



BANGLADESH

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**STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. MASUD BIN MOMEN, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF BANGLADESH TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON AGENDA ITEM 29: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
NEW YORK, 05 OCTOBER 2018**

**Mr. Chair,
Excellencies
Distinguished delegates**

Our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had sown the seed of gender parity having rightly identified that without establishing equal rights of women with men in all spheres of the nationhood we cannot have desired level of social upliftment. His daughter, Sheikh Hasina, the present Prime Minister, also followed her father's vision and put advancement of women at the heart of our development endeavours. She is one of the few world leaders who was present at the adoption of both the MDGs and the SDGs, a unique example of successful and sustained woman leadership. She received a number of awards over the years in recognition of her efforts in women empowerment, the latest being the Global Women's Leadership Award from Global Summit of Women 2018 in Sydney, Australia.

Mr. Chair,

Women advancement in Bangladesh, also a Constitutional stipulation, has been an all-round one; spread over all major sectors. In the current Parliament, we have 72 women members. In addition to the Prime Minister who is also the Leader of the House, the Speaker, the Deputy Leader and the Leader of the Opposition, all are women. We also have five women as members of the Cabinet.

Girls education is free of cost till twelfth grade in public educational institutions. At secondary level enrollment, girls have outnumbered boys by a significant margin.

Around 20 million women are employed in agriculture, service and industrial sectors. Women constitute 80% of 4.5 million workers engaged in the largest export earning garments sector. Our women are regarded as ‘bankable’, also having easy access to ‘micro saving’ schemes. Women entrepreneurs are offered collateral free bank loans, business start-up funds and industrial plots.

All our national plans, development policies and programmes are gender responsive. They try to ensure our women as equal contributors in the overall development of the country. In addition, a number of national actions plans for implementing National Women Development Policy; preventing Violence against Women and Children; ending Child Marriage; combating Human Trafficking and ensuring Gender Equity are underway which specifically target women. We are also mindful of bringing the marginalized and vulnerable section of womenfolk under social safety net programmes so that no one is left behind.

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh is one of the largest labour sending countries which includes a significant number of unskilled and semi-skilled female domestic workers. They are often victims of sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation from their employers. Our Government has taken concrete steps to protect their rights and dignity. Yet there has to be global efforts to ensure adequate safeguard under the existing international laws and conventions to protect women migrant workers in their host countries. We expect Global Compact of Migration will uphold this particular aspect.

In natural calamities, women and girls are the most vulnerable facing various challenges including displacement, trafficking, exploitation and other forms of discriminations. Being one of the most climate vulnerable countries, this poses a larger problem to us. Our indigenous initiatives under disaster risk reduction have significantly enhanced their resilience.

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh took the lead to table the historic Security Council resolution 1325 ‘Women, Peace and Security’ in 2000. Over the years we have been working closely with the international community in furthering the role of women over the entire continuum of conflict, more recently in conflict prevention. We are increasing the number of our female peacekeepers. We have been the first to deploy female helicopter pilots in a peacekeeping mission. We were privileged to deploy first full female police contingent in Haiti.

Our girls are making us proud in the fields of soccer and cricket. Two of our prominent women climbers have conquered the Mount Everest!

No wonder, in the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Index, 2017, Bangladesh has topped the South Asian countries in gender equality for the third consecutive year, ranking 47th among 144 nations jumping 25 places from previous year’s position. Bangladesh has made progress across all dimensions of economic opportunity and participation and secures the 3rd spot among the lower-middle income countries.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, I would like to echo three actions for women advancement that our Prime Minister suggested during the high-level week of 73rd UNGA:

- First** - Overcome gender stereotypes regarding women’s ability;
- Second** - Enhance women’s productivity;
- Third** - Create equal opportunities for women in all sectors with gender responsive policy intervention.

I thank you all.