Development adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which outlines a new vision for global development and creates new opportunities for international cooperation for development. During his attendance at the summits commemorating the 70th anniversary of the UN, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced a series of important and pragmatic initiatives by China to help the developing countries implement the SDGs, as well as the establishment of the China-UN Peace and Development Trust Fund. With the Fund up and running, its initial 13 projects have been launched. These projects relate to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the promotion of scientific and technological innovation of the developing world, and contribute immensely to the work of the UN and multilateralism.

Juncao technology is a priority project that the Fund is promoting. It is closely linked to issues that are important to developing countries, including eradication of poverty, reduction of hunger, use of renewable energy, promotion of employment and response to climate change. It fits the special conditions and needs of developing countries in Asia and Africa and it is a solution contributed by China to help them overcome their development challenges and implement the SDGs, thus advancing global development.

Juncao technology is characterized by high quality and low threshold. It can help implement the SDGs in the following ways.

Firstly, as it is an agricultural technology that replaces wood with grass, it has great potentials. Traditional techniques to cultivate edible and medicinal fungi mainly used wood logs and sawdust as “soil”. The cultivation was quite demanding in terms of physical environment, which made it very hard to replicate. In contrast, Juncao technology does not use arable land. It is low-cost, easy to operate and environment-friendly. As such, it is a particularly apt way to

help lift people living in impoverished regions out of poverty by bringing about economic, social and environmental benefits.

Secondly, Juncao technology serves sustainable agriculture development, helps farmers increase income and creates enabling conditions for the developing countries to implement the SDGs. Juncao is the best material for cultivating edible and medicinal fungi. Juncao cultivation will drive the cultivation and processing of edible and medicinal fungi, and also promote the development of livestock husbandry and livestock feeds production. Experience of some countries in implementing the Juncao project shows that Juncao industry can effectively create more jobs and promote sustainable agricultural development.

Thirdly, used to produce clean energy, Juncao can effectively help address the challenges of climate change. It has a high conversion rate of solar energy. The power generated from the burning of Juncao grown on one hectare of land is equivalent to that from more than 50 tons of coal. A ton of dried jumbo Juncao can produce over 450 cubic meters of biogas. Since the amount of CO₂ that Juncao absorbs during its growth offsets the amount it emits in burning, it has zero emission and zero pollution and is thus a source of clean energy that can help address the challenges of climate change.

Fourthly, Juncao helps conserve soil and prevent soil erosion. It is conducive to the protection of ecological environment and the prevention of desertification. Jumbo Juncao is very hardy and grows fast in many different environments. Within 100 days or so after planting, it starts to stop shifting sand and improve soil quality. The soil thus improved with Juncao technology can then be used to grow cash crops. Therefore, while providing protection against erosion and desertification, Juncao also brings economic benefit to the people in desert areas, thus offering an alternative way of preventing desertification and addressing soil erosion.

Since 1992, Juncao technology has been spread to more than 100 countries. 8 countries, namely, Thailand, Malaysia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Rwanda, Lesotho and Eritrea, have established bases for Juncao technology demonstration and training, as well as industrial development. In this process, Chinese Juncao scientists have overcome a lot of technological difficulties to ensure that Juncao technology “take hold” in recipient countries and produce real benefits.

In view of the high temperature in Fiji, the Chinese experts used refrigerators as mushroom sheds and overcame various difficulties to successfully cultivate a heat-tolerant species, thus creating a Juncao project tailor-made for Fiji.

In Rwanda where soil erosion is serious, the Chinese experts have designed a model of inter-planting Juncao with traditional local crops like fruit trees, corns and beans, which has yielded good results in soil and water conservation.

In the Eastern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea where water is extremely scarce and temperature could rise to 50 degrees Celsius during the day and drop to 6-7 degrees at night, the Chinese experts have overcome these technical challenges by developing the method of covered-soil cultivation on shaded strips, which suits the local condition.

Juncao technology has huge potentials. China hopes that through this workshop, an important platform for cooperation will be set up to create a good beginning for the project of Juncao technology. Going forward, effort is needed in the following aspects.

First, establish channels. We suggest that permanent missions here transmit the information on Juncao project to relevant authorities at home for follow-up and potential cooperation.

Second, set up network. We suggest that countries provide contact information of their focal points, so as to build an international platform and a cooperation network for this project through which communication and exchanges can be carried out.

Third, introduce the project to a wider audience. Based on current results and in light of the needs and cooperation intention of countries concerned, regional and sub-regional meetings can be convened to introduce this project and facilitate its implementation.

China looks forward to increased participation in this project to enable it to better serve the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, benefit the people of the developing world and make greater contribution to the building of a community of shared future for mankind.

Thank you for your attention.