



BANGLADESH AT THE UNITED NATIONS: ENGAGEMENTS IN 2018



Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman addressing the UN General Assembly in Bangla on 25 September 1974. That was the first time "Bangla", the language of the Bangalee nation, was pronounced at the United Nations. (Due to relentless efforts of the Father of the Nation, Bangladesh became the Member of the United Nations on 17 September 1974 as its 136th Member.)

“ মানবজাতির অস্তিত্ব রক্ষার জন্য শান্তি একান্ত দরকার। এই শান্তির মধ্যে সারা বিশ্বের সকল নর-নারীর গভীর আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষা মূর্ত হয়ে রয়েছে। ন্যায়নীতির উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত না হলে শান্তি কখনো স্থায়ী হতে পারে না ■

শান্তির প্রতি যে আমাদের পূর্ণ আনুগত্য তা এই উপলব্ধি থেকে জন্মেছে যে, একমাত্র শান্তিপূর্ণ পরিবেশেই আমরা আমাদের কষ্টার্জিত জাতীয় স্বাধীনতার ফল আশ্বাদন করতে পারবো এবং ক্ষুধা, দারিদ্র, রোগশোক, অশিক্ষা ও বেকারত্বের বিরুদ্ধে সংগ্রাম করার জন্য আমাদের সকল সম্পদ ও শক্তি নিয়োগ করতে সক্ষম হবো ■ ”

- জাতিসংঘে বঙ্গবন্ধু

“ Peace is imperative for the survival of humanity. It represents the deepest aspirations of men and women throughout the world. Peace to sustain must be, peace based upon justice ■

Our total commitment to peace is born of the realization that only an environment of peace would enable us to enjoy the fruits of our hard-won national independence and to mobilize and concentrate all our energies and resources in combating the scourges of poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment ■ ”

- Bangabandhu at UN



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Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's speech at the 73rd UNGA

জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের পদাঙ্ক অনুসরণ করে প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা সরকার প্রধান হিসেবে দায়িত্ব গ্রহণের পর থেকে প্রতিবছর (১৯৯৬-২০০০ এবং ২০০৯ থেকে অদ্যাবধি) জাতিসংঘ সাধারণ পরিষদের মূল অধিবেশনে বাংলায় ভাষণ প্রদান করে আসছেন। ২০১৮ সালের ২৭ সেপ্টেম্বর জাতিসংঘ সাধারণ পরিষদের ৭৩তম অধিবেশনে বাংলায় প্রদত্ত প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার ভাষণের পূর্ণ বিবরণ।

বিসমিল্লাহির রাহমানির রাহিম

জনাব সভাপতি,

আসসালামু আলাইকুম এবং শুভ সন্ধ্যা।

জাতিসংঘের ৭৩ বছরের ইতিহাসে চতুর্থ নারী হিসেবে সাধারণ পরিষদের সভাপতি নির্বাচিত হওয়ায় আমি আপনাকে অভিনন্দন জানাই। জাতিসংঘের প্রতি আপনার অঙ্গীকার সুরক্ষায় আপনার যেকোন প্রচেষ্টায় আমার প্রতিনিধিদলের পক্ষ থেকে থাকবে অকুণ্ঠ সহযোগিতা।

একইসঙ্গে বিশ্বশান্তি, নিরাপত্তা ও টেকসই উন্নয়ন প্রতিষ্ঠার লক্ষ্যে সাহসী ও দৃঢ় নেতৃত্ব প্রদানের জন্য আমি জাতিসংঘের মহাসচিব জনাব অ্যান্টনিও গুটেরেস-কে অভিবাদন জানাই।

জনাব সভাপতি,

সাধারণ পরিষদের অধিবেশনের জন্য আপনার নির্ধারিত প্রতিপাদ্য আমাকে অতীতের কিছু ব্যক্তিগত স্মৃতির পাতায় নিয়ে গেছে। চুয়াল্লিশ বছর আগে এই মঞ্চে দাঁড়িয়ে আমার বাবা, জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান বলেছিলেন: আমি উদ্ধৃত করছি “মানবজাতির অস্তিত্ব রক্ষার জন্য শান্তি একান্ত দরকার। এই শান্তির মধ্যে সারা বিশ্বের সকল নর-নারীর গভীর আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষা মূর্ত



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering her statement in Bangla at the 73rd Session of the UNGA on 27 September 2018

Following the footsteps of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been delivering her speech at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly in Bangla each year since her assumption of office (from 1996 to 2000 and from 2009 till to date).

English version of the speech of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivered at the UN General Assembly on 27 September 2018.

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Madam President,

As-Salamu Alaikum and good evening.

Let me congratulate you on your election as the fourth female President of the UN General Assembly during its 73 years' history. I assure you of my delegation's full support in upholding your commitment to the UN.

I also felicitate Mr. António Guterres, UN Secretary General for his firm and courageous leadership in promoting global peace, security and sustainable development.

Madam President,

The theme you have chosen for this year's session brings back some personal memories for me. Forty-four years ago, my father, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman stood on this podium and said, I quote,

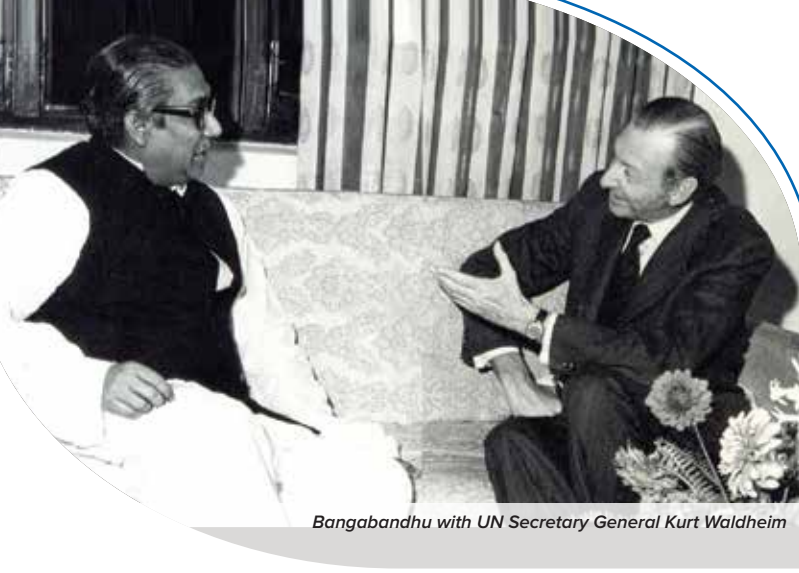
“Peace is an imperative for the survival of humanity. It represents the deepest aspirations of men and women throughout the world... The United Nations remains as the centre of hope for the future of the people in this world of sadness,

misery and conflict.” Unquote



Historic 7th March Speech, 1971, Ramna, Dhaka

হয়ে রয়েছে। এই দুঃখদুর্দশা-সংঘাতপূর্ণ বিশ্বে জাতিসংঘ মানুষের ভবিষ্যৎ আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষার কেন্দ্রস্থল”। উদ্ধৃতি শেষ।



Bangabandhu with UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Rohingya camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 12 September 2017

জনাব সভাপতি,

আমার বাবা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান বাংলাদেশের জনগণের আর্থ-সামাজিক উন্নয়নের জন্য আজীবন সংগ্রাম করেছেন। যেখানে ৯০ ভাগ মানুষই দারিদ্র্যসীমার নীচে বাস করত। দীর্ঘ ২৪ বছরের সংগ্রাম ও মুক্তিযুদ্ধে বিজয়ী হয়ে তাঁর নেতৃত্বে বাংলাদেশ স্বাধীনতা অর্জন করে ১৯৭১ সালে। এই দীর্ঘ সংগ্রামে প্রায় ১৪ বছরই তিনি কারাগারে বন্দি জীবন কাটিয়েছেন। তাঁকে হত্যার ষড়যন্ত্র হয়েছিল বার বার। স্বাধীনতা অর্জনের পর একটা যুদ্ধ বিধ্বস্ত, অর্থনৈতিকভাবে ধ্বংসপ্রাপ্ত দেশকে গড়ে তোলার কাজে তিনি আত্মনিয়োগ করেন। দেশের মানুষের জীবনে স্বস্তি ফিরে আসে। স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ হিসেবে বাংলাদেশের অগ্রযাত্রা শুরু হয়। দুর্ভাগ্য বাংলাদেশের জনগণের। মাত্র সাড়ে তিন বছর তিনি রাষ্ট্র পরিচালনার সুযোগ পেয়েছিলেন। ১৯৭৫ সালের ১৫ই আগস্ট ঘাতকেরা তাঁকে নির্মমভাবে হত্যা করে। একইসঙ্গে তারা আমার মা বেগম ফজিলাতুন নেছা, আমার তিন ভাই, যাদের মধ্যে ছোট ভাইটির বয়স ছিল মাত্র ১০ বছর, নবপরিণীতা দুই ভ্রাতৃবধুসহ পরিবারের ১৮ জন সদস্যকে হত্যা করে। আমি ও আমার ছোটবোন শেখ রেহানা বিদেশে ছিলাম বলে বেঁচে যাই। কিন্তু আমরা দেশে ফিরতে পারিনি।

সে সময়কার ক্ষমতা দখলকারী সামরিক একনায়ক ইন্ডেমনিটি অর্ডিন্যান্স জারি করে খুনীদের বিচারের পথ রুদ্ধ করে দিয়েছিল। আমরা এই নৃশংস হত্যার বিচার চাওয়ার অধিকার পর্যন্ত হারিয়েছিলাম।

জনাব সভাপতি,

বিশ্বব্যাপী বিপুলসংখ্যক নিপীড়িত ও রোহিঙ্গাদের মত নিজ গৃহ থেকে বিতাড়িত মানুষের দুঃখ-দুর্দশা আমার হৃদয়কে ব্যথিত করে। এ জাতীয় ঘটনাকে অগ্রাহ্য করে শান্তিপূর্ণ, ন্যায্য ও টেকসই সমাজ প্রতিষ্ঠা করা সম্ভব নয়। ১৯৭১ সালে স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময় আমাদের দেশের মানুষের উপর পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনী যে গণহত্যা চালিয়েছিল মিয়ানমারের ঘটনা সে কথাই বার বার মনে করিয়ে দেয়। ১৯৭১ সালে ৯ মাসের যুদ্ধে পাকিস্তানীরা ৩০ লাখ নিরীহ বাঙালিকে হত্যা করেছিল। ২ লাখ নারী পাশবিক নির্যাতনের শিকার হন। এক কোটি মানুষ বাড়িঘর ছেড়ে ভারতে আশ্রয় নিয়েছিলেন। আমার বাবাকে গ্রেফতার করে পাকিস্তানে নিয়ে যায়। আমার মা, ছোট দুই ভাই, বোনসহ আমিও বন্দি হই। সে সময় আমি সন্তান-সম্ভবা ছিলাম। আমার প্রথম সন্তানের জন্ম হয় বন্দি অবস্থায়। নোংরা ও স্যাঁতস্যাঁতে পরিবেশে আমাদের থাকতে হত।

বাংলাদেশে আশ্রয় নেওয়া রোহিঙ্গাদের উপর গণহত্যা ও মানবতাবিরোধী অপরাধ সংঘটনের যে বিবরণ জাতিসংঘের প্রতিবেদনে উঠে এসেছে তাতে আমরা হতভম্ব। আমরা আশা করি, আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায় বিশেষ করে জাতিসংঘ রোহিঙ্গাদের উপর ঘটে যাওয়া অত্যাচার ও অবিচারের বিষয়টি গুরুত্ব সহকারে দেখবে।

জনাব সভাপতি,

একজন মানুষ হিসেবে রোহিঙ্গাদের দুঃখ-দুর্দশাকে আমরা যেমন অগ্রাহ্য করতে পারি না, তেমনি পারি না নিশ্চুপ থাকতে। আমার পিতামাতাসহ পরিবারের সদস্যদের হত্যার পর আমাকেও দীর্ঘ ছয় বছর দেশে ফিরতে দেওয়া হয়নি। আমরা দুই বোন শরণার্থী হিসেবে বিদেশে অবস্থান করতে বাধ্য হয়েছিলাম। তাই আপনজন হারানো

Madam President,

My father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman devoted his life for the socio-economic development of the people of Bangladesh. He had done so at a time when 90% of the population lived below the poverty line. Following 24 years of struggle culminating in the victory of our Liberation War, Bangladesh gained Independence under his leadership in 1971. During this long period of struggle, he spent his time in the prison for almost 14 years. There were plots to assassinate him again and again.

Following the independence, Bangabandhu directed his strength to rebuild a war-ravaged country with a ruined economy. The people got back a sense of relief. Bangladesh set on its journey ahead as an LDC. Yet, what a misfortune for our people! Bangabandhu could lead the country only for three years and a half. He was brutally gunned down by assassins on 15 August 1975. Along with him, 18 members of my family - among them my mother Begum Fazilatunnesa, three brothers, the youngest only ten years of age, and two newly-wed sisters-in-law were also killed. My sister Sheikh Rehana and I happened to be abroad at the time and survived the mayhem. But, we were barred from getting back to the country. The military dictator who grabbed power at the time promulgated an Indemnity Ordinance and blocked the possibility for bringing the killers to justice. We were denied the right to seek justice for the gruesome murders.

Madam President,

I can feel the pain and suffering of countless people around the world, persecuted and expelled from their homes like the Rohingya. It is impossible to build peaceful, just and sustainable societies by ignoring such situations. The Myanmar situation repeatedly reminds us of the genocide committed by the Pakistan occupation forces against our people in 1971. During the nine months of our Liberation War, the Pakistanis had killed three million innocent Bengalis. Two hundred thousand women had to suffer heinous torture and abuse. Ten million people had to flee their homes and take refuge in India. My father was arrested and taken to Pakistan. I was also taken prisoner along with my mother, two younger brothers and a sister. I was expecting my first child at the time. He was born in captivity. We had to spend our days in a damp, unhealthy environment.

We are appalled by what we have seen in UN Reports about atrocities against the Rohingya who have now taken shelter in Bangladesh, which are tantamount to genocide and crimes against humanity. We expect the international community, particularly the UN, to give due importance to the atrocities and injustice suffered by the Rohingya population in Myanmar.

Madam President,

As a fellow human being, we can neither ignore nor remain silent about the plight of the Rohingya. When my father and family members



Marine Drive at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the commissioning ceremony of two submarines on 12 March 2018, Chattagram, Bangladesh

এবং শরণার্থী হিসেবে পরদেশে থাকার কষ্ট আমি মর্মে মর্মে উপলব্ধি করতে পারি। মিয়ানমার থেকে জোরপূর্বক বাস্তুচ্যুত ও অসহায় রোহিঙ্গা জনগোষ্ঠীর দুর্দশার স্থায়ী ও শান্তিপূর্ণ সমাধানে গত বছর সাধারণ পরিষদের অধিবেশনে আমি পাঁচ-দফা প্রস্তাব পেশ করেছিলাম। আমরা আশাহত হয়েছি, কেননা আমাদের ঐকান্তিক প্রচেষ্টা সত্ত্বেও আজ পর্যন্ত মিয়ানমারে রোহিঙ্গাদের স্থায়ী ও টেকসই প্রত্যাবাসন শুরু করা সম্ভব হয়নি।

মিয়ানমার আমাদের প্রতিবেশী দেশ। প্রথম থেকেই আমরা তাদের সাথে আলোচনার মাধ্যমে রোহিঙ্গা সমস্যার একটা শান্তিপূর্ণ সমাধানের চেষ্টা করে যাচ্ছি। ইতোমধ্যে

had been killed, I was not allowed to return home for six years. My sister and I were compelled to live abroad as refugees. I can feel the misery of losing one's loved ones and of living in a different land as a refugee.

I, therefore, presented a five-point proposal at the UN General Assembly last year with a view to finding a durable and peaceful solution to the sufferings of the forcibly displaced and hapless Rohingya. We are disappointed that despite our earnest efforts we have not been able to begin Rohingya repatriation in a permanent and



Launching moment of the first ever satellite of Bangladesh 'Bangabandhu-1' at 20:14 UTC on May 11, 2018 from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, USA

রোহিঙ্গাদের ফিরিয়ে নেওয়ার বিষয়ে বাংলাদেশ ও মিয়ানমার-এর মধ্যে একাধিক চুক্তি স্বাক্ষরিত হয়েছে।

তবে, মিয়ানমার মৌখিকভাবে সব সময়ই রোহিঙ্গাদের ফিরিয়ে নেবে বলে অঙ্গীকার করলেও বাস্তবে তারা কোন কার্যকর ভূমিকা নিচ্ছে না।

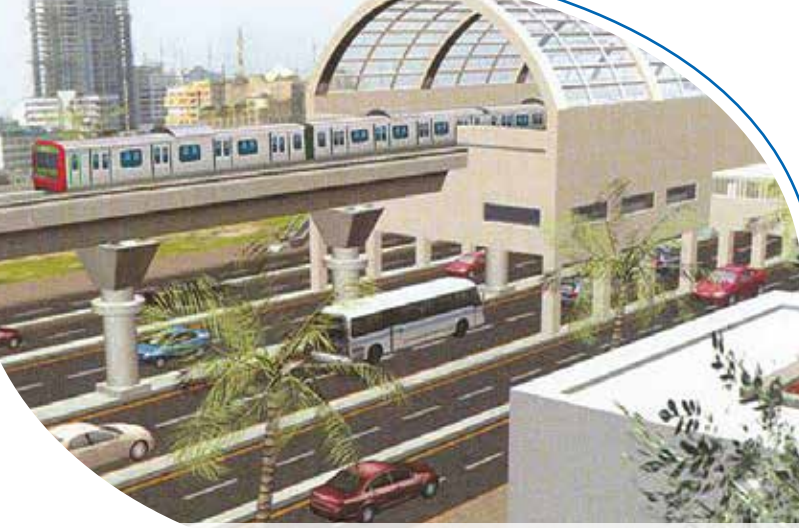
বাংলাদেশে অবস্থানরত এগার লক্ষাধিক রোহিঙ্গা জনগোষ্ঠী মানবতের জীবনযাপন করছে।

আমরা সাধ্যমত তাদের জন্য খাদ্য, বস্ত্র, চিকিৎসা, নিরাপত্তা, শিশুদের যত্নের ব্যবস্থা করেছি। এ ক্ষেত্রে জাতিসংঘ, কমনওয়েলথ, ওআইসি-সহ বিশ্বের বিভিন্ন দেশ ও সংস্থা সহানুভূতি দেখিয়েছেন এবং সাহায্য ও সহযোগিতা করে যাচ্ছেন। এজন্য আমি তাঁদের

sustainable manner.

Myanmar is one of our neighbours. From the outset, we have been trying to find a peaceful solution to the Rohingya crisis through bilateral consultations. So far, three bilateral arrangements have been concluded between Bangladesh and Myanmar for Rohingya repatriation. Despite their verbal commitment to take back the Rohingya, in reality the Myanmar authorities are yet to accept them back.

