



## BANGLADESH

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**STATEMENT BY BANGLADESH, ON AGENDA ITEM 28: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,  
AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 73<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 03 October 2018)**

**H.E. Mahmoud Saikal , the Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

Since this is the first time, my delegation is taking the floor, I extend our warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chair and other members of the Bureau of the Third Committee on your election. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the days ahead.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement given by Egypt on behalf of Group of G-77 and China. In addition, I would like to share today my country's experience in Social Development.

**Mr. Chair,**

The Government of Bangladesh led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been working relentlessly to eradicate poverty through people-centric development plans and actions. In recent times, the country has witnessed robust economic growth. We have made significant strides in social development as well duly complemented by this economic development. Bangladesh climbed three spots to rank at 136 among 189 countries in the latest human development index (HDI), released by the UNDP. We have reduced significantly infant mortality rate; the life expectancy is now more than 72 years. This has happened due to consistent investment in health, water, education and sanitation sectors by our government bringing the services to people's doorsteps, often using the power ICT. NGOs and private sector have also complemented government's efforts immensely.

In the last fiscal year, we spent 5.9% of our national budget in the public health sector; this year, it has been increased by 17%. There are 18,000 community health clinics and Union Health Centres for delivering basic health care services countrywide; 30 different types of medicines are being distributed free of cost. As a result, we have been able to reduce deaths from killer diseases such as Tuberculosis by 19% in the last two years.

**Mr. Chair,**

Skills and knowledge are regarded as the key driving forces under the “Vision 2021” of the present Government to achieve Middle Income Country Status by 2021. Our government is investing a significant amount of its resources for the human resources development especially for the youth. We have achieved 100% enrollment at the primary level several years back. Literacy rate has increased from 45% to 72.9% in the last nine and half years. Bangladesh has given special priority to the best use of demographic dividend of its young population to take us through the next couple of decades by imparting appropriate skills. A number of initiatives have been taken up to upgrade and enhance the skill of the existing workforce as well.

We are encouraged to see that the Secretary General’s report on *Plan of action to integrate volunteering into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* has recognized Bangladesh’s efforts.

We recognize that adequate resourcing and funding for volunteerism are critical to sustaining participatory development. In Bangladesh, the Youth Welfare Fund Act of 2016 provides youth organizations with financial support for volunteerism. Bangladesh is supportive of the Special Voluntary Fund to enable United Nations Volunteers (UNV) to develop projects. We are happy to be a partner of UNV as mentioned by their representative yesterday.

Bangladesh has been committed in her “whole-of-society” approach in taking along all sections of its population towards achieving sustainable development. In that we have not only focused on youth, women and children but also older persons and persons with disabilities. Family has been one of the main enabling factors in our efforts. We therefore, continue to support various efforts towards strengthening national family-centered policies and programmes.

We are working hard to ensure equal respect, rights, full participation and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, thereby mainstreaming disability in our development policies and programmes. We were instrumental in adoption of the GA resolution on Autism in 2012. The Mission of Bangladesh along with other like-minded countries arranges High Level Event at the UN to observe the ‘World Autism Awareness Day’ on 2 April. This year Ms. Saima Hossain of Bangladesh, a globally renowned champion for the cause of Autism Spectrum Disorder and a WHO Goodwill Ambassador for the Autism in the South East Asia Region attended the event. In this regard, we also commend the Secretary General for his efforts in preparing the **United Nations 2018 flagship report on disability and development: realization of the Sustainable Development Goals** as well as on **Inclusive development for persons with disabilities**.

Bangladesh stresses importance on effective enforcement of labour laws with regard to migrant workers and promotes safe, orderly and regular migration. We were actively engaged in the deliberations leading to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016. As the original proponent, Bangladesh played an active role in the negotiations leading to the adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration and look forward to its successful adoption in Marrakech, coming December.

**Mr. Chair,**

One, however, cannot ignore the fact that inequality remains as one of the biggest impediments to achieving more inclusive social development of course we are all committed to implement SDG 10. As enshrined in our Constitution, all our development efforts are geared towards addressing this challenge. We, however, need enhanced partnership and burden sharing through more south-south, north-south and triangular cooperation within the international community and various stakeholders to make it a reality.

I thank you.

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