



Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations at the Plenary of the Second Committee of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Agenda item 24: Eradication of Poverty and other development issues (17 October 2018, CR-2, UNHQs)

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

At the outset, I would like to align with the statements delivered by Egypt, as the Chair of the G77, and Malawi, as the Chair of LDCs.

The success of the 2030 Agenda is contingent upon our success in eradication of poverty in all forms and dimensions.

Mr. Chairman,

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina mentioned in our National Report for VNR last year, "The concept of sustainable development will look alien if we falter in our pursuit to build a poverty-free world". By adopting inclusive and people-centric development policies for achieving a pro-poor growth, our Government has been able to reduce poverty to 21.4% and extreme poverty to 11.3%. Half of the total budget expenditure has been interlinked to poverty reduction for the last nine years. Our per capita income now stands at USD 1,752 with a GDP growth rate of 7.86%. Sustained growth rate contributed largely to the reduction of poverty in the country.

Poverty was well-entrenched in Bangladesh during the 70s after its emergence as an independent state and Bangladesh was categorized as a least developed country. However, due to our resoluteness to address poverty in a holistic manner and visionary leadership, we could qualify for graduation from this category for the first time this year.

We earned international acclamations for our success in achieving the MDGs particularly in poverty alleviation. We are committed to take forward our poverty alleviation programmes by attaining the SDGs which are now integrated into our national development plans to become a middle-income country by 2021.

The Government recognizes the multidimensional nature of poverty and plans to invest on capacity building for introducing Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) measurement.

Building on our success in health related MDG targets such as under- five mortality, maternal mortality rate and stunting, we are now implementing a US \$ 14.71 billion mega programme called 4th Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program (4th HPNSP) -2017-2022 in line with the SDGs. It incorporates appropriate strategies and activities for focused improvements in increasing access to and utilization of health care with the objective of providing universal health coverage by 2030.

The current Government, for the first time in the country, has formulated a comprehensive National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) to consolidate all safety net programmes and 6.5 million elderly men and women, widows, destitute women and persons with disabilities are getting regular allowances.

We have focused on skill development of the people particularly the youth and the women and have been creating job opportunities for them. We envisage that about 12.9 million additional jobs will be created by 2020. We are setting up 100 Special Economic Zones that would help create 10 million job opportunities in Bangladesh. We also aim to secure around 2 million jobs abroad for migrant workers. We are encouraging women to get into wage employment in the rural economy in larger proportion.

We envision a 12% growth rate in our exports by 2020. I may mention here that Ready-Made Garments constitutes almost 80% of our exports and employs 4.5 million workers of which 85% are women. This has significantly contributed to our efforts in poverty reduction and women empowerment.

The Government has been allocating significant resources to the transport sector to improve competitiveness and growth. This will play a major role in poverty reduction through accelerated economic activities in rural Bangladesh.

Our enhanced power generation capacity and the use of 5.5 million solar panels have helped rural small/medium industries to grow and create jobs and reduce poverty.

Our emphasis on ICT sector in line with government's Digital Bangladesh Vision has significantly reduced the transaction costs of trading with the urban economy, brought farms closer to growth centres, and financial services to the doorsteps of rural population.

We recognize access to finance as one of the most important factors for to alleviate poverty. The central bank of Bangladesh has been playing a pivotal role in offering banking facilities to millions, particularly rural people and women, who did not have access to any formal financial services. The 'One House, One Farm' project based on micro-savings for the rural and marginalized communities has been successful in lifting millions out of poverty in rural Bangladesh.

Climate change impacts constitute a big threat to our poverty eradication efforts. We are spending over 1% of our GDP in addressing climate change impacts. Now, we are implementing a mega project titled *Delta Plan 2100* to build capacity for combating climate change.

Mr. Chairman,

I would conclude mentioning that poverty eradication is a shared responsibility and our development partners should come forward to support us to address some major challenges that we face in our poverty eradication efforts such as resource mobilization, availability of technology and data capacity building.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.