The 1.1 million Rohingya hosted in Bangladesh are living in an uncertain situation. To the best of our ability, we have made arrangements for their food, clothing, healthcare, child-care and



Ongoing Metro Rail Project, Dhaka Metropolitan, Bangladesh



Dhaka-Chattagram 4-Lane Highway, Bangladesh

সকলের প্রতি জানাই কৃতজ্ঞতা ও ধন্যবাদ।
 রোহিঙ্গারা যতদিন তাদের নিজ দেশে ফেরত যেতে না পারবেন, ততদিন সাময়িকভাবে তারা যাতে মানসম্মত ও স্বাস্থ্যসম্মত পরিবেশে বসবাস করতে পারেন, সে জন্য শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্যসহ সকল ধরনের সুযোগ-সুবিধার ব্যবস্থা রেখে আমরা নতুন আবাসন নির্মাণের কাজ শুরু করেছি। আন্তর্জাতিক সংস্থাগুলোকে এ কাজে সহযোগিতার হাত বাড়িয়ে দেওয়ার জন্য আহ্বান জানাচ্ছি। একইসঙ্গে রোহিঙ্গারা যাতে সেখানে যেতে পারেন তার জন্যও আমি আন্তর্জাতিক সংস্থাগুলোর সহযোগিতা চাচ্ছি।
 যেহেতু রোহিঙ্গা সমস্যার উদ্ভব হয়েছে মিয়ানমারে তাই এর সমাধানও হতে হবে

security. Many countries and organizations including the UN, the Commonwealth, and the OIC have shown solidarity with the Rohingya and extended support and assistance for them. I extend my appreciation and thanks to the international community.
 So long the Rohingya are not able to return home, they should, as a temporary arrangement, be able to live in a good and healthy condition. With this in mind, we have started working on a new housing facility for them with all arrangements for their education, health care and other needs. I call upon international organizations to



Bangladesh proudly rising from the mighty Padma: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina watching the construction of the Padma Bridge, the symbol of Bangladesh's indomitable success, from helicopter on her way back from Tungipara on 15 August 2018.

মিয়ানমারে। জাতিসংঘের সঙ্গে মিয়ানমারের যে চুক্তি হয়েছে আমরা তারও আশু বাস্তবায়ন ও কার্যকারিতা দেখতে চাই। আমরা দ্রুত রোহিঙ্গা সমস্যার শান্তিপূর্ণ সমাধান চাই।

জনাব সভাপতি,

গত ত্রিশ বছরে বাংলাদেশ জাতিসংঘ শান্তিরক্ষা কার্যক্রমের অধীনে ৫৪টি মিশনে এক লক্ষ আটান্ন হাজার ছয়'শ দশ জন শান্তিরক্ষী প্রেরণের মাধ্যমে বিশ্বশান্তি রক্ষায় বিশেষ অবদান রেখেছে। পেশাগত দায়িত্ব পালন করতে গিয়ে বাংলাদেশের ১৪৫ জন শান্তিরক্ষী জীবনদান করেছেন।

বর্তমানে ১০টি মিশনে ১৪৪ জন নারী শান্তিরক্ষীসহ বাংলাদেশের মোট সাত হাজারের

join hands with us in this initiative. I also seek their assistance to help relocate the Rohingya to the facility.

The Rohingya crisis has had its origin in Myanmar. As such, its solution has to be found in Myanmar. We also wish to see immediate and effective implementation of the agreement concluded between Myanmar and the UN. We want an early, peaceful solution to the Rohingya crisis.

Madam President,

In last 30 years, Bangladesh has made its contribution to international peace by deploying over 158,000 peacekeepers in 54 missions. 145 peacekeepers from Bangladesh have made their supreme sacrifice in



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laying foundation stone of Matarbari 1200 MW ultrasuper critical coal power plant through a video conferencing at Gonobhaban, 25 January 2018



Work of submarine cable in Bangladesh in progress.

অধিক শান্তিরক্ষী নিযুক্ত রয়েছেন। আমাদের শান্তিরক্ষীগণ তাদের পেশাদারিত্ব, সাহস ও সাফল্যের জন্য প্রশংসিত হয়েছেন। এছাড়া, Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System-এ ২৩টি ক্ষেত্রে অবদানের জন্য আমরা অঙ্গীকার করেছি। নিরাপদ, নিয়মিত ও নিয়মতান্ত্রিক অভিবাসন বিষয়ক Global Compact-এর মূল প্রবক্তা হিসেবে আমরা আরও দূরদৃষ্টিসম্পন্ন এবং মানবাধিকার কেন্দ্রিক একটি কম্প্যাক্ট প্রত্যাশা করেছিলাম। বর্তমান বিশ্ব পরিস্থিতির প্রেক্ষাপটে অভিবাসন বিষয়ক এই কম্প্যাক্টকে আমরা স্বাগত জানাই এবং অভিবাসীদের অধিকার রক্ষায় এটি একটি ক্রমঃপরিবর্ধনশীল দলিল হিসেবে কাজ করবে বলে আমি বিশ্বাস করি।

বাংলাদেশ সন্ত্রাসবাদসহ সকল সংঘবদ্ধ অপরাধের বিরুদ্ধে। বাংলাদেশের ভূখণ্ডে প্রতিবেশী দেশগুলোর স্বার্থবিরোধী কোন কার্যক্রম বা সন্ত্রাসী কর্মকান্ড আমরা পরিচালিত হতে দিব না। সন্ত্রাসবাদ মোকাবেলায় আমাদের 'zero tolerance' নীতি অব্যাহত থাকবে।

সহিংস উগ্রবাদ, মানবপাচার ও মাদক প্রতিরোধে আমাদের সমাজের সকল শ্রেণি-পেশার মানুষকে সম্পৃক্ত করার নীতি বিশেষ সফল বয়ে এনেছে।

এ বিষয়ে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের উদ্যোগে গৃহীত Global Call to Action on the Drug Problem-এর সঙ্গে বাংলাদেশ একাত্মতা ঘোষণা করেছে।

জনাব সভাপতি,

২০০৯ সাল থেকে আমরা অন্তর্ভুক্তিমূলক ও জনকল্যাণমুখী উন্নয়ন নীতিমালা বাস্তবায়ন করে চলেছি। জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের স্বপ্নের সোনার বাংলাদেশ প্রতিষ্ঠার পথে আমরা জনগণের সকল প্রত্যাশা পূরণে সচেষ্ট রয়েছি।

বিশ্বব্যাপক ২০১৫ সালে আমাদের নিম্ন মধ্যম আয়ের দেশ হিসেবে স্বীকৃতি দিয়েছে। মোট দেশজ উৎপাদনের বিবেচনায় বাংলাদেশ আজ বিশ্বের ৪৩তম বৃহৎ অর্থনীতির দেশ। আমাদের মাথাপিছু আয় ২০০৬ সালের ৫৪৩ মার্কিন ডলার থেকে বৃদ্ধি পেয়ে ২০১৮ সালে ১ হাজার ৭৫১ মার্কিন ডলারে উন্নীত হয়েছে। জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধির হার গত অর্থবছরে ছিল শতকরা সাত দশমিক আট-ছয় (৭.৮৬) ভাগ। মূল্যস্ফীতি বর্তমানে ৫.৪ শতাংশে হ্রাস পেয়েছে। দারিদ্র্যের হার ২০০৬ সালের শতকরা ৪১.৫ ভাগ থেকে শতকরা ২১.৪ ভাগে হ্রাস পেয়েছে। একই সময়ে হত দরিদ্রের হার ২৪ শতাংশ থেকে ১১.৩ শতাংশে নেমে এসেছে।

বৈদেশিক মুদ্রার রিজার্ভ ২০০৮-০৯ অর্থবছরে ছিল ৭.৫ বিলিয়ন মার্কিন ডলার। ২০১৮ সালে তা বেড়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে ৩৩ বিলিয়ন মার্কিন ডলার। সরকারী বিনিয়োগ ২০০৯ সালে ছিল শতকরা ৪.৩ ভাগ। ২০১৮ সালে তা ৮.২ শতাংশে উন্নীত হয়েছে। বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন সক্ষমতা ২০০৯ সালের ৩ হাজার ২০০ মেগাওয়াট হতে ২০১৮ সালে কুড়ি হাজার মেগাওয়াটে বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে।

টেকসই বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করতে আমরা কয়লাভিত্তিক সুপারক্রিটিক্যাল বিদ্যুৎকেন্দ্র নির্মাণ করছি। সঞ্চালন লাইনবিহীন প্রত্যন্ত অঞ্চলে ৫৫ লাখ সোলার প্যানেল স্থাপনের মাধ্যমে বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ করা হচ্ছে। দেশের ৯০ শতাংশ জনগণ বিদ্যুৎ সুবিধার আওতায় এসেছে। রূপপুর পারমাণবিক বিদ্যুৎ প্রকল্পের কাজ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মাধ্যমে আমরা পারমাণবিক শক্তির নিরাপদ ব্যবহার যুগে প্রবেশ করেছি।

বাংলাদেশ আজ উন্নয়নের বৈশ্বিক মডেল হিসেবে বিবেচিত। আমরা স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ

the line of duty. Currently, more than 7,000 peacekeepers including 144 women are deployed in ten different missions. Our peacekeepers have been acclaimed for their professionalism, courage and success. Lately, we have made pledges in 23 categories under the "Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System".

As the original proponent, Bangladesh expected to see a more robust and human rights centric Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration. In the contemporary global context, the Migration Compact should be considered a positive step and should serve as a living document for protecting the rights of migrants.

Bangladesh stands firm against terrorism and all organized crimes. We shall not allow our territory to be used for any terrorist acts against or any activity detrimental to the interest of our neighbours. Our 'zero tolerance' policy in countering terrorism will continue undiminished. Our 'whole of society' approach has served us well in preventing violent extremism, human trafficking and flow of illicit drugs. Bangladesh has aligned itself with the Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem mooted by the United States.

Madam President,

Since 2009, we have been implementing inclusive and people-centric development policies. On our way to realizing Shonar Bangla as envisioned by our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, we remain committed to fulfilling our people's aspirations.

The World Bank recognized Bangladesh as a lower middle-income country in 2015. Bangladesh is the 43rd largest economy in the world in terms of nominal GDP. Our per capita income has increased from US\$ 543 in 2006 to US\$ 1,752 in 2018. We have achieved the average GDP growth rate of 7.86%. Inflation has decreased by 5.4%. Poverty rate has dropped from 41.5% in 2006 to 21.4% in 2018. During the same period, extreme poverty has decreased from 24% to 11.3%.

Our forex reserve was USD 7.5 billion in 2008-09 fiscal year. In 2018, it grew up to USD 32.2 billion. Public investment was at 4.3% of GDP in 2009. It rose to 8.2% in 2018.

Power generation capacity has gone up to 20,000 megawatts from 3000 megawatts in 2009. We are building coal-based super-critical power generation plants to ensure sustainable power supply. In remote areas without transmission lines, power supply is being ensured with the help of 5.5 million solar panels. 90% of our population has come under electricity coverage. With the launch of the work on the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, we have moved a step ahead in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Bangladesh is now recognized as a global development model. We have commenced our journey from being an LDC to the status of a developing country. The pathway for graduation is inextricably linked with our SDG implementation strategy, which is integrated in our Seventh Five Year Plan. We remain fully committed to implementing



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking with Robot Sophia at Digital World 2017 at BICC, Dhaka, 6 December 2017



The Hilsa: National Fish of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is the 4th largest producer of fish in the world.

হতে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণের যাত্রা শুরু করেছে। আমাদের স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের এই যাত্রাপথ আমাদের টেকসই উন্নয়ন লক্ষ্যমাত্রার পরিকল্পনার সাথে অঙ্গাঙ্গীভাবে জড়িত, যা আমাদের সপ্তম পঞ্চবার্ষিকী পরিকল্পনায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত হয়েছে। আমরা টেকসই উন্নয়ন লক্ষ্যমাত্রার বাস্তবায়নে পুরোপুরি অঙ্গীকারাবদ্ধ।

বর্তমান অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধির প্রেক্ষাপটে বাংলাদেশে বিনিয়োগের ব্যাপক এবং অপরিমিত সুযোগ সৃষ্টি হয়েছে। বিদেশি বিনিয়োগকারীদের জন্য কর রেয়াত, দৈনিক পরিহার, শুষ্কছাড়সহ বিভিন্ন আর্থিক প্রণোদনা দেওয়া হচ্ছে। আমরা ১০০টি নতুন অর্থনৈতিক অঞ্চল সৃষ্টি করছি যা প্রায় এক কোটি কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ সৃষ্টি করবে।

জনাব সভাপতি,

জাতিসংঘ মহাসচিব ও বিশ্বব্যাংকের প্রেসিডেন্টের যৌথ উদ্যোগে ১১টি দেশের সরকার ও রাষ্ট্রপ্রধানের সমন্বয়ে গঠিত বিশেষজ্ঞ প্যানেলের সদস্য হিসেবে, আমি বৈশ্বিক নেতৃবৃন্দের কাছে পানির যথাযথ মূল্যায়ন, ব্যবস্থাপনা এবং এ বিষয়ে প্রয়োজনীয় বিনিয়োগে জরুরী পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণের আহবান জানাই। অন্যথায় আমরা আমাদের ভবিষ্যত প্রজন্মের কাছে দায়ী থাকব।

সকলের জন্য সুপেয় পানি ও স্যানিটেশনের ব্যবস্থা নিশ্চিতকরণ এবং এ বিষয়ক টেকসই উন্নয়ন লক্ষ্যমাত্রা-৬ বাস্তবায়নে আমার সরকার দৃঢ়প্রতিজ্ঞ। ইতোমধ্যে, বাংলাদেশের ৯৯ শতাংশ মানুষ স্যানিটেশন এবং ৮৮ শতাংশ মানুষ সুপেয় পানির সুবিধা পাচ্ছেন।

জনাব সভাপতি,

সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা বেষ্টনীর আওতায় ছয় দশমিক পাঁচ (৬.৫) মিলিয়ন বয়স্ক নারী-পুরুষ, বিধবা বা স্বামী পরিত্যক্তা নারী এবং প্রতিবন্ধী ব্যক্তি নিয়মিত ভাতা পাচ্ছেন।

২০১০ সাল থেকে প্রাক-প্রাথমিক হতে মাধ্যমিক পর্যায় পর্যন্ত শিক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে বিনামূল্যে পাঠ্যপুস্তক বিতরণ করা হচ্ছে। চলতি বছর ৪ কোটি ৪২ লাখ ৪ হাজার ১৯৭ শিক্ষার্থীর মধ্যে ৩৫ কোটি ৪২ লাখ ৯০ হাজার ১৬২টি বই বিতরণ করা হয়েছে। দৃষ্টিহীনদের জন্য ব্রেইল পদ্ধতির বই এবং ক্ষুদ্র নৃ-গোষ্ঠীর শিক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে তাদের মাতৃভাষার বই দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

প্রাথমিক হতে স্নাতকোত্তর পর্যন্ত প্রায় ২ কোটি ৩ লাখ শিক্ষার্থীর মধ্যে বৃত্তি প্রদান করা হচ্ছে। ১ কোটি ৪০ লাখ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার্থীর মায়ের কাছে মোবাইল ফোনের মাধ্যমে বৃত্তির টাকা পৌঁছে যায়। প্রাথমিক পর্যায়ে শতভাগ ভর্তি নিশ্চিত হয়েছে। শিক্ষার হার গত সাড়ে ৯ বছরে ৪৫ শতাংশ থেকে বৃদ্ধি পেয়ে বাহাওর দশমিক নয় (৭২.৯) শতাংশে উন্নীত হয়েছে।

আমাদের অনন্য এবং উদ্ভাবনী আর্থ-সামাজিক পদক্ষেপসমূহ বহুল জনপ্রিয়তা অর্জন করেছে। 'একটি বাড়ি একটি খামার' প্রকল্পের মাধ্যমে গ্রামীণ প্রান্তিক জনগোষ্ঠীর জন্য ক্ষুদ্র সঞ্চয় ব্যবস্থা চালু করা হয়েছে। সঞ্চয়কারীগণ যে পরিমাণ টাকা জমা করেন, সরকার সমপরিমাণ অর্থ তাঁর হিসাবে জমা করে। আমরা গৃহহীন নাগরিকমুক্ত বাংলাদেশ সৃষ্টির লক্ষ্য নিয়ে আশ্রয় প্রকল্প (shelter project) গ্রহণ করছি। আমরা বাংলাদেশের প্রতিটি গ্রামে শহরের সুবিধাসমূহ পৌঁছে দেওয়ার জন্য কাজ করে যাচ্ছি।

the SDGs.

In the backdrop of our current economic growth, there are now immense and large-scale business opportunities in Bangladesh. Foreign investors are being offered various financial incentives like tax holiday, avoidance of double taxation and exemption of duties. We are setting up 100 Special Economic Zones that would help create 10 million job opportunities in Bangladesh.

Madam President,

To follow up on my role as a member, we remain committed to implement the outcome of the High-level Panel on Water, formed under the joint initiative of the UN Secretary General and the World Bank President. I urge world leaders to take urgent actions on proper appraisal, management and investment in water. We shall be held responsible to our future generations if we fail to do so.

My government remains committed to ensuring safe drinking water and sanitation for all through achieving SDG 6. As of now, 99% of our people have access to sanitation and 88% to safe drinking water.

Madam President,

Under our social safety-net programmes, 6.5 million elderly men and women, widows, destitute women and persons with disabilities are getting regular allowances.

Since 2010, students are receiving free textbooks from pre-primary to secondary levels in school. 354.92 million books have been distributed among 43.76 million students this year. Vision impaired students are receiving braille books. Children from ethnic minorities are being given books in their mother languages.

Around 20.03 million students from primary to graduate level are getting stipends. Stipend money for 14 million students is sent directly to their mothers through mobile phones. We have ensured 100% enrollment at the primary level. Literacy rate has increased from 45% to 72.9% in the last nine and half years.

Our home-grown, innovative socio-economic development models have gained widely popular acceptance. Micro-savings have been introduced for rural, marginalized communities through the 'One House, One Farm' (Ekti Bari, Ekti Khamar) project. The amount saved by beneficiaries on their individual accounts is equaled in deposit by the government. The 'Shelter Project' (Ashrayon) is being implemented with the aim of having no homeless person in Bangladesh. We are working towards reaching urban facilities to every one of our villages.

Madam President,

Women's empowerment and participation have been a major factor in Bangladesh's outstanding development. We have promoted women's empowerment through enhancing their education opportunities and facilitating their political and economic emancipation.

We have created opportunities for girls to pursue their education free



Two girls exploring their public school exam results online from a Digital Centre - An example of women empowerment of Bangladesh.



Jubilant children with new text books: In Bangladesh, new academic books are distributed among the students on the first day of each year, the largest such undertaking in the world.

