

Turkey signs agri deals with African countries

Turkey and six African countries signed cooperation deals in agriculture, fisheries, and livestock in the Mediterranean resort province of Antalya. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Turkey's Food, Agriculture and Livestock Minister Faruk Çelik recalled Turkey's ongoing efforts to develop agricultural cooperation with the continent since 2005.



Image Source: [African Agri Council](#)

As a result of these efforts, Turkey's trade with Africa increased from \$5bn to \$18bn, Çelik said. "In terms of agriculture, our trade has increased from \$418m to \$2.5bn. We know that these figures are not sufficient. We are all aware of this. The aim of all these meetings is to raise our trade volume, especially in the area of agriculture and to further develop our relationships in every field," the Minister added.

Friday (28 April) was the last day of the Turkey-Africa First Agriculture Ministers Meeting and Agribusiness Forum. Organised by the Turkish Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock, the two-day event hosted more than 300 participants, including ministers, from 54 African countries.

Deals were signed with Congo, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Guinea, Rwanda, and Gambia.

Agriculture a must for the African continent

Çelik underlined that agriculture was a strategic sector and a must for the African continent. "The African continent holds one-fourth of all arable land in the world. That is why it is not possible to ignore the agricultural potential of Africa," he said, adding Turkey was "extending its hand to Africa not to take something from it, but "to make sure that Africa stands on its own feet." Çelik noted that participating agriculture ministers addressed significant topics and problems regarding the sector in their countries.

The meetings will create an opportunity to resolve the country's problems, he said. "We have seen that it is possible for countries to develop themselves when their agricultural supplies and demands match," he added.

"The main important thing is to have arable land and to ensure that that land can be irrigated. All other issues can be solved through qualified technical means and staff," Çelik said.

Africa and Turkey working towards cooperation

Sacko Josefa Leonel Correa, African Union commissioner for rural economy and agriculture, said that African countries and Turkey worked towards cooperation. "We are now witnessing political will in Turkey. This is highly important for the development of the agriculture sector and for the development of African countries. We are aware of the effort," Sacko said.

The commissioner underlined that they were working in the fields of livestock, fisheries, environment, irrigation and sanitation.

"During the meetings, we listened to different presentations and projects. I believe that we are on the right path," she said. Sacko praised Turkey's experience in the area of agriculture as "one of the largest exporters of agricultural commodities. Thus, we have a lot to learn from you and we can benefit from your experiences, she said.

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