জনাব সভাপতি,

বাংলাদেশের অভাবনীয় উন্নয়নের অন্যতম নিয়ামক হল নারীর ক্ষমতায়ন ও উন্নয়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় নারীর অংশগ্রহণ। নারী শিক্ষার উন্নয়ন এবং রাজনৈতিক ও অর্থনৈতিক স্বনির্ভরতা অর্জনের মাধ্যমে নারীর ক্ষমতায়ন আমরা নিশ্চিত করছি।

সরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে মেয়েদের দ্বাদশ শ্রেণি পর্যন্ত বিনাবেতনে লেখাপড়ার সুযোগ করে দেওয়া হয়েছে। মাধ্যমিক পর্যায়ে মেয়ে ও ছেলে শিক্ষার্থীর অনুপাত ৫৩:৪৭। ২০০৯ সালের শুরুতে যা ছিল ৩৫:৬৫।

বাংলাদেশের সংসদই সম্ভবত বিশ্বের একমাত্র সংসদ যেখানে সংসদ নেতা, সংসদ উপনেতা, স্পীকার এবং বিরোধী দলীয় নেতা নারী। বর্তমান সংসদে ৭২ জন নির্বাচিত নারী সংসদ সদস্য রয়েছেন। তৃণমূল পর্যায়ে নারীর রাজনৈতিক ক্ষমতায়নের জন্য প্রতিটি স্থানীয় সরকার প্রতিষ্ঠানে ৩৩ শতাংশ আসন নারীর জন্য সংরক্ষিত রাখা হয়েছে।

কৃষি, সেবা ও শিল্পখাতে প্রায় ২ কোটি নারী কর্মরত রয়েছেন। বাংলাদেশের রপ্তানি আয়ের সর্ববৃহৎ উৎস তৈরি পোশাক খাতে প্রায় ৪৫ লাখ কর্মীর ৮০ শতাংশই নারী। নারী উদ্যোক্তাদের জামানত ছাড়াই ৫ শতাংশ সার্ভিস চার্জ ব্যাংক ঋণের সুবিধা দেওয়া হচ্ছে। ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তা তহবিলের ১০ শতাংশ এবং শিল্প প্লটের

১০ শতাংশ নারী উদ্যোক্তাদের জন্য বরাদ্দ রাখা হয়েছে।

জনাব সভাপতি,

বাংলাদেশ বিশ্বের সর্বাধিক ঘনবসতিপূর্ণ দেশগুলোর মধ্যে অন্যতম। মাত্র একশ ৪৭ হাজার ৫৭০ বর্গকিলোমিটার আয়তনের ভূখণ্ডে ১৬ কোটিরও বেশি মানুষের বসবাস। সম্পদের সীমাবদ্ধতা সত্ত্বেও আমরা বিভিন্ন সামাজিক সূচকে প্রভূত অগ্রগতি অর্জন করেছি। মাতৃমৃত্যুর হার প্রতি এক লাখে ১৭০ এবং পাঁচ বছর বয়সের নীচে শিশুমৃত্যুর হার প্রতি হাজারে ২৮-এ হ্রাস পেয়েছে। মানুষের গড় আয়ু ২০০৯ সালের ৬৪ বছর থেকে বর্তমানে ৭২ বছরে উন্নীত হয়েছে। গত অর্থবছরে আমাদের জাতীয় বাজেটের পাঁচ দশমিক তিন-নয় (৫.৩৯) শতাংশ আমরা স্বাস্থ্য খাতে ব্যয় করেছি। এ বছর স্বাস্থ্য খাতের বরাদ্দ ১৭ শতাংশ বৃদ্ধি করা হয়েছে।

প্রায় সাড়ে ১৮ হাজার কমিউনিটি ক্লিনিক এবং ইউনিয়ন স্বাস্থ্যকেন্দ্রের মাধ্যমে স্বাস্থ্যসেবা জনগণের দোরগোড়ায় পৌঁছে দেওয়া হচ্ছে। ৩০ প্রকারের ঔষুধ বিনামূল্যে দেওয়া

of cost till twelfth grade in public educational institutions. At secondary level, the ratio of girls and boys is 53:47. In early 2009, it was 35:65.

Bangladesh is perhaps the world's only country, where in its National Parliament, the Speaker, the Leader of the House, the Deputy Leader of the House, and the Leader of the Opposition are all women. In the present Parliament, there are 72 elected female members. 33% seats are earmarked for women in local government bodies in order to promote women's political empowerment at the grassroots.

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. Women entrepreneurs are offered collateral free bank loans with 5% service charge. 10% of Small Entrepreneurs' Fund and 10% of industrial plots are earmarked for women entrepreneurs.

Madam President, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. More than 160 million people now live in a land area of only 147,570 square km. Despite our resource constraints, we have made significant strides across a range of social



Under construction Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, Bangladesh.

indices.

The maternal mortality rate has decreased to 170 per 1000 and child mortality rate under the age of five has gone down to 28 per thousand. Life expectancy has increased to 72 years from 64 in 2009. In the last fiscal year, we spent 5.9% of our national budget in the public health sector. This year, investment in health has been increased by 17%. With around 18,000 community health clinics and Union Health Centres operating, health care been reached to our people's doorsteps. 30 different types of medicines are being distributed free of cost. Tuberculosis prevention and control efforts have been intensified to reach the 2030 SDG target. As a result, TB related deaths have reduced by 19% in the last two years.

Madam President,

Bangladesh has been playing a pioneering role in raising awareness



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina encouraging autistic children at the event of 11th World Autism Awareness Day at BICC, Dhaka on April 2, 2018



Doctors at a public hospital registering a patient using a mobile app.

হচ্ছে। টেকসই উন্নয়ন লক্ষ্যমাত্রা ২০৩০ অনুযায়ী আমরা যক্ষা প্রতিরোধে বিভিন্ন কার্যক্রম জোরদার করেছি। যার ফলে গত দুই বছরে যক্ষাজনিত মৃত্যুর হার ১৯ শতাংশ হ্রাস পেয়েছে।

জনাব সভাপতি,

অটিজম ও জন্মগত স্নায়ুরোগে আক্রান্ত শিশুদের বিষয়ে সচেতনতা সৃষ্টির জন্য আমরা আন্তর্জাতিক ক্ষেত্রে অগ্রণী ভূমিকা পালন করছি। এ বিষয়ে আমাদের কার্যক্রমকে জোরদার করতে এ সংক্রান্ত একটি সেল গঠনের প্রক্রিয়া চলছে। এছাড়া অটিজম বিষয়ক জাতীয় স্টিয়ারিং কমিটি এবং জাতীয় অ্যাডভাইজরি কমিটি গঠন করা হয়েছে। এই কমিটির সভাপতি এবং বিশ্ব স্বাস্থ্য সংস্থার মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য বিষয়ক অ্যাডভাইজরি প্যানেলের সদস্য সায়মা ওয়াজেদ হোসেন এ সংক্রান্ত বিশ্ব স্বাস্থ্য সংস্থার দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার শুভেচ্ছা দূত হিসেবে নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন।

জনাব সভাপতি,

আমরা জাতিসংঘের মহাসচিব কর্তৃক High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation প্রতিষ্ঠাকে স্বাগত জানাই। 'ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ' ধারণার মূল দর্শন হল জনগণের কল্যাণ। ইন্টারনেটভিত্তিক সেবার ব্যাপক প্রচলনের মাধ্যমে তৃণমূল পর্যায়ে জনগণের কর্মসংস্থান বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে এবং ডিজিটাল বাংলাদেশ বাস্তবরূপ ধারণ করেছে।

বিশ্বের ৫৭তম দেশ হিসেবে নিজস্ব স্যাটেলাইট "বঙ্গবন্ধু স্যাটেলাইট-১" মহাকাশে উৎক্ষেপণের মধ্য দিয়ে আমরা মহাকাশ প্রযুক্তির জগতে প্রবেশ করেছি। বস্তুত এটি ছিল জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের স্বপ্ন। ১৯৭৫ সালের ১৪ই জুন প্রথমবারের মত বাংলাদেশে স্যাটেলাইট ভূকেন্দ্র স্থাপন করার মাধ্যমে তিনি যে স্বপ্নের বীজ বপন করেছিলেন এই স্যাটেলাইট উৎক্ষেপণের মধ্য দিয়ে তা বাস্তবায়িত হয়েছে।

জনাব সভাপতি,

বাংলাদেশ জলবায়ু পরিবর্তনে সর্বাধিক ঝুঁকির সম্মুখীন পৃথিবীর প্রথম দশটি দেশের একটি। ভূপ্রকৃতি এবং জনসংখ্যার আধিক্য বাংলাদেশকে বিশেষভাবে জলবায়ু পরিবর্তনের ঝুঁকির মুখে ফেলে দিয়েছে।

আমরা প্যারিস চুক্তির বাস্তবায়নে অঙ্গীকারাবদ্ধ। জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন প্রতিরোধে আমরা আমাদের মোট দেশজ উৎপাদনের এক শতাংশ ব্যয় করছি এবং জলবায়ু সহায়ক কৃষি ব্যবস্থা প্রবর্তন করছি। আগামী পাঁচ বছরে বৃক্ষ আচ্ছাদনের পরিমাণ ২২ শতাংশ হতে ২৪ শতাংশে উন্নীত করার উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করেছি। পৃথিবীর সর্ববৃহৎ ম্যানগ্রোভ এবং ইউনেস্কো ঘোষিত বিশ্ব ঐতিহ্য-সুন্দরবন সংরক্ষণে ৫ কোটি মার্কিন ডলার ব্যয়ে একটি প্রকল্প চলমান রয়েছে।

আমাদের উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রম এবং জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মোকাবেলায় সক্ষমতা সৃষ্টিতে গৃহীত পদক্ষেপসমূহকে একীভূত করে আমরা বদ্বীপ পরিকল্পনা-২১০০ শীর্ষক মেগা প্রকল্প গ্রহণ করেছি।

বাংলাদেশ বদ্বীপ পরিকল্পনা-২১০০ একটি জলকেন্দ্রিক, বহুমুখী এবং টেকনো-ইকনমিক দীর্ঘমেয়াদি পরিকল্পনা। স্থানীয় ভূতাত্ত্বিক এবং বৈশ্বিক জলবায়ু পরিবর্তনের পেশাপটে বাংলাদেশ সরকার এই পরিকল্পনা গ্রহণ করেছে। বাংলাদেশই পৃথিবীর একমাত্র দেশ যা কিনা দীর্ঘ ৮২ বছর মেয়াদি এই পরিকল্পনা গ্রহণ করেছে।

about the needs of children affected by autism and other neuro-developmental disorders. In order to further consolidate our efforts in this regard, a specialized cell is being created in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. A National Steering Committee and a National Advisory Committee have already been set up. Saima Hossain Wazed, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee and a member of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) expert advisory panel on mental health, has been named a Goodwill Ambassador on this issue for South Asia.

Madam President,

We welcome the formation of the Secretary General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation. The underlying premise of our vision for a "Digital Bangladesh" is to promote people's well-being. Widespread introduction of Internet-based public service delivery has led to growth in job creation at the grass root level. The idea of a Digital Bangladesh has become real.

We have made our foray into the world of space technology by launching our own satellite, Bangabandhu I, being the 57th country in the world to have done so. It was in fact a dream of our Father of the Nation that we would one day reach the outer space. The launching of this satellite helped us realize the aspiration he had instilled in us by setting up the first satellite ground-station of the country on 14 June 1975.

Madam President,

Bangladesh is among the 10 most climate vulnerable countries in the world. Its topography coupled with high density of population has made the country particularly exposed to climate change risks.

Bangladesh remains committed to implement the Paris Agreement. We are spending over 1% of our GDP in addressing climate change impacts; we are also promoting climate-resilient agriculture. Initiatives have been taken to increase tree coverage from 22% to 24% in the next five years. A project worth 50 million US dollar is being implemented for the conservation of the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest and a UNESCO world heritage site.

We have integrated our development programmes and our efforts to build capacity for combating climate change into a mega project titled Delta Plan 2100. It is a water-centric, multi-sectoral, techno-economic plan with a long-term time frame. It has been developed in consideration of the local geo-morphology and of global climate change impact. Bangladesh is the only country in the world that has adopted such a long-term development plan spanning 82 years.

Madam President,

We are shocked by the continued violation of the rights of the brotherly people of Palestine. This must come to an end. As the Chair of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, we shall continue to work with the international community for resolution of the Palestine question.



Readymade Garments Factory: Top-most export earning sector of Bangladesh



Bangladesh is a trusted name in games & sports. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina congratulating Bangladesh national cricket team on their victory in the first one-day international (ODI) series against the touring Zimbabwe in Dhaka

জনাব সভাপতি,
 ভ্রাতৃপ্রতীম ফিলিস্তিনি জনগণের বিরুদ্ধে মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘন আজও অব্যাহত রয়েছে যা আমাদের মর্মান্বিত করে। এ সমস্যার আশু নিষ্পত্তি প্রয়োজন। ওআইসি-র পররাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রীদের কাউন্সিলের সভাপতি হিসেবে আমরা ওআইসি-র মাধ্যমে ফিলিস্তিনি সমস্যা সমাধানে কাজ করে যাব।

জনাব সভাপতি,
 মানব সভ্যতার অগ্রগতিতে তিনটি মৌলিক উপাদান বিশেষ ভূমিকা পালন করে থাকে, তা হল - শান্তি, মানবতা ও উন্নয়ন। তাই মানব সমাজের কল্যাণে আমাদের মানবতার পক্ষে সংগ্রাম অব্যাহত রাখতে হবে। জনগণকে সেবা প্রদান এবং তাদের কল্যাণ নিশ্চিত করাই আমাদের মূল লক্ষ্য হওয়া উচিত। মানবতা ও সৌহার্দ্যই আমাদের টেকসই

Madam President,

There are three elements that play the most critical part in advancing human civilization: Peace, humanity and development. For the well-being of human societies, we must continue to strive for humanity. Our main objective must be to serve the people and ensure their well-being. It is humanity and goodwill that would take us forward on the pathway to sustainable development.

In a world faced with myriad of challenges, our common interest, shared responsibility and sustainable partnership would be our best bet for preserving the human civilization.

Madam President,

All my life, I have been working selflessly to make a difference in the



Bangladesh's celebration ceremony for fulfilling the graduation criteria from LDC category for the first time at BICC, Dhaka, 22 March 2018

উন্নয়নের পথে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যাবে। সমস্যা-সঙ্কুল এই পৃথিবীতে আমাদের সম্মিলিত স্বার্থ, সমন্বিত দায়িত্ব ও অংশীদারিত্বই মানব সভ্যতাকে রক্ষা করতে পারে।

জনাব সভাপতি,
 বাংলাদেশের জনগণের ভাগ্য পরিবর্তনে আমি নিঃস্বার্থভাবে কাজ করে যাচ্ছি। গত সাড়ে নয় বছরে আর্থ-সামাজিক বিভিন্ন খাতে বাংলাদেশ বিস্ময়কর সাফল্য অর্জন করেছে। যে বাংলাদেশকে বলা হত দুর্ভোগ, বন্যা-খরা-হাড্ডিসার মানুষের দেশ, তা এখন বিশ্বশান্তি, দুর্ভোগ ব্যবস্থাপনা, নারীর ক্ষমতায়ন ও উন্নয়নের ক্ষেত্রে বিশ্বে চমক সৃষ্টি করেছে। বিভিন্ন সূচকে বাংলাদেশ তার দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার প্রতিবেশীদের ছাড়িয়ে যেতে সক্ষম হয়েছে। কিন্তু আমাদের পথচলা এখনও শেষ হয়নি। এ পথচলা ততদিন চলবে, যতদিন না আমরা আমাদের জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের ক্ষুধা, দারিদ্র্য, নিরক্ষরতা এবং শোষণমুক্ত সোনার বাংলাদেশ প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে পারব।

ধন্যবাদ জনাব সভাপতি।

খোদা হাফেজ। জয় বাংলা, জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু
 বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী হোক।

lives of my people. In the last nine years and a half, Bangladesh has achieved remarkable success in different socio-economic sectors. That Bangladesh the world knew as the land plagued by disasters, floods, droughts and hunger has done wonders in maintaining international peace, managing disasters, empowering women and consolidating development gains. Bangladesh has now surpassed its neighbours in South Asia on a number of indicators. But, our journey has not reached its end. Our journey will continue till the day we can build a Bangladesh free of hunger, poverty, illiteracy and exploitation – the Shonar Bangladesh of our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

I thank you.

Khoda Hafez. Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu
 May Bangladesh Live-forever

Participation of Hon'ble Prime Minister at the 73rd UNGA

Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina led the Bangladesh delegation to the high-level segment of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly from 23-28 September 2018. The delegation included Hon'ble Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Hon'ble Foreign Minister, Hon'ble Adviser for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Affairs, Hon'ble Adviser for Information and Communication Technology Affairs, Hon'ble State Minister

leadership in Bangladesh's diplomatic efforts seeking a peaceful resolution of the long-standing Rohingya crisis and for setting up a unique example of humanity by providing shelter and humanitarian assistances to millions of Rohingyas, two renowned international bodies conferred awards upon Hon'ble Prime Minister:

- a) The United Nations Inter Press Service News Agency (IPS) honoured her with 'Humanitarian Award'. The



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving 'IPS Humanitarian Award', UNHQs, New York, 27 September 2018.

for Foreign Affairs, Hon'ble Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs; relevant Secretaries and other senior officials of the Government, journalists and eminent personalities, who also participated in various events. A high-level business delegation was a part of the entourage.

Hon'ble Prime Minister's engagements during the 73rd UN General Assembly session were very intense surpassing those of sessions in the previous years. She participated in

earlier recipients of the award include, inter alia, former United Nations Secretary-Generals Kofi Annan and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and former President of Finland Mr. Martti Ahtisaari.

- b) The Global Hope Coalition, a non-profit organization working for countering violent extremism, protection of cultural heritage and creating a bridge between culture and heritage, honoured her with 'Special Distinction Award for Leadership'. Former UNESCO Director



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving 'Special Distinction Award for Outstanding Leadership' by Global Hope Coalition, New York, 27 September 2018.

as many as 18 high-level meetings and side events and had 13 bilateral meetings with world leaders/dignitaries.

International awards received:

In recognition of her courageous, visionary and prudent

General Irina Bokova is the President of the organization. Hon'ble Prime Minister dedicated both the awards to the people of Bangladesh.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering her statement in Bangla at the 73rd Session of the UNGA on 27 September 2018



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the High-level Event on the Global Compact on Refugees: A Model for Greater Solidarity and Cooperation at the UNHQs, 24 September 2018

General Debate:

The General Debate segment was held on 25 September-01 October 2018. The theme was 'Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies.' Hon'ble Prime Minister addressed the General Debate on 28 September 2018 and like previous occasions, in Bangla. In her address, pointing out that the theme of the session resonated the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu

Hon'ble Prime Minister highlighted Bangladesh's remarkable socio-economic achievements particularly in women empowerment, health, energy, education and power generation as well as Bangladesh's fulfilling of the criterion of graduation from LDC to a developing country. She also shared the country's successes in digitalization particularly internet-based public service delivery and venture into the domain of space technology by launching its first communication satellite 'Bangabandhu Satellite-I', the 57th



Ambassador of Bangladesh to USA Mr. Mohammad Ziauddin and Permanent Representative & Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UN Mr. Masud Bin Momen welcome Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana at Newark Liberty Int'l Airport, New Jersey, 23 September 2018.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman when he said 44 years ago in this General Assembly Hall that 'Peace is imperative for the survival of humanity', she mentioned about Bangabandhu's vision of realizing a 'Sonar Bangla' and reiterated her commitment to fulfilling people's aspirations. She recalled the genocide committed against the people of Bangladesh in 1971.

country in the world to do so. Referring to her 5-point proposal regarding the Rohingya crisis placed at the 72nd UN General Assembly, she expressed disappointment that despite Bangladesh's earnest bilateral efforts, repatriation of the Rohingyas has not started yet. Sharing her personal experience as a refugee, she reiterated her government's continued commitment in



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina participating at the 'Leaders Dialogue: Together for Girls Education in Conflict-Affected and Fragile Contexts' at the invitation of Canadian PM Mr. Justin Trudeau, UNHQs, 24 September 2018



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the high level event entitled 'Making impossible possible: Unlocking the potential through the International Finance Facility for Education', UNHQs, 24 September 2018

rendering humanitarian assistance to the Rohingyas during their stay in Bangladesh. “The Rohingya crisis has had its origin in Myanmar. As such, its solution has to be found in Myanmar”, she reaffirmed, and expressed hope for an immediate and effective implementation of the agreement concluded between Myanmar and the UN. Stressing on Bangladesh’s priority for an early, peaceful solution to the Rohingya crisis, she urged the international community, particularly the UN, to give due importance to the atrocities and injustice suffered by the Rohingya population in Myanmar.

Hon’ble Prime Minister highlighted the dedication, courage and professionalism of Bangladesh peacekeepers and reiterated Bangladesh’s commitment towards UN Peacekeeping Operations as one of the largest troops/police contributors.

Hon’ble Prime Minister did not hide her disappointment saying that as the original proponent of the Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration Bangladesh expected it to be more robust and human rights centric. She vowed against all kinds of terrorism and violent extremism and organized crimes. Referring to the climate change risks Bangladesh is subjected to, she reiterated Bangladesh’s commitment to implement the Paris Agreement and highlighted Bangladesh’s domestic initiatives for adaptation and mitigation. She also mentioned about Bangladesh’s ‘Delta Plan-2100’ in this connection.

Hon’ble Prime Minister mentioned Bangladesh’s pioneering role in raising awareness about the needs of children affected by autism and other neuro-developmental disorders led by Ms. Saima Hossain Wazed, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee and member of the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Expert Advisory Panel on Mental Health and a Goodwill Ambassador on this issue for South Asia.

Hon’ble Prime Minister also expressed disappointment at the continued violation of rights of the brotherly people of Palestine and reiterated her commitment to continue to work with the international community for resolution of the Palestine question as the Chair of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers.

High-level events and side events:

On Rohingya issue:

- On 24 September, Hon’ble Prime Minister addressed the high-level event on the ‘Global Compact on Refugees: A Model for Greater Solidarity and Cooperation’ organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In her address, she welcomed the adoption of Global Compact on Refugees. Pointing out that most of the refugee hosting countries were developing countries like Bangladesh, she invited world leaders to come forward with political will and commitment to help these countries shoulder the burden.
- Highlighting the magnitude of Rohingyas crisis and its impact on Bangladesh, Hon’ble Prime Minister underscored the need for addressing the root causes of forced displacement and urged the international community to intensify its efforts in resolving protracted crises by ensuring safe and sustainable return of the forcibly displaced population to their homelands. She also requested international partners to help the UN in implementing its joint response plan – humanitarian assistance programme for the Rohingyas, with necessary funding.
- Hon’ble Prime Minister reminded all that by opening the border and sheltering the displaced Rohingyas, Bangladesh has not only saved lives but also stabilized the entire region containing the crisis within its border. Referring to the impacts of Rohingya influx on Bangladesh’s socio-economic fabric and environment, Hon’ble Prime Minister announced that pending return, the Rohingyas would be relocated to a newly developed island called ‘Bhashan Char’. She reiterated that Bangladesh did not have any policy of local integration and the Rohingyas must return to their own country to secure their own future. For peaceful and sustainable resolution of the crisis, Hon’ble Prime Minister made three specific recommendations:

First, Myanmar must abolish discriminatory laws, policies and practices against Rohingyas and address the root causes of forced displacement in a genuine and timely manner.

Second, Myanmar must create a conducive environment by building trust and guaranteeing protection, rights and



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the High-level Side-Event on the 'Situation of Rohingya Minority in Myanmar' convened by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UNHQs, 27 September 2018



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at High-level discussion on 'Economic Growth through Women's Empowerment', UNHQs, 27 September 2018

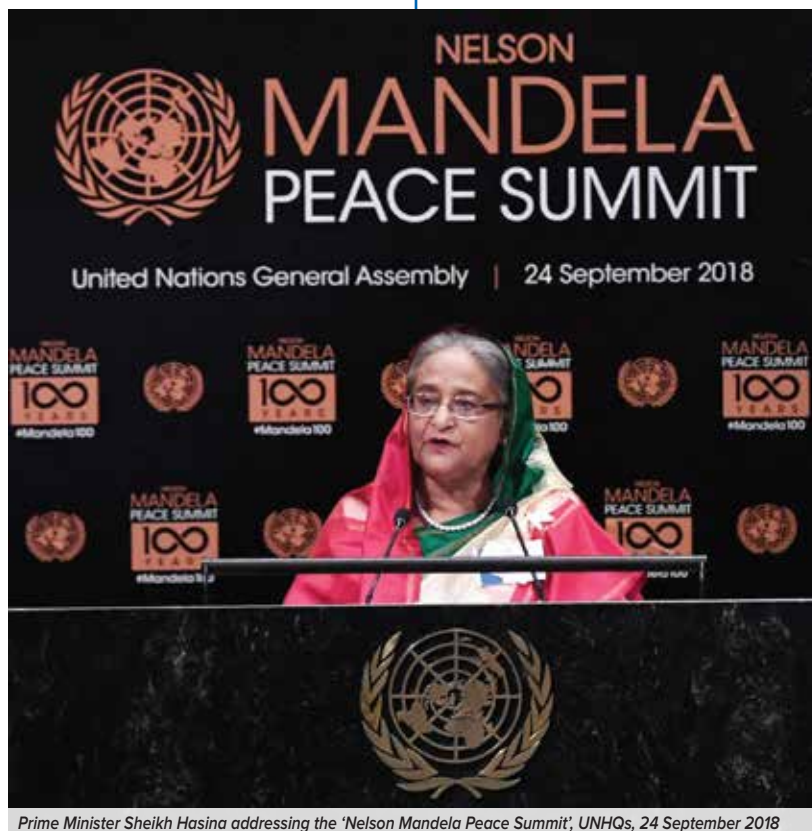
pathway to citizenship for all Rohingyas. If needed, create a "safe zone" inside Myanmar to protect all civilians.

Third, prevent atrocity crimes against Rohingyas in Myanmar by bringing accountability and justice, particularly in light of the recommendations of the Fact-Finding Mission of the UN Human Rights Council.

- UN Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres, World Bank President Mr. Jim Yong Kim and a number of Heads of State/Governments were present at the event all of whom profusely praised Hon'ble Prime Minister's leadership in dealing with the Rohingya crisis.
- On 24 September, at the invitation of Canadian Prime Minister Mr. Justin Trudeau, Hon'ble Prime Minister participated at the 'Leaders Dialogue: Together for Girls Education in Conflict-Affected and Fragile Contexts'. Highlighting the special needs of displaced people around the world who most often carry horrific experiences of violence and atrocities, she elaborated Bangladesh government's initiatives for providing informal education to Rohingya children and equipping them with life skills to lead decent life once they go back to Myanmar. She stressed on three particular issues: first, the need for their psycho-social care and special education; second, their need for a special learning environment; and third, the need for their education to be aligned with their own culture, ethnicity and language. She urged the international community to continue their

support to give education to the Rohingya children in Bangladesh and invest in Myanmar villages to help their return and reintegration.

- On 27 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister attended the high-level side-event on the 'Situation of Rohingya Minority in Myanmar' convened by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the European Union and the OIC Secretariat. In her intervention, Hon'ble Prime Minister highlighted the plight of Rohingya Muslims from the Rakhine State of Myanmar and urged the international community in particular OIC member countries to put pressure on Myanmar to resolve the crisis. She also urged the Muslim Ummah to ponder, why Muslims around the world were facing violence and repression. Through dialogue any such problem could be solved, she opined.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the 'Nelson Mandela Peace Summit', UNHQs, 24 September 2018

On social and human development issues:

- On 24 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister attended the high-level event on 'International Finance Facility for Education' at the invitation of former British Prime Minister Mr. Gordon Brown. In her speech, she cited Bangladesh's efforts and progresses in achieving the education related SDGs. In this connection, she shared that 26.9% of Bangladesh's development budget has been allocated in education sector. She also mentioned about government's various initiatives to improve the quality of education and about 'Ananda School' in particular to bring underprivileged children under education coverage.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the High-level Informal Dialogue on 'Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Towards COP24 and Beyond', UNHQs, 26 September 2018



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering her statement at WEF Plenary Session entitled 'Sustainable Development in the Fourth Industrial Revolution', New York, 25 September 2018

- On 27 September, at the invitation of Lithuanian President Ms. Dalia Grybauskaitė, Hon'ble Prime Minister attended the high-level discussion on 'Economic Growth through Women's Empowerment'. UN Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres was also present at the event. In her speech, highlighting her government's initiatives for women empowerment, Hon'ble Prime Minister urged world leaders to consider three actions to advance women's empowerment as tool for development: First - overcome gender stereotypes regarding women's ability; Second - enhance women's productivity by addressing challenges specific to women including violence against women; Third - create equal opportunities for women in all sectors of life and livelihoods with gender responsive policy intervention.

On issues of international peace and security:

- On 24 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister addressed the 'Nelson Mandela Peace Summit' and made a 5-point proposal to achieve a peaceful future; first: settle all international disputes through peaceful means and prevent conflict in all circumstances; second: strengthen cooperation to achieve sustainable development goals; third: promote tolerance, preserve diversity, protect religious and ethnic minorities from discrimination and exploitation; fourth: fight terrorism, through ending the flow of financing as well as supply of arms to terrorists and their outfits; and fifth: promote and protect human rights in any circumstance and nurture a culture of peace and non-violence.
- At the invitation of UN Secretary-General, Hon'ble Prime

Minister attended the 'High-level meeting on Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)' on 25 September where she highlighted Bangladesh's emphasis on UN Peacekeeping reform as a leading contributor of troops and police. She also called for clear mandates to the UN Peacekeepers, and authorizing and equipping them adequately to fulfill their mandates. She reiterated Bangladesh's 'zero tolerance policy' against sexual exploitation and abuse and continued commitment to the work of the Secretary-General's 'Circle of Leadership'. The meeting adopted a 'Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations' and Bangladesh supported the declaration. Hon'ble Prime Minister was one of the few world leaders who were invited to speak in this event.

On issues of climate change:

On 26 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister participated at a high-level Informal Dialogue on "Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Towards COP24 and Beyond" where she elaborated the initiatives taken by Bangladesh to address climate change and highlighted the successes in this sector such as mainstreaming climate actions and disaster risks reduction in national plan, investing over 1% of GDP to address the climate change impacts, already spending US\$ 450 million from domestic resources for adaptation and mitigation purposes, and making agricultural sector climate resilient. Reiterating Bangladesh's commitment to never exceed the average per capita emission of the developing world and to low-carbon, climate-resilient development endeavours, she expressed hope that international



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the 'High Level Meeting on Action for Peacekeeping', UNHQs, 25 September 2018



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the Luncheon Roundtable Meeting 'Bangladesh of the Future' organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Hotel Grand Hayatt, New York, 24 September 2018

community would utilize the opportunity in COP 24 to have a more focused discussion on climate finance to put the world on track to meet pre-2020 ambition and long-term goals of Paris Agreement.

On investment and commercial issues:

Hon'ble Prime Minister along with the President of Mexico and the Prime Minister of the Netherlands co-chaired the closing plenary of the 'WEF Sustainable Development Impact Summit' at the invitation of the founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Professor



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the 'Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem', at the invitation of US President Mr. Donald Trump, UNHQs, 24 September 2018

largest apex business bodies in the world. Top U.S. investors and companies including Chevron, General Electric attended the meeting. In her deliberations, Hon'ble Prime Minister highlighted her government's business and investment friendly policies and initiatives and the huge investment potentials of Bangladesh. Praising Bangladesh's enormous socio-economic development, U.S. investors shared their successful investment experiences in Bangladesh.

Other important events:

- On 24 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister participated in



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a civic reception hosted by expatriate Bangladesh Community, New York, 23 September 2018

Klaus Schwab. There she discussed about the formidable challenges faced by Bangladesh due to Rohingya influxes. She also highlighted Bangladesh's national plan and progress in achieving the SDGs as well as successes in addressing the challenges of climate change and emphasized on the role of quality education in this regard. On Bangladesh's preparation for the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', she shared her government's initiatives to educate the large young population of Bangladesh to turn them into an asset. Over 700 representatives from government, civil society organizations and businesses of 70 countries attended the meeting.

On 24 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister attended the 'Luncheon Roundtable Meeting: Bangladesh of the Future' organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, one of the

the "Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem" at the invitation of U.S. President Mr. Donald Trump. Bangladesh has supported the Global Call.

- Hon'ble Prime Minister attended the official luncheon hosted by the UN Secretary-General on 25 September 2018 and attended the reception hosted by the U.S. President Mr. Donald Trump on 24 September 2018.
- Expatriate Bangladesh community hosted on 23 September a civic reception in honour of Hon'ble Prime Minister.
- International media took special interest in Hon'ble Prime Minister's participation in the 73rd UN General Assembly. The Voice of America and the Reuters took her exclusive interviews.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at Bangladesh's High-level Side Event on 'Cyber Security and International Cooperation', UNHQs, 25 September 2018



U.S. Senator Jeffrey Alan Merkley calling on the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, New York, 23 September 2018

- Hon'ble Prime Minister addressed a press briefing at the Mission on 28 September.

High-level event hosted by Bangladesh:

- On 25 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister attended Bangladesh's high-level Side Event on 'Cyber Security and International Cooperation' at the UN Headquarters where she highlighted Bangladesh's leap into digital era through extension of IT infrastructure, internet penetration and taking public services at people's doorsteps and launching Bangladesh's first communication satellite Bangabandhu-1. Stressing on the importance of securing

time, for achieving a safe cyber world, he called upon the UN and others concerned to formulate standardized policies and global norms in addition to application of the UN Charter and relevant international laws. Other discussants highlighted the steps taken in Bangladesh for ensuring cyber security and the ongoing cooperation with Singapore, Estonia and Japan and other efforts in the regional and international domain in this regard.

Bilateral Meetings:

Hon'ble Prime Minister had the following 13 bilateral meetings most of which were requested by the other sides:



Information and Communication Technology Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister Mr. Sajeeb Ahmed Wazed delivering statement at the Bangladesh's High-level Side Event on 'Cyber Security and International Cooperation', UNHQs, 25 September 2018



- cyber space and keeping its critical infrastructures safe from cyber-attacks, she opined that states must remain true to their commitments and not conduct or support any harmful cyber activity and stated that UN could play a critical role in this regard. Hon'ble Prime Minister urged for international cooperation to invest in capacity building for cyber security and fulfillment of internationally agreed commitments by development partners.
- Hon'ble Information and Communication Technology Affairs Adviser Mr. Sajeeb Ahmed Wazed and Hon'ble Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Affairs Adviser Dr. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, BB also spoke at the event. In his remarks, Hon'ble ICT Adviser emphasized on securing the interest of Bangladesh and other developing countries in the cyber domain and on international cooperation for capacity building in combatting cybercrimes. At the same

- U.S. Senator Jeffrey Alan Merkley paid a courtesy call on Hon'ble Prime Minister on 23 September.
- British Foreign Secretary (Foreign Minister) Mr. Jeremy Hunt called on the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 24 September. They discussed issues of mutual bilateral interest. Rohingya issue and its peaceful resolution also featured prominently in the meeting.
- On 25 September, Hon'ble Prime Minister met the Queen of the Netherlands, Her Majesty Máxima Zorreguieta Cerruti. During the meeting, referring to the World Bank's Data Book on Financial Inclusion, Queen Máxima praised the inclusive economic development of Bangladesh. She also recognized that Bangladesh was ahead of other developing countries in terms of financial inclusion of the vulnerable and marginalized population.



British Foreign Secretary Mr. Jeremy Hunt calling on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, UNHQs, 24 September 2018



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the Queen of the Netherlands, Her Majesty Máxima Zorreguieta Cerruti, UNHQs, 25 September 2018

- d. President of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Mr. Borge Brende called on the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 25 September. They discussed ways to strengthen international business cooperation. (Mr. Brende, the then Foreign Minister of Norway, attended the Language Movement Day Programme as a special guest at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka on 21 February 2017.)
- e. On 26 September, Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of the UNICEF called on the Hon'ble Prime Minister. In the meeting, the Executive Director commended the initiatives taken by Hon'ble Prime Minister and her government for providing education, healthcare and other services to the forcibly displaced Rohingyas, especially their children. She pledged to continue the cooperation of UNICEF for the Rohingyas as well as the host community children.
- f. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Mr. Filippo Grandi called on the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 26 September. The High Commissioner informed that he was working with the Myanmar authorities to ascertain whether the Rohingya villages in Rakhine State have a favorable environment for the return and reintegration of the Rohingyas. Hon'ble Prime Minister and the High Commissioner also discussed about relocation of some of the Rohingyas to 'Bhasan Char' and the required cooperation in this regard.
- g. UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener called on Hon'ble Prime Minister on 26 September. The Special Envoy apprised Hon'ble Prime Minister of her strong demarche to the Myanmar government for creating favourable environment for the repatriation of the Rohingyas. She also vowed to work with Bangladesh government in the repatriation process.
- h. On 26 September, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ms. Federica Mogherini called on Hon'ble Prime Minister. The High Representative promised to work for ensuring human rights of Rohingyas in Myanmar and continuing humanitarian assistance for them in Bangladesh. She also emphasized on ensuring accountability for human rights violations against the Rohingyas in Myanmar.
- i. On 27 September, a bilateral meeting was held between the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the President of Estonia

- Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid. Ms. Kaljulaid expressed hope that Bangladesh would graduate from LDC group and further go ahead to become a model amongst the developing countries and contribute in the global arena. Regarding her country's candidature for non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council, the President expressed commitment that if elected, Estonia would work towards formulating international law on digital and cyber security. She also emphasized on bilateral cooperation with Bangladesh in the field of information technology.
- j. Hon'ble Prime Minister had a bilateral meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres on 27 September. The Secretary-General dubbed Hon'ble Prime Minister as a role model among the global leaders. He also praised her generosity and firmness in dealing with the Rohingya issue. Hon'ble Prime Minister sought greater cooperation from the United Nations for full implementation of her five-point proposals for resolution of Rohingya crisis placed before the UN General Assembly in 2017. The 11th parliamentary election in Bangladesh was also discussed. The Secretary-General expressed full support and cooperation of the UN to the endeavours of the Hon'ble Prime Minister.
- k. ICRC President Mr. Peter Maurer paid a courtesy call on the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 27 September. They discussed the Rohingya issue particularly its humanitarian aspects, assistance to the Rohingyas living on the 'zero line', and conducive environment for repatriation.
- l. President of the UN General Assembly Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Gracès met the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 27 September. Ms. Espinosa praised Hon'ble Prime Minister for leading Bangladesh to remarkable socio-economic development.
- m. The U.S. Secretary of State Mr. Mike Pompeo called on the Hon'ble Prime Minister at her place of residence. They discussed issues of mutual interest. The Rohingya crisis and responsibility of the international community in this regard also featured in the discussion. The U.S. Secretary of State praised Bangladesh's unprecedented success under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister and expressed hope that the relations between



Bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the President of Estonia Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid, UNHQs, 27 September 2018



UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener calling on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, UNHQs, 26 September 2018

the two countries would be stronger in the coming days.

Declarations Bangladesh joined:

During the 73rd UN General Assembly, Bangladesh joined the following 5 declarations under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister. They are: (a) Political Declaration at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit; (b) Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations; (c) Collective Statement of the Members of the Secretary-General's Circle of Leadership on the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Operations; (d) Global Call to Action on World Drug Problems; and (e) Joint Ministerial Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Ministerial and other-high level engagements:

Bangladesh's participation at the 73rd UN General Assembly also included engagement of rest of the delegation in a number of high-level events and side-events pertaining to issues important to Bangladesh such as: adolescent girls in crisis, fighting plastic pollution, advanced manufacturing technologies, women and girls on the move, youth, conflict, innovative policies for poverty eradication, private sector in achievement of SDGs and emerging business models, financing climate futures, preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, humanitarian protection, child marriage, inclusive digital society, ICTs for the SDGs, gender equality and human rights in the Environment Agreement, financing for Out-of-School children etc.

- Hon'ble Foreign Minister and Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs chaired/spoke/participated at various ministerial events of the Commonwealth, LDCs, SAARC, OIC, ACD, D8 and had bilateral meetings with their counterparts.
- Foreign Secretary also had several bilateral meetings with his counterparts and participated in/chaired a number of events/panels on various topical issues including migration.



UN Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina exchanging views while attending the High-level Informal Dialogue on 'Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Towards COP24 and Beyond', UNHQs, 26 September 2018

Conclusion:

The 73rd UN General Assembly was important for Bangladesh for a number of reasons. First, it took place amid the growing worldwide concern about wane of multilateralism in view of the rise of ultra-nationalist fervor and fast-changing domestic political scenario in many countries. In this backdrop, the assemblage of as many as 126 Heads of State and Government, the highest since the 2005 World Summit, sent across a resounding message which was quite reassuring for multi-lateralism. And participation of Hon'ble Prime Minister in this UN General Assembly was regarded as Bangladesh's unwavering commitment to multilateralism and for

that matter the UN.

- Second, utilizing the platform of the UN, Hon'ble Prime Minister had presented a 5-point proposal for a resolution of the Rohingya crisis during the 72nd UN General Assembly (in 2017), which made its way in the subsequent



UN High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. Filippo Grandi calling on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, UNHQs, 26 September 2018



High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ms. Federica Mogherini calling on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, UNHQs, 26 September 2018

pronouncements of world leaders. During this session of UN General Assembly also, she took the opportunity to inform the international community about Bangladesh's efforts in resolving the crisis, the challenges to repatriation and made three specific recommendations which found significant traction among world leaders. Earlier, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (IIFFM) on Myanmar, established by the Human Rights Council, affirmed that Myanmar's top military generals must be investigated and prosecuted for genocide in the northern Rakhine State which created obligations not only on the part of UN and other multilateral fora but also on member states and their leadership. Moreover, the International Criminal Court (ICC), in an unprecedented decision, has ruled that it can prosecute Myanmar for crimes against humanity (deportation) against the Rohingyas. Hon'ble Prime Minister's participation in the 73rd UN General Assembly marked the culmination of a year-long diplomatic efforts and also paved the future pathway in this regard.

- Third, peacebuilding, sustaining peace and preventive diplomacy is one of the priorities of the current UN Secretary-General. He is also keen to bring qualitative changes in peacekeeping by premising it on realistic expectations. Two high-level meetings were held in this session on these issues where Bangladesh Prime Minister's presence was particularly solicited. Her interventions served to secure Bangladesh's peacekeeping interests as well as give impetus to Secretary-General's priorities.
- Fourth, this was the first time the World Economic Forum (WEF) Summit was held on the side lines of the UN General Assembly. The idea was to draw complementarity between United Nations and the world business community. In this context, Bangladesh Prime Minister's co-chairing the closing plenary of the WEF Summit carries much significance. It is to be noted that Hon'ble Prime Minister was a special invitee to the Summit.
- Fifth, this General Assembly session featured some high-level events on a number of sustainable development issues such as global health, education and women empowerment. Bangladesh's participation in these events was important not only to share Bangladesh perspectives but also to push for consolidating international cooperation in those areas to the benefit of

developing countries.

- Sixth, 73rd UN General Assembly, high-level week the last GA high-level session in the successive two tenures of the present government, took place right before the 11th National Parliament Election.
- Hon'ble Prime Minister's intense engagements during the high-level week of the 73rd UN General Assembly demonstrated the importance Bangladesh is getting in the global arena. Her presence in a number of high-level events and side-events were in fact solicited by global leaders including the UN Secretary-General which is the recognition of Bangladesh's growing voice on many global issues. The large number of bilateral meeting requests, some of which could not be accommodated due to time constraint, were also indicative of Bangladesh's increasing successes in bilateral diplomacy.
- Hon'ble Prime Minister's consistent overtures about 1971 genocide in her country statements in the General Debate of successive years added to Bangladesh's continued efforts to internationalize its genocide.
- Hon'ble Prime Minister's participation in the 73rd UN General Assembly helped showcase Bangladesh's graduation trajectory, various socio-economic achievements during the past 10 years and share Bangladesh's success story. During her engagements with world leaders, they profusely lauded Hon'ble Prime Minister for steering the country towards development and fulfillment of the graduation criteria and expressed their support to her continued leadership. Her courageous, pragmatic and humane role and generosity in dealing with the Rohingya crisis has further consolidated her stature as a global leader and enhanced the profile of the country she leads. Due to this, in addition to its image as a 'development model', Bangladesh has now emerged on the global stage with a different and unique identity: a developing country yet bold enough to give shelter to 1.1 million Rohingyas. Bangladesh is seen by all in this new light.
- In all counts, Hon'ble Prime Minister's participation in the high-level week of the 73rd UN General Assembly was very successful and significant for the country.

Visit of H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General to Bangladesh

Since the latest round of Rohingya crisis broke out in August 2017, considering the potential of multilateral approach in resolving the crisis and the important role UN Secretary-General can play in this regard, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York has been pursuing with the Secretary-General to visit Bangladesh. Mission's efforts paid off when he undertook the visit from 30 June-03 July 2018 taking along H.E. Mr. Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group. H.E. Mr. Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and H.E. Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) were also part of the delegation.

Call on the Hon'ble Prime Minister: The UN Secretary-General and the President of World Bank Group jointly called on the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 01 July 2018 at Prime Minister's Office. During the meeting, both the Secretary-General and World Bank President profusely thanked Hon'ble Prime Minister for her generosity in sheltering the Rohingyas as well as for her pragmatic leadership in dealing with the Rohingya issue. They deeply appreciated Bangladesh's remarkable socio-economic developments and expressed satisfaction at Bangladesh's impressive development planning for and progress in achievement of SDGs. They also felicitated Hon'ble Prime Minister on Bangladesh's fulfillment of the criteria for graduation from LDC category. They reiterated their commitment of continued partnership with Bangladesh in supporting its development endeavours.

Visit to Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar:

The Secretary-General and World Bank President along with the other members of the entourage visited the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar on 02 July 2018. Before visiting the camps, Hon'ble Foreign Minister made a presentation on the Rohingya crisis and the role and expectations of Bangladesh. He reiterated Hon'ble Prime Minister's assertion "The root of the Rohingya problem lies in Myanmar and the solution has to be found in Myanmar". Referring to the bilateral arrangements signed with Myanmar for return of the Rohingyas, Hon'ble Foreign Minister shared the difficulties Bangladesh were facing in implementing them. He stressed that Myanmar should demonstrably try to create conducive environment in the Rakhine state and take confidence-building measures to facilitate the return of Rohingyas. He underscored the provisions which were essential for creating conducive environment, such as, return to the original place of abode or place of choice, non-criminalization, non-discrimination, resettlement and reintegration. Addressing the root causes was essential for a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis and the recommendations of Kofi Annan Commission provided a clear guideline towards that end, he reiterated. Hon'ble Foreign Minister also stated that some kind of measures to ensure accountability and justice would encourage the Rohingyas to return to their own country. In this connection, he apprised the dignitaries

that Bangladesh had responded to the invitation from the International Criminal Court (ICC) and submitted the requested information as a State Party to the Rome Statute.

To find a durable solution to the protracted Rohingya crisis, Hon'ble Foreign Minister urged the Secretary-General to mobilize international community to:

- i) Persuade Myanmar to implement the bilateral agreements with Bangladesh for safe and sustainable return of the forcibly displaced Rohingyas;
- ii) Pursue with Myanmar for implementation of the recommendations of Rakhine Advisory Commission immediately and unconditionally;
- iii) Work towards adoption of resolution in the UN Security Council imposing appropriate and adequate sanctions against the responsible entities in Myanmar;
- iv) Take actions to ensure accountability and justice for the mass atrocity crimes or human rights violations committed against the Rohingyas; and
- v) Explore ways to ensure permanent and peaceful solution to the Rohingya crisis utilizing any tool or means available with the UN.

The Secretary-General, World Bank President and visiting dignitaries then went to Kutupalong Transit Centre and interacted with the newly arrived Rohingyas. They heard from the Rohingyas the horrific account of atrocities, killing, rape and tortures unleashed on them and how they fled Myanmar to save their lives. From Transit Centre, they went to the Kutupalong extension camp-4 and saw first-hand the massive amount of humanitarian work

undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh and the national and international humanitarian actors particularly the efforts with regard to relocation of thousands of Rohingyas and also the stabilization projects in preparation for the upcoming rainy and cyclone seasons. They also talked to the Rohingyas there and visited a counseling centre set up for Rohingya women who were victims of sexual atrocities and an IOM-operated primary health care centre. During interactions, Rohingya representatives expressed their willingness to return to their homes if they were granted the similar rights as the Myanmar nationals enjoy. Few of them also demanded justice for the atrocities.

At the end, the dignitaries interacted with the press and shared their take on the visit. "It is unbelievable. My heart is broken. I have heard probably the most tragic stories," Secretary-General said while briefing reporters at the Kutupalong camp. He termed the atrocities by Myanmar forces as "systematic violation of human rights" and expressed deep gratitude to the Government and people of Bangladesh for opening their borders to the Rohingyas while so many borders in the world were closed. He lamented that solidarity



UN Secretary-General António Guterres and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at PMO, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1 July 2018.



UN Secretary-General António Guterres enjoying some lighter moments with Rohingya children in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh, 2 July 2018



UN Secretary-General António Guterres and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim interacting with Rohingyas in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh, 2 July 2018

expressed by the international community for the Rohingyas was not translated into sufficient support. He urged international community to step up to the plea and substantially increase financial support for the Rohingyas in Bangladesh. Insisting on the Rohingyas peoples' right to return to Myanmar, Secretary-General said that the repatriation should take place when the conditions for them to live with full dignity in their own country were there.

Soon after visiting the camps, in a tweet, Secretary-General said "In Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, I've just heard unimaginable accounts of killing and rape from Rohingya refugees who recently fled Myanmar. Nothing could've prepared me for the scale of crisis and extent of suffering I saw today in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. I heard heartbreaking accounts from Rohingya refugees that will stay with me forever. They want justice and a safe return home. My appeal to the int'l community is to step up support".

society.

In his response, the UN Secretary-General acclaimed Bangladesh for its incredible socio-economic development just within 47 years of independence and termed Bangladesh as 'economic miracle'. He expressed deep appreciation for embedding SDGs in all of Bangladesh's development plans. However, he identified climate change as one of the major threats. He advised that Bangladesh should raise this issue more loudly in all international fora.

Although the Secretary-General has always been a staunch supporter for the cause of Rohingyas, his visit to the camps strengthened further his conviction, reflection of which could be found in his subsequent pronouncements on the Rohingya issue. In his briefing to the Security Council on the situation in Myanmar on 28 August 2018, he made a particular mention of this visit and shared stories of horrendous persecution and sufferings from his



UN Secretary-General António Guterres attending 'SDGs: Towards development Bangladesh by 2041' event, PMO, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1 July 2018.

SDG Event: An event on 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda was arranged by the SDG Coordinator on 01 July 2018 at Prime Minister's Office which was graced by Hon'ble Foreign Minister and Hon'ble Planning Minister. Representatives of the government, civil society, private sector, development partners as well as youth leaders were also present. The SDG Coordinator made a presentation on the development achievements of Bangladesh and the initiatives taken by the Government of Bangladesh for implementing SDGs. He also briefed the audience about 10 special initiatives of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to take the benefits of the development to the doorsteps of every citizen.

The session was interactive where many important questions were raised from the floor and suggestions were made. There were queries: how UN could play a more meaningful role in addressing growing inequality, achieving inclusive institutions and quality education; what could be the initiatives by World Bank for promoting small and medium women entrepreneurs for achieving SDG 5 (gender equality) etc. Two young leaders (one male and one female) shared their initiatives of contributing to the development of the

interactions with the Rohingyas in the camps. All these are expected to have bearing, on the Security Council's proceedings with regard to the Rohingya issue.

Both the Secretary-General and World Bank President were very impressed with Bangladesh's progress in implementing the SDGs.

That the Secretary-General took along the World Bank President in the visit was significant. It helped secure World Bank's and its affiliated bodies' continued humanitarian assistance for the Rohingyas. It may be noted that just a couple of days ahead of the visit, the World Bank announced close to half-a-billion dollars in grant-based support to help Bangladesh address the needs of Rohingyas in areas such as health, education, water and sanitation, disaster risk management, and social protection. World Bank's pledge is expected to shore up further international humanitarian assistance for Rohingyas.

The Secretary-General's visit to Bangladesh is expected to further strengthen the overall partnership between Bangladesh and the United Nations. The same applies for the World Bank.

Rohingya crisis and efforts of Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations

Dealing with the Rohingya crisis have been the most important preoccupation of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York since August 2017. In view of the imperativeness of putting international pressure on Myanmar in tandem with bilateral engagements, the Mission made all out efforts to make the best use of the multilateral track. The whole year, we kept on lobbying intensely and as a result, Rohingya issue remained as one of the most talked-about topics at the United Nations in New York during 2018. The Mission's efforts were carried out largely in four tracks: at the General Assembly, at the Security Council, at the UN Secretariat and with member states.

Chairpersonship in 2018 facilitated our mobilization efforts.

In the General Assembly, we utilized the presence of Hon'ble Prime Minister during the high-level weeks of 73rd and 72nd UNGA to rally support of world leaders. She very poignantly raised the Rohingya issue in her statements at the successive General Debates and other high-level events and each time came up with concrete recommendations which found strong resonance in the subsequent pronouncements of world leaders. All appreciated the bold and pragmatic leadership and humane role of our Hon'ble Prime Minister in giving shelter to 1.1 million Rohingyas.



UN Secretary-General António Guterres speaking at the Open Briefing on the situation of Myanmar, UN Security Council, 28 August 2018

General Assembly: Our initial mobilization began with the 'OIC Contact Group on Rohingya Muslim Minorities' in New York. A small group of OIC Permanent Representatives, led by the Saudi Arabian Permanent Representative met the UN Secretary-General, President of the Security Council and President of the General Assembly and briefed them about the crisis and requested to take initiatives to resolve it. Bangladesh Permanent Representative also met the Secretary-General and

Our next goal at the General Assembly front was the Third Committee resolution on the 'Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar'. In 2018, we have been able to bring a stronger resolution than that of 2017 which was adopted by the General Assembly with an overwhelming majority (136 in favour, 8 against and 22 abstentions). The resolution includes two vital elements: (a) for the first time, the issue of accountability of



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering her statement at the High-level Side-Event on the 'Situation of Rohingya Minority in Myanmar' convened by Saudi Arabia, UNHQ, 27 September 2018

other senior officials of the UN separately. Subsequently, we pushed the discussion from the Contact Group to the wider OIC membership as a result of which the Rohingya crisis started making to the mainstream discussion of the United Nations in a bigger and stronger way. Our assumption of the OIC CFM

Myanmar for violations of international law for which there is a resounding call from the international community and (b) extending the appointment of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar. There are some other notable things with regard to the 2018 resolution: European Union this time joined



UNSC, 14 May 2018: US Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Nikki Haley speaking at the Security Council's briefing after the Council's visit to Bangladesh & Myanmar from 28 April to 1 May 2018



UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener meeting the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, 21 May 2018

OIC as co-sponsors thus widening our support base; the number of co-sponsors has increased; votes in favour has gone up by 14, votes against have gone down by 2 also abstentions by 2, compared to 2017; of all country-specific resolutions this resolution has garnered the highest number of votes in favour, lowest against and lowest abstentions. Due to our intense persuasion, a number of countries who voted against in 2017 or abstained, have voted in favour in 2018. All these indicate the broader acceptance and legitimacy that the resolution continues to enjoy among the international community.

We had to do massive mobilization: we went through very

lead role in reviewing the peacebuilding architecture and in the emergence and promotion of the notion of 'sustaining peace', also as a founding member of Peacebuilding Commission, we maintained a close interface with the Council. All these contributed to raising our visibility and acceptance in the Council which had positive bearing on pursuing the Rohingya issue in the Council and also across the UN system.

We have not yet been able to get a resolution from the Council as there no consensus on the issue. Although Bangladesh is not a member of the Council and despite the differing views of some key countries on the Rohingya issue, the Security Council



UN Security Council delegation with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Gonobhaban, Dhaka, 30 April 2018

difficult negotiation; made certain compromises yet remained firm on our redlines; reached out many key member states and regional bodies and provided them with due explanation; and lastly negotiated the budget for the Special Envoy's office in the face of efforts by some quarters to cut down on it.

Security Council: To overcome the handicap of pushing an issue in the Security Council which is the case with any non-member state, we intensified our overall engagement with the Council. We participated in almost all the monthly open debates of the Council (twice in a month) since August 2017 on various themes/topics related to international peace and security including the Rohingya issue and delivered statements articulating our position on each issue. We continued our active involvement, as a major troops/police contributing country, in the strategic and policy decision-making processes of the Council with regard to opening/closing and mandate review/renewal of peacekeeping missions. Capitalizing on our

still met, as many as 13 times in various formats since August 2017 which yielded some concrete outcomes namely, one Presidential Statement, one common Press Elements and one Press Statement and saw some unsuccessful attempts for a Council resolution. Led by the United Kingdom and constantly pushed by us, some sympathetic members of the Council are continuing their efforts for getting a resolution. So, amid many other competing conflicts around the world, the Council did remain seized with the Rohingya crisis in 2018. These are all important and incremental steps which have been possible due to unrelenting persuasion by our Missions and the Headquarters.

Visit of the Security Council: Mission's persuasion paid off when the Council finally visited Bangladesh and Myanmar from 28 April to 01 May 2018. The visit gave the Council members the due orientation about the ground realities and helped them understand the magnitude and root causes of the crisis. This



Members of the Security Council delegation visiting the Kutupalong camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh on 29 April 2018



Ministerial-level pledging conference for the Rohingyas at Palais des Nations, organized by the UNHCR, IOM, and OCHA on 23 October 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland

had significant impact on the Council members who otherwise do not have direct interest in the issue and are remotely connected to it.

United Nations Secretariat: We maintained constant liaison at all levels of the Secretariat including the Secretary-General himself and particularly with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (formerly Department of Political Affairs) and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, even during full closure of United Nations on important holidays and provided them with up-to-date information and strategic inputs. Whenever the Special Envoy was in New York we met her, got her assessment and conveyed our expectations from her. It was again largely the Mission's persuasion that led the Secretary-General visit the Rohingya camps in June-July 2018.

We persistently carried out many strategic moves at the UN all the year round: we spoke on Rohingya issue whenever there

in favour of Rohingyas.

Ongoing involvement of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Rohingya issue gives a big leverage in pursuing the accountability issue. Bangladesh's membership in the ICC bureau for 2019-2020 comes as another opportunity because during our membership, the bureau will work on selecting the new chief prosecutor of the Court which would be critical for the proceedings of the Pre-Trial Chamber-1.

Public outreach: We hosted events on Rohingya issue outside the United Nations; we spoke in events hosted by various organizations. We also continued our engagements with US think tanks and universities and co-hosted seminars/panels with them.

Media outreach: We increased our engagements with the UN media, international media and local Bangladeshi media to feed them with information on the Rohingya issue.



Ambassador Masud Bin Momen speaking at the Security Council's special meeting on Rohingya issue where the Chairperson of Fact Finding Mission in Myanmar briefed the council on atrocities in Myanmar, 19 October 2018



Security Council, 14 May 2018: Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Masud Bin Momen speaking at the Security Council's briefing after the Council's visit to Bangladesh & Myanmar on Rohingya issue on 28 April to 1 May 2018

was an opportunity to do so, we responded whenever Myanmar spoke casting aspersions on us; we provided member states with facts, figures and arguments rebutting Myanmar's persistent propaganda campaign; we impressed upon sympathetic member states of the Security Council to hold meetings on Rohingya issue during their presidency; we hosted or had other countries host events at the UN on Rohingya issue; whenever there was a high-level dignitary from Dhaka, we arranged meetings for him/her with UN leadership/high officials including the Secretary-General and arranged events for them to speak on the issue; we kept on pushing UN leadership to undertake visits to Cox's Bazar and facilitated numerous such visits, on return they made public statements or briefed the Security Council. All these contributed to building world opinion

Our outreach was not only confined in New York. With Ministry's support, we activated all our Missions abroad to lobby with their host governments and countries of concurrent accreditation. Ministry also did its part by reaching out resident diplomatic missions in Dhaka. To support the strong role played by the Human Rights Council with regard to Rohingya issue, we maintained regular contact with our Permanent Mission in Geneva and exchanged developments in New York and Geneva to complement our respective negotiating strategies.

Rohingya crisis is one of the most difficult diplomatic challenges Bangladesh have ever faced. We have so far succeeded in keeping the issue alive at the United Nations particularly in the Security Council, but it is more important for the momentum to be sustained.

Bangladesh: A Symbol of Glory in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

Bangladesh maintained 2nd position among Troops and Police contributing countries in 2018. Having maintained this despite stiff competition is a testimony of UN's confidence on us. Over the last few years, peacekeeping operations have transformed significantly and reached a new height owing to growing focus on accountability of the performance and enhanced role of the peacekeepers. Blue Helmets are now on the radar of various institutions and quarters including human rights organizations while on deployment. They are far more accountable than before. Yet Bangladeshi peacekeepers have continued to earn laurel and excellent reputation by their sincere and professional works in some of the most dangerous and volatile field missions such as, in Mali, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and South

Nations Security Council.

Bangladesh first deployed troops in 1988, when it participated in two operations – UNIMOG in Iraq and UNTAG in Namibia. So, 2018 marks Bangladesh's 30 years in UN peacekeeping operations. To celebrate this glorious occasion, the Mission hosted a high-level reception, perhaps Bangladesh's most prestigious UN event in recent years, at the UNHQs on 25 April 2018. Highlight of the reception was the presence of the UN Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres and the President of



First batch of Bangladeshi peacekeepers, 1988, UNIMOG, Iraq

UN General Assembly Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, both of whom spoke highly of Bangladesh not only for its contribution to UN peacekeeping but also for its overall contribution to the work of the UN.



Dignitaries at the Celebration of '30 Years of Bangladesh in UN Peacekeeping Operations' at UNHQs, New York, 25 April 2018

Sudan. Considering the present time challenges, Bangladesh is focusing more on quality of peacekeeping and sending peacekeepers who are more capable of delivering on the ground and fulfilling the mandates given by the United

In 2018 Bangladesh kept four contingents at readiness level under United Nations Peacekeeping Readiness System (UNPCRS) to respond to any immediate need of United Nations at any critical time. Last year, Bangladesh deployed an



Two female helicopter Pilots of Bangladesh Air Force joined United Nations Peacekeeping mission in Congo in December 2017, the first time in UN history



Bangladeshi troops on patrol at MINUSCA in Central African Republic

Infantry Contingent of 850 personnel in Democratic Republic of Congo - MONUSCO as Readily Deployable Battalion (RDB); we also started deploying for the first-time military observers in United Nations Peacekeeping: Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), South Sudan.

As the recognition of our value-driven contribution to UN's strategic and policy decision-making on peacekeeping particularly to Secretary-General's 'Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)' initiative, our Hon'ble Prime Minister was among the few world leaders to have been invited to speak at the Secretary-General's high-level meeting on A4P on 26 September 2018.



Under Secretary-General of the UN Peacekeeping Operation Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix meeting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her National Parliament's Office, June 2018, Dhaka

The new concept of protection of civilians (POC) added new challenges for our peacekeepers. For avoiding human casualties and particularly for safeguarding women and children, most of the UN field missions are mandated with POC, though peacekeepers are not primarily meant for POC tasks. So, greater responsibilities have been vested on them and expectations are also very high. This has already been incorporated in the training curriculum of peacekeepers and is being given the highest priority.



Defence Ministerial Peacekeeping Meeting, Vancouver, Canada, September 2017

Performance of our peacekeepers has been well-regarded in Mali, Central African Republic, South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo. Our peacekeepers have obtained high

credibility with their pro-active operational measures, deep sense of commitment and excellent professionalism. Our peacekeepers enjoy due to having no caveats and their adherence to the laid down UN chain of command.

United Nations has always been encouraging to deploy more female peacekeepers and aimed to increase female participation by 15% among all unarmed observers and staff officers by 2018. Bangladesh has good representation of female peacekeepers in the all-female Formed Police Units (FPU) in Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti. However, representation

of female individual peacekeepers (as observer's/staff officers) is required to be enhanced. Our Armed Forces Division and Police Headquarters are taking measures to increase female participation. Bangladesh is planning to send one platoon female members with each military contingent from 2019.

It may be noted that perception and face value is very important in the UN environment. Forthcoming and positive outlook from the senior mission leadership of Bangladesh is helping boost positive image of our Armed Forces/Police in particular and the country in general. They continue to keep our head very high.

Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: How Bangladesh fits into the paradigm

The Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his UNGA speech in 1974 said, “Peace is an imperative for the survival of humanity. It represents the deepest aspirations of men and women throughout the world”.

Forty-two years after that on 27 April 2016, members of the United Nations both at the General Assembly and the Security Council, quite loudly echoed the same sentiment beginning a new paradigm in UN Peace discourse. On that day, in a rare parallel process, the UN General Assembly and UN Security Council adopted, by consensus, two most comprehensive UN peacebuilding resolutions (popularly known as ‘Twin Resolutions’) in its history. Most significantly, the ‘twin resolutions’ mooted the concept of ‘sustaining peace’. The idea is about shifting the focus of peacebuilding from recurrence of violence after major conflicts to enhanced efforts on conflict prevention through participatory and nationally-owned processes.

Bangladesh remained a champion of the process leading up to the adoption of the resolutions and thereafter continued to seize every opportunity to engage in the Secretary-General’s ‘surge in peace diplomacy’ in the General Assembly, Security Council and Peacebuilding Commission, among others. The most fitting recognition of such a sustained engagement came in the beginning of 2018 when the President of the 72nd UNGA invited our Permanent Representative to co-facilitate the resolution on Secretary-General’s report (A/72/707–S/2018/43) on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace. Bangladesh successfully steered the

Inspector General, Bangladesh Police participated in the Second United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit and shared Bangladesh perspectives on the role of Police in conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

Bangladesh’s profile as a leading contributor of troops and police to UN peacekeeping operations for many years put us to the forefront of the debate surrounding reforms in the peace and security architecture of the UN. We voiced support for the Secretary-General’s Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) agenda for UN peacekeeping operations. The Hon’ble Prime Minister’s kind participation at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit and UN Secretary-General’s High-level Meeting on the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) during the high-level segment of the UNGA in September 2018 reaffirmed Bangladesh’s unwavering commitment in this regard.

Given the renewed importance of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in the new context, Bangladesh further intensified its engagements in the PBC. We continued to act as the coordinator of NAM caucus in PBC and reported monthly on PBC activities at the NAM Coordinating Bureau (CoB) meetings. In parallel, Bangladesh started playing an active role in the Group of Friends of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). Notably, Hon’ble Prime Minister contributed USD 100,000 to the PBF during the high-level segment of the 72nd UNGA. Thereafter, we became member of the Group of Friends of the PBF led by the UK and Sweden.

Bangladesh’s contributions towards advancing the peacebuilding



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the ‘Nelson Mandela Peace Summit’, UNHQ, 24 September 2018



Bangladesh’s Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal delivering his statement at the high-level event on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, UNGA Hall, 24 April 2018



Dr. Mohammad Javed Patwary, BPM (Bar), Inspector General, Bangladesh Police addressing the 2nd UN Chiefs of Police Summit, UNHQs, 22 June 2018

process along with Lithuania. The resolution was eventually adopted during the High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace on 24-25 April 2018. H.E. Mr. Asaduzzaman Khan, MP, Hon’ble Minister for Home Affairs led a high-level delegation to that meeting and had been privy to its adoption. In his deliberation, he stressed the need for enhanced and sustained resources for peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

On 21-22 June 2018, Dr. Mohammad Javed Patwary, BPM (Bar),

and sustaining peace agenda in the UN particularly our ability to navigate through difficult negotiations for building broader consensus for Secretary-General’s Sustaining Peace Agenda have earned her special recognition in the comity of nations in 2018. While we take pride in our achievements in 2018, we primarily drew inspiration from the dedicated efforts of thousands of our peacekeepers, and also from our heroes who made supreme sacrifice in faraway lands in their pursuit to ensuring global peace.

Countering Terrorism (CT) and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE): Bangladesh Perspective

Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her speech at the 73rd UNGA in September 2018 said, "Our zero-tolerance policy in countering terrorism will continue undiminished. Our 'whole of society' approach has served us well in preventing violent extremism, human trafficking and flow of illicit drugs".

Notably, since 2009, Hon'ble Prime Minister made it a consistent theme of all her General Assembly (GA) deliberations to condemn in the strongest possible terms terrorism and violent extremism in all forms and manifestations. Under her guidance, Bangladesh's engagement with the UN in CT and PVE fields had considerably deepened and widened over the years. Bangladesh's perspectives on CT and PVE are primarily premised on four important pillars namely prevention, disruption, capacity building and upholding respect to human rights. Essentially, these core elements of our national CT and PVE strategy fit quite well within the broader UN's Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, which was adopted in GA, by consensus, in 2006.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Gulshan on 01 July 2016, Bangladesh delegation further enhanced its engagement with the UN, and its counter-terrorism related bodies, in order to create more opportunities for collaboration. We have been working with the UN in diverse areas including national PVE strategy, terrorist designation and asset freezing, strategic communication to counter violent extremist narratives, de-radicalization in prison settings, youth empowerment for preventing violent extremism, maritime and aviation security, preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction for terrorist purposes, and foreign terrorist fighters, etc.

We continued to support the UN by advocating enhanced system-wide coordination and coherence in the fields of CT and PVE. In June 2017, the General Assembly established the Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT) and appointed Mr. Vladimir Voronkov as the first Under-Secretary-General (USG) to head UN-OCT. Immediately after that, early in 2018, a UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact was signed by 38 UN entities for improving coordination, enhancing transparency, and strengthening

evidence-based data gathering.

Bangladesh supported the establishment of the UN-OCT and developed in multi-layered partnership with the office. In such engagements, we had been emphasising on recognition of our national priorities in the UN's works in CT and PVE. In March 2018, the Mission facilitated the visit of a UN expert team from UN-OCT to

Bangladesh. The idea was about reviewing the factors driving individuals towards radicalisation and assessing the current capacities in Bangladesh to reduce and prevent radicalization. The Mission received encouraging feedbacks from both the visiting UN team and stakeholders in the country on the outcome of the visit.

In June 2018, Bangladesh actively participated in the sixth biennial review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The bone of contention was about the difference of views on the issue of preventing violent

extremism. Bangladesh delegation strongly supported the Secretary-General's PVE Plan of Action, which underscores the primacy of national strategies developed and implemented through a 'whole-of-society' approach. We played a catalytic role in its adoption by bridging gaps across various stakeholders. In parallel, the Secretary-General hosted the first United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States. The theme of the conference was "Strengthening international cooperation to combat the evolving threat of terrorism". A high-level delegation led by Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam, Additional Inspector General of Police led Bangladesh delegation.

Terrorism is a global issue and needs coherent and concerted global response. As such, Bangladesh delegation had always been advocating enhanced cooperation in the United Nations, regional and sub-regional organizations and other multilateral fora.

Bangladesh remains supportive of concluding the work on a Comprehensive Counter-Terrorism Convention. We also support the proposal to convene a high-level conference to adopt the Convention by resolving the outstanding issues over the legal definition of terrorism. Pending this much-anticipated development, Bangladesh will continue to invest efforts in ratifying and implementing the relevant international counter-terrorism instruments.



UN Secretary-General António Guterres addressing the High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States flanked by Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, 28 June 2018, UNHQs



Bangladesh delegation at the High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, 28 June 2018, UNHQs

Awareness raising initiatives on Bangladesh's Genocide

Despite global consent on 'no to genocides', we are still witnessing mass atrocity crimes in different parts of the world including Gaza Strip, Syria, Yemen and Rakhaine State in Myanmar. The intriguing fact that our experience of one of the worst genocides since the Holocaust received rather scant attention in international genocide scholarship until recently. Present government took different steps to bring the local perpetrators under justice and to obtain recognition from international community for our genocide soon after they assumed power in 2009.

At the height of the Cold War, it was almost impossible for our young, war-ravaged Bangladesh without UN membership to strive for securing international recognition for the genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during our war of liberation and to seek accountability for the perpetrators of the crimes through an international judicial process. As a result, ours is one of the least internationally studied genocide cases according to different scholars. Thanks to the collective efforts of many individuals, both inside and outside the country, the oft-forgotten genocide in Bangladesh in 1971 has gradually making its place back in international genocide scholarship.

On 11 March 2017, our National Parliament passed a resolution designating 25 March as the 'National Genocide

purpose was to use that opportunity to translate our collective reflection on the horrors of our genocide into renewing global commitment to work towards preventing the commission of genocides anywhere in the world.

Guests from different strata including diplomatic corps, academics, Friend of Bangladesh Liberation War awardees, international youth organization, US politicians, Bangladesh community leaders and freedom fighters attended this discussion event. It evolved on the theme 'Genocide: Never Again'.



Guests paying homage to the memories of martyrs & victims of genocide 71 in Bangladesh during observance of National Genocide Remembrance Day at Bangladesh Mission, 25 March 2018

Two academics from Binghamton State University, New York Professor Maxim Pensky and Professor Nadia Rubaii discussed the question of the value of countering impunity for genocides when the period between occurrence of genocide and prosecution is very long which is particularly relevant in the

Bangladesh case. But that is just one of several examples where prosecutions seek to punish persons for acts committed decades in the past. They also addressed the challenges and opportunities for universities to contribute to prevention through research conducted in partnership with practitioners, and through carefully-designed, highly-applied, contextually-tailored, and fully-interdisciplinary academic programs.



Dignitaries speaking during observance of National Genocide Remembrance Day at Bangladesh Mission. From left Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, CG Shamim Ahsan, CG of India Sandeep Chakravorty, CG of Kosovo Teuta Sahatqija, Professor of Binghamton University Dr. Maxim A Pensky, Professor of Binghamton University Dr. Nadia Rubaii, Friends of Bangladesh Liberation War Awardee US Physiologist David Nalin, Representative of New York City Mayor Office Ms. Jessica Ramos, President Genocide 71 Foundation USA Dr. Pradip Ranjan Kaur, and President, World Youth Alliance Mr. Lord Leomer B.

Remembrance Day' to commemorate the targeted mass killing of civilians that was the precursor to a nine-month long War of Liberation culminating in our independence in December 1971.

The Mission has been working throughout the year at the UN in various ways to internationalize our genocide. As part of that and in order to reiterate our shared commitment to 'never again' to the commission of genocides and to help pave the way for reconciliation with the past through accountability and memorialisation, we organized a discussion event, first of its kind, in observance of our 'National Genocide Remembrance Day' on 25 March 2018 at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh in New York. Our

The Mission had since been pursuing for a tangible outcome of this event. Eventually, we could prepare a set of proposals on possible collaboration between the Institute for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention of Binghamton University, New York and University of Dhaka or/and Liberation War Museum for student exchange programme on genocide prevention and further study on our Liberation War and our genocide in particular.

Building on this experience, the Mission is planning to organize a similar event in 2019 with wider outreach to disseminate our shared commitment to stop genocide and mass atrocity crimes at any place in the world.

Science and Technology in UN discourse

The United Nations has become the foremost forum to address issues that transcend national boundaries and cannot be resolved by any one country acting alone. In addition to its initial goals of safeguarding peace, protecting human rights, establishing the framework for international justice and promoting economic and social progress, the United Nations has taken on new challenges cutting across various disciplines. Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and its related frontier technologies is one such issue.

Throughout 2018, the United Nations in its various organs, bodies and forums discussed issues relating to 4IR and consequences of technological advances.

Following is a highlight of some initiatives taken at the United Nations to open a strategic and inclusive discussion about the modalities of global governance in the era of frontier technologies:

- a. Secretary-General's strategy on new technology: Technologies possess immense potential for fostering growth, prosperity and environmental sustainability. Keeping this in mind, the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) has undertaken a strategy on 'New Technology'. The goal of this internal strategy is to define how the United Nations system will support the use of these technologies to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Agenda and to facilitate their alignment with the values enshrined in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the norms and standards of international law. The strategy has committed to supporting dialogue on normative and cooperation frameworks and enhancing UN system support to government capacity development.
- b. The UN University has created "AI (artificial intelligence) and Global Governance Platform" as an inclusive space for researchers, policy actors, corporate and thought leaders to explore AI related public policy challenges. It is hoped that the ideas shared, debated, and discussed through this Platform will help UN member states, multilateral agencies, funds, programmes and other stakeholders consider their own roles in shaping the governance of AI.
- c. Group of Friends on Exponential Technological Change: At the initiative of the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the UN, the Group of Friends on "Exponential Technological Change" was established in 2017 to regularly discuss challenges and opportunities of Exponential Technological Change and automation on sustainable development. Bangladesh is a member of the Group.
- d. The UNSG has constituted a "High-Level Panel of Digital Cooperation" comprising leaders from the public and private sectors and civil society in July 2018 to offer recommendations on how to ensure a constructive use of digital technology now

and into the future. The panel is co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma and expected to present its report by April 2019.

- e. Informal plenary of President of the General Assembly (PGA): In October 2018, PGA convened an informal dialogue to discuss about the "New technologies and its consequences". The purpose was to understand the opportunities and challenges brought about by new and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, block chains, synthetic biology, satellite and drone technologies.
- f. UN resolutions: Mexico sponsored a resolution (A/RES/73/17) on "Impact of Rapid Technological Change on the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals" which was adopted by consensus on 26 November 2018. Bangladesh co-sponsored the resolution along with 41 other countries. The resolution calls on all UN Member States and agencies to implement public policies and share best practices so that the new technologies help achieve the 2030 Agenda. It establishes, for the first time, coordination between the Technology Facilitation Mechanism created by the 2030 Agenda with the Commission on Science



President of the 73rd session of the General Assembly (GA), chairs the GA meeting on the impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the SDGs, 18 October 2018, UNGA Hall, UNHQs

and Technology for Development and other forums; points to artificial intelligence as one of the emerging technologies with the greatest impact on sustainable development; urges members to consider technological change in the quadrennial review of global progress on the 2030 Agenda; and issues an

invitation for a leaders'-level debate on the subject during the 74th UNGA in September 2019. Meanwhile, Second Committee adopted by consensus a resolution on "Information and communications technologies for sustainable development". Bangladesh was the facilitator of the negotiation on behalf of the Second Committee chair.

In view of Bangladesh's priority on science & technology sector and digitization of the country, the Permanent Mission remained deeply engaged in the aforesaid and other science and technology related discourses of the United Nations, it also organized a brainstorming session on 13 December 2018 on "4IR: Challenges and opportunities for Bangladesh", where colleagues from the Consulate-General, UN Department of Economic & Social Affairs (DESA) and academics from the University of Connecticut were invited. Generated from the session, a report with recommendations for implementation at national and diplomatic level was forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The paper highlighted the need for improvement in areas, such as education, research, innovation, and skills training. It also suggested, among others, to establish a national task force to deal with the issue, form 4IR cells in relevant Ministries, promote public awareness, initiate TechPlomacy, undertake exploratory study to understand skills need for our expatriate workers.

Global Health and the United Nations

The United Nations, since its inception, has been actively involved in promoting and protecting good health worldwide. Leading that effort within the UN system is the World Health Organization (WHO). However, some aspects of public health have recently started to draw attention of the global leaders. The most important among these are SDG 3- “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”- and nearly 50 targets across 14 other SDGs which are critical to ensuring health and wellbeing for all. As a result, some select health related issues having serious global implications were deliberated upon at the United Nations in New York in 2018. These are:

High level meeting on Tuberculosis (TB) and Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs)

On 26 September 2018, the UNGA held a high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis. Speakers at this one-day event, drew attention to the problem of drug-resistant TB, and called for improving access to health services and medicines. At the end of the meeting, the Assembly endorsed a political declaration titled “United to End Tuberculosis: An Urgent Global Response to a Global Epidemic”. Member States including Bangladesh reaffirmed their commitment to end the global tuberculosis epidemic by 2030, committing themselves to accelerate national and collective actions, investments and innovations in fighting the preventable disease. World leaders agreed to mobilize US\$13 billion per year to finance TB prevention and treatment by 2022, and promised another US\$2 billion per year for TB research. Recognizing that tuberculosis disproportionately affects developing regions and countries, Heads of State and Government also pledged to provide leadership, acknowledging that multi-drug-resistant strains can reverse gains made in combating the disease, which remains among the top 10 causes of death worldwide.

On the next day, 27 September 2018, the UN held a one-day comprehensive review of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the third such meeting on the issue. The theme of the meeting was “Scaling up multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral responses for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. Similar to TB event, the Assembly endorsed a declaration by which world leaders vowed to scale up efforts to prevent and control NCDs

committing to provide greater policy coherence through a whole-of-government approach. The leaders agreed that health systems should be strengthened and reoriented towards universal health coverage and improvement of health outcomes, while greater access to affordable, safe, effective and quality medicines and diagnostics should be promoted. On 10 October 2018, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions, by consensus, containing the declarations on TB and NCDs.

Both the events were attended by our then Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, H.E. Zahid Maleque, MP who led the Bangladesh delegation that included representatives of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and officials of the Directorate General of Health.

Universal health coverage:

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) has galvanized significant political movement in the past few years. The UNGA resolution, “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, frames that in order “to promote physical and mental health and well-being, and to extend life expectancy for all, we must achieve universal health coverage and access to quality healthcare.” In this connection, the UN Member States agreed to set 12 December as International UHC Day, as well as to hold a UN High-level Meeting on UHC in 2019. Since an estimated 400 million people around the world lack access to one or more essential health services, UHC can serve as a cornerstone to advance the implementation of the health-related SDGs.

This year at the UN Headquarters, the UHC Day was celebrated in a grand manner. UN Deputy Secretary-General, H.E. Amina J. Mohammed attended the event as Chief Guest while the Permanent Representatives of Brazil and Japan were present as special guests. The speakers at the event discussed how countries are moving towards UHC, and ways that the UN is providing support to this. Earlier, at the initiative of Permanent Missions of Brazil and Japan, a Group of Friends on ‘Universal Health Coverage’ was established. Bangladesh, along with 40 other countries, has joined the group. The group is expected to serve as an informal platform for UN Member States to exchange information on events and initiatives worldwide and at the UN that seek to support and advocate for achieving UHC by 2030. It will also provide an opportunity for interested Member States to hear from relevant experts, partners and advocates on the various





Secretary-General António Guterres (on screens) addressing the opening segment of the Interactive Civil Society Hearing, part of the Preparatory Process towards the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Tuberculosis, 4 June 2018, UNHQs



General Assembly session on Global Health and Foreign policy, 13 December 2018, GA Hall, UNHQs

components and implications of health systems strengthening, including monitoring, accountability and the implementation measures necessary to achieve and sustain UHC.

Global health and foreign policy:

Member states have been discussing this issue under a Plenary agenda item every year since the 63rd UNGA. The theme of Global Health and Foreign Policy agenda of the 73rd UNGA was “Healthier world through better nutrition”. The GA adopted a resolution with the same title. As in previous years, the Global Health and



Zahid Maleque, State Minister for Health and Family Welfare speaking at the 50th session of the Commission on Population and Development at UNHQs, 3 April 2017

Foreign Policy (GHFP) Initiative- a group of seven countries co-led by Japan and Brazil- proposed the resolution. This year, for the first time, the United States disassociated from the resolution and called for a vote. It was adopted by a recorded vote of 157 in favour to 2 against (Libya, United States), with 1 abstention (Hungary). We voted ‘yes’ for the resolution.

The resolution calls upon Member States to reinforce actions towards the improvement of nutrition, health conditions and living standards of populations around the globe as a key element of strategies for the eradication of all forms of



Dr. Mohammad Habibe Millat speaking at 73rd UNGA's High-level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases, 5 July 2018, UNHQs

malnutrition. It further called upon Member States to consider ratifying or implementing, as appropriate, the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Due to the importance we attach with health issues domestically, Bangladesh delegation actively participated in the informals of the resolution. In the negotiation, Bangladesh suggested many core concepts and ideas

regarding the global health, and its link to SDGs. The issue of double burden of the under and over nutrition was also highlighted in the document with special reference to low income countries. Bangladesh suggested to incorporate ‘sharing of best practices’ and ‘creating greater public awareness about nutritional requirement among population’ which were included in the resolution.

Bangladesh made a statement at the general debate on this agenda item for the first time where Bangladesh’s health-related achievements were highlighted including reduction in maternal, infant, and under-5 mortality rates, increased vaccination coverage, higher life expectancy at birth etc.

The statement also pointed out that under the visionary leadership of our Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has outperformed its many South Asian neighbours in health-related achievements, convincingly defying the expert view that economic

strength and abundant health resources are the key drivers of better public health.

UN recognizes Bangladesh's development as it qualifies for Graduation from LDC Group

Bangladesh had been categorized as a Least Developed Country (LDC) by the United Nations in 1975. Graduation from this category was a national aspiration. The United Nations Committee for Development Policy (CDP) determined three criteria for graduation which are GNI per capita, Human Asset Index (HAI) and Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI). The Graduation thresholds for 2018 were USD 1230 for GNI per capita, 66 or above for HAI and 32 or below for EVI. The UNCDP, on completion of its review of the LDC category in 2018, found

role in securing this qualification. Considering the importance, the Government of Bangladesh attached to the qualification issue. The Mission remained constantly engaged with the UNCDP and other concerned UN agencies on this issue since 2016. To ensure the qualification of graduation by Bangladesh, at the recommendation of the H.E. the Permanent Representative, several high-level delegations from Bangladesh visited New York and met the concerned high officials of the UNCDP and other agencies on different occasions to provide them with correct and



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina watching the celebratory event at Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka on the occasion of Bangladesh's first time fulfillment of the graduation criteria from LDC category, 22 March 2018

that Bangladesh's GNI per capita was USD 1274, for HAI was 73.2 and EVI was 25.2. Hence, it announced on 15 March 2018 that Bangladesh had met the graduation criteria for the first time. On 16 March 2018, at a simple event at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh, Mr. Roland Mollerus, Chief of the UNCDP Secretariat handed over to H.E. the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh Ambassador Masud Bin Momen an official letter conveying that Bangladesh qualified for graduation for the first time. In 2021, Bangladesh will have to meet the graduation criteria again to finally graduate from the LDC category.

updated information on Bangladesh's development. Mission also facilitated visits by the UNCDP officials to Bangladesh to meet the BBS and other concerned offices in Bangladesh and address the issues of data discrepancy. H.E. the Permanent Representative and the Mission officials kept engaged with the UNCDP and other agencies regularly on substantive matters concerning Bangladesh's graduation and conveyed the outcomes of the meetings to Bangladesh. In this way, Mission remained vigilant and followed up with the UNCDP while the process of Bangladesh's graduation was at a critical juncture.



Roland Mollerus, Chief, Secretariate of the Committee for Developing Policy handing over the letter to Ambassador Masud Bin Momen on Bangladesh's fulfilling the graduation criteria from LDC category for the first time (left). Dignitaries speaking at the hand-over ceremony at Bangabandhu Auditorium, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh, New York, 16 March 2018 (right).

Qualification for graduation was indeed a major milestone in the sustainable development trajectory of Bangladesh. Moreover, it was remarkable that Bangladesh was the first LDC that could qualify for graduation with considerable margin in all three criteria.

Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York, under the guidance and leadership of H.E. Permanent Representative Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, played a vital

Now the Mission is coordinating with UNCDP in preparing an early assessment of the impacts of graduation from the LDC category on Bangladesh's economy. In all related UN negotiations, the Mission has been strongly pursuing the issue of support from the international community for the graduating countries so that their development efforts are not affected by the loss of trade and other benefits that they used to enjoy as LDCs.

UN continues to provide political momentum to combat environmental degradation and Climate Change

Climate Change remains one of the most discussed topics in the UNHQs in New York. This is also one of the priorities of the Secretary-General who will convene a climate conference in September 2019. Bangladesh remains proactively engaged on climate change/environment issues particularly in the General Assembly and the Security Council and highlights its vulnerabilities to the climate change. The Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh was invited by the Secretary-General to address the High-Level Leaders' Dialogue on Climate Change held during the high level week of the UNGA in September 2018. Highlights of the latest and on going UN discourse on climate change are as follows:

COP 24: During the Conference of Parties (COP 24) in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018 countries agreed to "Katowice Climate Package" which are a set of guidelines to implement the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. The new Package, expected to promote international cooperation on climate change, will be implemented in 2020. It includes guidelines that will operationalize the transparency framework on how to report greenhouse gas emissions and efforts to reduce them. It sets out how countries will provide information about their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that describe their domestic climate actions including mitigation and adaptation measures as well as details of financial support for climate action in developing countries. All countries will have to report their emissions and show progress in cutting emissions every two years from 2024. The Katowice Climate Package also articulates a commitment from the

importance of climate justice and Loss and Damage. Bangladesh delegation pushed for a workshop in 2019 on "effectiveness" of Climate Finance to measure its impacts at the ground which was finally adopted as a COP decision.

Proposed Global Pact for the Environment: After an intense negotiation, the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution 72/277 entitled "Towards a Global Pact for the Environment" on 10 May 2018 that mandated the Secretary-General to issue a technical and evidence-based report to identify



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the High-level Informal Dialogue on 'Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Towards COP24 and Beyond' in UNHQs, New York, 26 September 2018

and assess possible gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments with a view to strengthening their implementation. It also decided to establish an ad hoc open ended working group (OEWG) to consider this report. At the guidance of the co-facilitators Lebanon and Portugal, the first substantive meeting of the OEWG was held in Nairobi on 14-18 January 2019 that considered the Report of the Secretary-General. The Report revealed that there are gaps in the international environmental laws, the structure of international environmental governance is fragmented, and implementation of the environmental laws is challenging both at the national and the international levels.

The Report also suggested that countries should come up with a comprehensive and unifying instrument which would gather all the international environment laws and principles.

Bangladesh was one of the first co-sponsors of 72/277 resolution initiated by France and actively participated in the negotiations in New York.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with Heads of State/Government in the Opening Session of the High-level Segment at Plenary Hall, COP-22 Conference, Marrakech, November 15, 2016

developed countries to provide financial assistance to poorer countries to help them in reducing emissions, prepare for adaptation with events such as rising sea levels and pay for damages already caused by climate change. It also includes guidelines that relate to the process for establishing new targets on finance from 2025 onwards to follow-on from the current target of mobilizing USD 100 billion per year from 2020 to support developing countries, and how to assess progress on the development and transfer of technology. The Bangladesh delegation strongly pursued the issues of climate finance, adaptation and technology transfer. It also highlighted the

Bangladesh delegation also constructively engaged in the first substantive meeting of the OEWG in Nairobi and voiced its support for the process. Being one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the world, and in view of the fact that environmental degradation has been affecting its development efforts severely, Bangladesh reaffirmed its support to any collective effort and innovative solution to protect the environment and fight climate change. It also expressed its firm support to the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities and its commitment to the existing environmental agreements.

Water Agenda at the United Nations

Water Agenda enjoys profound attention in the UN. In view of the national importance, Bangladesh Permanent Mission remains deeply involved in water related issues particularly in the implementation of the SDG 6. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister was one of the 11 members of the High Level Panel on Water (HLPW) which was convened in 2016 by the UN Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank at the

resources. The "International Decade (2018-2028) for Action-Water for Sustainable Development" was launched in 2016 and the GA resolution on Mid Term Review of the Decade was negotiated in 2018. Bangladesh Permanent Mission actively participated in these activities. We highlighted in all the fora that the recommendations of the HLPW Report can be the foundation for taking urgent water actions by the



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering statement at the Inaugural Ceremony of World Water Day 2018 on 27 March 2018, BICC, Dhaka

heads of State and Government level to provide leadership to urgently develop and implement a new global water strategy, through an integrated approach, to change the way water is used, valued and managed. The other members were the Netherlands, Tajikistan,

Governments and other stakeholders.

As per the recommendation of the HLPW, Bangladesh delegation along with other HLPW members pursued the issue of holding a UN Conference on Water/SDG 6 in the resolution on Midterm Review of



The High-level Panel on Water submitting its final report to the UN Secretary General António Guterres and the World Bank's representative, UNHQs, 14 March 2018

Mexico, Mauritius, Peru, Senegal, Jordan, Hungary, South Africa and Australia. There was also an adviser from South Korea. The HLPW report entitled "Making Every Drop Count: An Agenda for Water Action" and its main recommendations were presented in March 2018. The recommendations indicate how intrinsically linked the SDGs are to one another, and the key role SDG 6 plays in achieving many other SDGs that rely on the development and management of water

the Water Decade. As a result, it has been decided that a High- Level Conference on SDG 6 would be held in 2021 and the Midterm Review of the Water Decade would be held in 2023. It may be mentioned here that the last Water Conference under the UN auspices was held in 1978 in Argentina. Although we are seeing an encouraging turn around now, this is a sad commentary of the state of affairs of water issue at UN over the past four decades.

Agenda 2030 and the SDGs: center of the UN development discourse

Increasing protectionism, rigidity in delivering on commitments and reluctance in engaging on development issues on the part of the development partners have made the implementation of the highly ambitious and transformative SDGs difficult. The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The Forum meets annually under the auspices of the ECOSOC for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment. It meets in every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the General Assembly for two days.

The HLPF this year (2019) will be convened from 9 July to 18 July with the ministerial meeting of the forum from 16-18 July. The theme will be "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality". The HLPF this year

will undertake in-depth review of SDGs 4 (quality education), 8 (decent work), 10 (inequality), 13 (climate change), 16 (inclusive societies) and 17 (global partnership).

The 2019 High-level Political Forum (HLPF), under the auspices of the UNGA, called the SDG Summit, will assess progress achieved so far since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in September 2015 and provide leadership and guidance on the way forward that would help accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. It will be at the Heads of State/Government level and will

stakeholders. In 2019, 51 countries are taking part in the VNR.

Bangladesh participated in the VNR as early as in 2017, the second year of implementation of 2030 Agenda, and presented its national report to the ECOSOC on the implementation of the SDGs. Bangladesh may consider taking part in VNR in 2020 again. Bangladesh was appointed co-facilitator along with Australia by

the President of ECOSOC to lead the intergovernmental process for negotiating the Ministerial Declaration of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2018. Bangladesh's leadership in the process earned accolades from all the member states.

Bangladesh delegation actively took part in the HLPF in 2018. It was also invited to participate in the VNR Lab which was introduced in 2018 as a follow-up mechanism of the VNR.

2019 is an important year for the HLPF process. As per the mandate of the 2030 Agenda,

negotiations on the reform of the HLPF will take place in 2019. Mission will remain engaged in the negotiations on the reform of the HLPF.

Financing will be the biggest challenge for the countries to implement the SDGs. The annual FFD Forum takes stock of the progress in the means of implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda which is a complementary process of the HLPF. This year the FFD Forum will be held from 15-18 April 2019. Bangladesh delegation is a strong voice in the intergovernmental



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda on 27 September 2015, United Nations, New York



'Voluntary National Review (VNR)' of High Level Political Forum (HLPF) at UNHQs, 17 July 2017. Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal (left) and Principal SDG Co-coordinator Abul Kalam Azad (right) presenting the National Report at the VNR session.

take place on 24-25 September 2019 in New York.

As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda encourages member states to participate in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) which focuses on the progress of implementation of SDGs at the national and sub-national levels, VNR is voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and it provides a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant

negotiation on the outcome of this process on Means of Implementation of the SDGs including ODA, trade, foreign direct investment, and technology transfer. There will also be a High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development this year in the high level week of the UNGA in September.

It is expected that these events will play an important role in identifying areas for action to accelerate the progress towards sustainable development.

South-South Cooperation: an important tool for strengthening partnership for the SDGs

The Second UN High Level Conference on South-South Cooperation will be held in Argentina from 20-22 March 2019. As it is being held after 40 years since the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) was adopted, it is also called B A P A + 4 0 Conference. The intergovernmental negotiations on the outcome document has started under the co-facilitatorship of Uganda and Lithuania.

B a n g l a d e s h delegation attaches high importance to the South-South Cooperation (SSC) as an effective mechanism for development cooperation among the southern countries. Mission is actively participating in the negotiations on this document as a G77 member. We have placed several proposals in our national capacity particularly on duty-free quota-free market access of LDC products to the southern countries, strengthening of SSC in public service delivery, special consideration for the LDCs in technology transfer, support for Technology Bank, robust cooperation on frontier technology related issues, accelerated cooperation in climate actions in the global south, more support for the LDCs and graduating countries from the UN Development System, and the promotion of the private sector in the framework of SSC. Other G77 countries also have come up with many proposals to broaden the scope of the SSC and strengthen it particularly in the backdrop of the traditional partner countries' rigidity and reluctance to deliver on their commitments.

The developed countries are focusing on (i) principles of development cooperation effectiveness, (ii) reporting on the SSC, (iii) measuring of the SSC along with the mention of

human rights and gender equality, (iv) technology transfer on voluntary and mutually agreed terms etc. A number of G77 countries particularly the emerging economies have expressed their opposition to these issues. Their argument is that SSC is voluntary and any measuring or monitoring mechanism would be interpreted by our development partners as commitments such as ODA. There are also diverse views on whether the same principles that guide the SSC should be applied to South-South and Triangular cooperation.

For G77 members, trade & technology transfer are important issues. However, the US has taken a strong stance against the trade issues relating to WTO arrangements and the climate actions, and warned that it would not be in a position to accept references to these issues.

Bangladesh Permanent Mission led by H.E. The Permanent Representative participated at the preparatory meeting on the BAPA+40 Conference held in Egypt in 2018 and expressed its commitment to South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

The Mission is closely working with the UNOSSC (UN Office for South-South Cooperation) to enhance the scope of SSC in the development of Bangladesh. Its publication 'South-South Cooperation' in

Action Series which showcases the southern countries as well as their partners' policies, initiatives and activities featured our success story entitled "Citizen-Friendly Public Service Innovation in Bangladesh".



High-level Meeting on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Post 2015 Development Agenda: Financing for Development in the South and Technology Transfer, 17 May 2015, Dhaka



Ministers from eight countries at the Ministerial Conference on South-South Cooperation in ICTs, 19 October 2016, Dhaka

UN to observe the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

This year Bangladesh tabled for the successive 19th time, its flagship resolution entitled "Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace" on 12 December 2018 at General Assembly. Bangladesh takes pride in presenting this resolution since the idea was first mooted by us in 1997. Since 13 September 1999, the Assembly has been adopting this resolution under the lead of Bangladesh every year by consensus with overwhelming support of Member States. This year 100 Member States cosponsored this important resolution. The resolution assumed special significance as the year 2019 will be the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

The Assembly proclaimed the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace and the decade 2001-2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.

After completing arduous negotiations, we presented the

importance of a 'whole-of-society' approach in our national context for promoting a "culture of peace".

The most important and new content of this year's resolution appropriate and befitting observance of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action, which falls on 13 September 2019, by holding a high-level forum on that date. This will be an opportunity for renewing the commitments to strengthen further the global movement for the culture of peace. Therefore, holding of the High-Level Forum on Culture of Peace this year, which has been convened by the President of General Assembly since 2012, will have special significance. To this end, the Mission has already started working with

the office of the PGA and other Member States.

H.E. Mr. Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh participated and delivered the statement at the General Debate of the UN High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace held on 05 September 2018 convened by the President of the 73rd General Assembly.



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP at the General Debate of the High-level Forum on the Culture of Peace on 5 September 2018, UNHQs, New York

draft at the General Assembly on 12 December 2018. In our introduction, we stated our overarching commitment to the values and principles enshrined in the UN Charter and to work alongside the international community in promoting and protecting peace. We also emphasized that the Government of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina remains committed to the cause and underscores the

The theme of this year's forum was "The Culture of Peace: A Credible Pathway to Sustaining Peace".

Bangladesh's advancement in Women Empowerment

Bangladesh attaches high importance to achieving gender equality and women empowerment. The government, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has set highest priority in this field. Due to continuation of the policies and strategies conducive to the advancement of women, Bangladesh has achieved remarkable successes in this year.

Global recognition of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for outstanding contribution to women empowerment continued. She was awarded "Planet 50-50 Champion" by UN-Women and "Agent of Change Award" by Global Partnership Forum in 2016 and the "Global Women's Leadership Award" from Global Summit of Women in Sydney, Australia in 2018.

During the year 2018, the Mission continued its efforts to highlight at UN our achievements in women advancement, and the resilience of our women and girls to overcome any challenge like climate displacement.

Bangladesh had high-level representation of all major UN events relaxed to advancement of women. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) under ECOSOC being the most prominent of all. This year's

delegation to CSW, which visited New York from 18-23 March 2018, was headed by H.E. Ms. Meher Afroze, MP, Hon'ble State Minister for Women and Children Affairs. The delegation also comprised of an NGO representative.

This year, Bangladesh carried out another significant responsibility at the 62nd CSW by serving as one of the four Vice Chairs, endorsed by the Asia-Pacific Group (APG), representing APG. During the session, we were also given to Chair three important sessions/panels. The other important aspect was to facilitate two package resolutions namely "Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women" and "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women". The first resolution is important in that it has asked the President of General Assembly (PGA) to hold a high-level meeting of the General Assembly in the margins of the 75th session of the GA in 2020 [The year marks the 25th anniversary of Fourth World Conference, Beijing (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action)].

As part of her engagement during the 62CSW, Hon'ble State Minister attended the Bangladesh sponsored side event titled

"Shouldering the Burden: Rural Women and Climate-Induced Displacement" on 20 March 2018. She was one of the panelists. The panel also included Executive Director of UN Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Ms. Carla Mucavi, Director FAO and Ms. Mariam Traore Chazalnoel, Thematic Specialist in Migration, Environment and Climate Change of IOM based in New York. The event, well attended by member states as well as NGOs and civil society, was an opportunity to highlight the various steps taken by the government and our overall preparedness in adopting and mitigating the climate change and its harmful impacts. In her remarks, Hon'ble Minister also highlighted Bangladesh's proactive role in all climate related discourses including at the SDG preparation and the Paris Climate conference also as an early adopter and advocate of climate change discourse both climate action taken. She also referred to the Hon'ble Prime Minister receiving the United Nations "Champions of the Earth" award

by UNEP in recognition of her country's initiatives to address climate change. UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka referring to her visit to Bangladesh, praised our government and its people for their generosity in hosting Rohingyas and providing them with

humanitarian support. She also particularly praised the women of the host community in Cox's Bazar for their resilience.

Hon'ble State Minister made country statement on 21 March 2018 where she highlighted how the various effective policy, strategy and plan of action of the present government led our women including the rural women get integrated in our mainstream socio-economic activities and gradually come out of extreme poverty. She also mentioned some global ideas and recognitions validating our women empowerment, namely, 34th ranking in World Economic Forum's Inclusive Development Index's list of emerging economies, topping in South Asia; 47th place in the Global Gender Gap ranking 2017 prepared by World Economic Forum, in terms of gender equality again topping in South Asia. She also shared how our women were making greater in-roads, in politics, ranking 7th among 155 countries in the political empowerment category etc. The Chair of the CSW, Ambassador Geraldine Byrne of Ireland thanked the Hon'ble State Minister for Bangladesh's championing role in women's empowerment and also for Bangladesh delegation's role at the CSW Bureau.



Meher Afroze MP, Minister of State for Women and Children Affairs speaking at the General Debate of the 62nd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on 21 March 2018, UNHQs, New York

Bangladesh at the forefront of UN awareness building initiatives on Autism and other developmental disorders

In recent times, Bangladesh has been at the forefront of the global efforts particularly at the UN in building awareness on Autism.

Autism affects an estimated 1 in 59 children. Because of various symptomatic subtypes, it is usually referred to as Autism Spectrum disorder (ASD)- a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. A large section of our today's population especially the children suffer from ASD and other neuro-developmental disorders. In our overarching commitment to move ahead with various goals and targets of the Agenda 2030 we have pledged to "leave no one behind". Bangladesh has therefore, been at the forefront of national, regional and international efforts towards building awareness, taking various skill building

neurodevelopment disorders and disabilities related issues in the National 7th Five Year Plan for 2016-2021.

It may be mentioned that in 2012, Bangladesh facilitated the General Assembly Resolution titled "Addressing the socioeconomic needs of individuals, families and societies affected by autism spectrum disorders (ASD) developmental disorders (DD) and associated disabilities" which focused on addressing ASD and other developmental disorders and in 2013, another General Assembly Resolution that stressed the importance of ensuring accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of the UN development agenda. Every year since 2008, the UN Member states have been observing World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) on 2 April. Observance of the day gives us an opportunity to renew our pledge so as to create



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the Opening Ceremony of the International Conference on Autism and Neuro Developmental Disorders, Bhutan, 19 April 2017

initiatives to these unique but vulnerable population so that they can also be turned into human resources and contribute to the "whole-of-society" approach that we have taken up for our overall socio-economic pursuit leading towards implementation of the SDGs.

Pragmatic and forward-looking political leadership has been the key that made this possible. Bangladesh, under the able and dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has identified specific sectors and taken holistic approach to addressing the needs and challenges of our vulnerable population through targeted policies and programmes.

We have taken significant steps to ensure the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities, including those affected by Autism and other neuro-developmental disorders. Bangladesh is among the few countries in our region that have not only ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities but have also ratified its Optional Protocol. Bangladesh has also included autism,

an enabling environment where persons with Autism and other developmental disorders can enjoy a better life with rights and dignity; use their unique expertise and contribute to mainstream nation-building activities. Since 2016, Bangladesh has been an active player at the UN to observe the events related to World Autism Awareness Day.

As part of that Bangladesh Permanent Mission has been engaging with Member States, relevant UN entities and other stakeholders in this field and highlighting Bangladesh's effort at the national, regional and international levels. The work has been bolstered by the prominent role of Ms. Saima Wazed Hossain, the able daughter of our Prime Minister. More known as the 'Autism Champion', she has been the inspirational figure and leader behind many of the exceptional works being done for the wellbeing of the persons with Autism in Bangladesh. She is currently the Chairperson of the Bangladesh National Advisory Committee for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders



A delegation of 'Autism Speaks' meeting Ms. Saima Wazed Hossain on 5 April 2018 at UNHQs, New York



Ms. Saima Wazed Hossain visiting a joint exhibition by Bangladesh & Qatar Permanent Missions on World Autism Awareness Day, 5 April 2018, UNHQs, New York

as well as a Member of the World Health Organization's Expert Advisory Panel on Mental Health. It is because of her relentless efforts that our country has turned into an example in the developing world in addressing the challenges of Autism. Her work in the wider region has also been recognized globally as she was recognized by the WHO as a Goodwill Ambassador for Autism in the South East Asia Region.

The Mission worked closely with United Nations entities dealing with Autism such as Department of Public Information, Member States, NGOs like Autism Speaks along

express their inner strength and creativities. She also spoke on creating the conducive space for the persons with autism so that a healthy social balance is maintained. At the interactive section, replying to a question from Professor Jonas Ruškus, member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, she said that as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Bangladesh government has been taking various policies and implementing programmes for persons with autism and especially women as per the recommendation of the intergovernmental advisory committee.



Ms. Saima Wazed Hossain at various events of World Autism Awareness Day, 5 April 2018, UNHQs, New York



with other stakeholders to organize events during WAAD. Recognizing her stellar role, UN invited Ms. Saima Hossain as a distinguished panelist in the observance of the World Autism Awareness Day 2018 (WAAD2018) event at the UN held on 5th April 2018. The theme of the day's observance was "Empowering Women and Girls with Autism".

As a panelist on "Ableism, Sexism, Racism... How They Intersect", Ms. Hossain spoke on the various challenges that affect the women and girls with autism and how to help them with effective steps to overcome those. She highlighted the various types of discriminations that the women with autism face, including the stigma and stereotyping by the family and society in general increasing their vulnerability. They are faced with maltreatment, disparity and torture from the members of their family. She called for creation of opportunities like vocational training, appropriate education and engaging them with cultural activities so that they can

This year, in addition to partnering the UN event, Bangladesh Mission also organized an Exhibition with Missions of Qatar, India, Kuwait and South Korea as well as Autism Speaks at the UN premises. The event was participated by Member States, UN agencies like UNICEF and NGOs working in the field of autism. Shuchona Foundation, a leading organization from Bangladesh also participated. Ms. Hossain in her inaugural remarks, stated that persons with autism especially women and girls need to be provided with all kinds of opportunities that they deserve. She shared how Shuchona Foundation is working with the Bangladesh government and other partners and NGOs in close coordination in order to create those opportunities that can lead to the welfare of persons with ASD and other disability disorders. The event was attended by more than 200 visitors. In 2019, Bangladesh Mission will again partner with the UN to arrange befitting programme on the WAAD.

Bangladesh's election successes at UN

The major election successes for the Mission came in the form of membership of various prestigious UN bodies/entities namely: Human Rights Council (for the term 2019-2021); Commission on Status of Women (2019-2023); and Executive Boards of UNICEF (2019-2021) and UNWOMEN (2019-2021). In addition to membership to the UNICEF Executive Board, Bangladesh has been endorsed by the Asia-Pacific Group to assume the Vice-Presidency of the Bureau for 2019 and is expected to take up the Presidency in 2020. All these are reflections of international community's confidence on Bangladesh as a responsible member in the comity of nations.

The most important election in 2018 was the election as a member of the Human Rights Council. On 12 October 2018, elections were held at the General Assembly to elect 18 members of the Council by direct and secret ballot. All the 193 member states of the UN took part.

Although simple majority of votes i.e.97 votes were required to be elected to the Human Rights Council, Bangladesh obtained 178 votes. India, Bahrain, Fiji and the Philippines were also elected from the Asia-Pacific region. Earlier, this Mission worked along with these candidate countries to secure endorsement of the Asia-Pacific Group.

The election of Bangladesh to Human Rights Council is a further testimony to the advancements we have been making in

democracy, human rights, good governance, transparency and accountability under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The timely, humanitarian and sympathetic gesture shown by Bangladesh with regard to the Rohingyas have had significant influence on Member States to vote for Bangladesh. It may be mentioned that during the current tenure of the Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh had served at the Human rights Council for another term, from 2015 to 2017.

As the newly elected member of the Human Rights Council, Bangladesh joined several auspicious observances viz. 20th anniversary of "The Declaration on human rights defenders", the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 25th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action as well as the Human Rights Day. We reiterate our pledges to continue a contributing and responsive role particularly from within the Human Rights Council towards realizing the objectives of the global human rights instruments in the spirit of engagement and cooperation. As members of CSW and Executive Boards of UNICEF and UN Women, we have already started contributing to the efforts of these bodies and member stated for women development. Within the Esecutive Boards, we are also working to ensure that the country programmes of UNICEF and UN Women are aligned to national priorities particularly in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh vows to join global efforts to eliminate world drug problem

The government of Bangladesh, under leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been on high alert and declared 'zero tolerance' to the menace of drug. We have declared war against drug lords especially the ones trafficking illicit drugs like Ya Ba. During the Third Committee meeting under

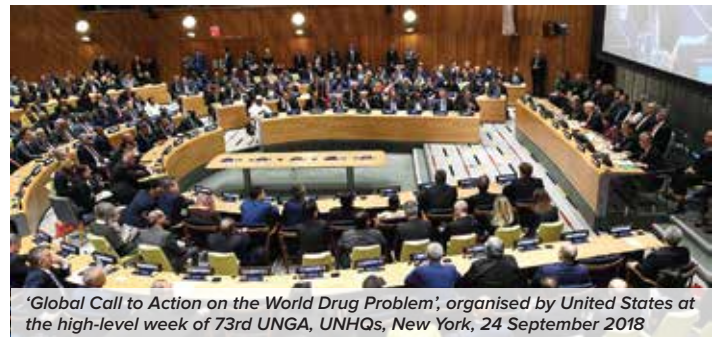


the 73rd General Assembly, Bangladesh made a statement at the general debate highlighting the importance our government attaches to curb this menace to the society.

While conveying this clear message from our Hon'ble Prime

Minister, we stated before the committee: "We've contained militancy, now we've taken an initiative to save the country from this drug menace."

Bangladesh delegation also co-sponsored this year the resolution titled 'International Cooperation to address and counter the world drug problem' facilitated by Mexico. Earlier, during the high-level week of 73rd UNGA, Bangladesh also joined the 'Global Call to Action on World Drug Problem' on 24 September 2018 at the UNHQ where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina joined the world leaders underscoring the global unity needed to combat the scourge of illicit drugs. Bangladesh was one of the 31 co-hosts who



joined to organize the event proposed by the USA. A total of 99 Member States finally endorsed the document. This was another high-level global event where Bangladesh's commitment to eliminate drug problem was appreciated.

First ever visit of the UN Special Envoy on Youth to Bangladesh: a recognition of youth advancement

Bangladesh delegation has been attending regularly the ECOSOC Youth Forum held at the United Nations. This has been an opportunity for Bangladesh to highlight its sustained efforts in bringing in positive changes in the lives of the huge young population (about 40% in age 25-54 years and only 5% or so above 65 years of age) in the country.

This year the Forum was organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake. It created an opportunity for Bangladesh to closely interact with the Envoy on Youth. On her invitation, H.E. Dr. Shri Biren Sikder, State Minister, Ministry of Youth and Sports led the Bangladesh delegation to the 2018 ECOSOC Youth Forum on 30-31 January 2018. The theme of this 7th Forum was "The role of youth in building sustainable and resilient urban and rural communities."

two-day long event.

During the forum, the Mission arranged a bilateral meeting for the Hon'ble Minister with Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth at the sidelines where they discussed ways to further enhance youth empowerment and related matters. He invited the Envoy to visit Bangladesh which the latter agreed to. The Mission pursued the matter and the Envoy expressed her interest to undertake the visit during the International Youth Day, which falls on 12 August. Accordingly, the Hon'ble Minister sent invitation to the Envoy on Youth to join the celebration of the International Youth Day in August in Dhaka. This led to the first ever visit of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth to Bangladesh that took place from 5 to 11 August 2018.

Mission organized a packed programme for the visit of the Envoy. A day-long grand celebration took place at the Sheikh



UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake speaking at the International Youth Day event, 6 August 2018, Savar, Dhaka

As one of the panelists in the forum, the Hon'ble Minister highlighted the national policy and strategy being implemented by the Government of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina keeping the huge youth population at the forefront of all such endeavours. He shared that in our vision documents many elements involving youth empowerment have been reflected as they are in the 2030 Agenda. In the latest five-year plan of Bangladesh, youth related SDGs and targets have been accommodated and aligned for the implementation of our developmental efforts considering the demographic dividend in the next few decades. He also mentioned how under the 'Digital Bangladesh' endeavours, the government has put emphasis on developing youth's knowledge, innovation and skills for boosting their resilience in individual and social contexts. He highlighted that in spite of the sincerity of the government there is still significant requirement of resource mobilisation and capacity building for which he recommended to building a 'global partnership'. 34 Youth Ministers of different countries attended this

Hasina National Institute of Youth Development, Savar, Dhaka with the theme 'Safe spaces for Youth' to observe the International Youth Day. The Youth Envoy was a special guest in the event. The Hon'ble State Minister for Youth and Sports; Minister of State, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs; Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Youth and Sports; Deputy Minister, Ministry of Youth and Sports and other dignitaries were also present.

During her visit, the Youth Envoy also had the opportunity to meet young people from different strata as well as leaders from youth organizations, which kicked off a dialogue on #SafeSpaces4Youth. The programme of the Envoy also included visit to the Bangladesh National Parliament, Bangbandhu Memorial Museum, Foreign Service Academy, and various other places of importance. She paid courtesy call on the Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs. Over all, the visit created opportunities for the Envoy to hold discussions with the young diplomats, Parliament Members



Chairperson of the Bangladesh National Advisory Committee for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Ms. Saima Wazed Hossain showing UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, 7 August 2018, Dhaka



UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake interacting with Young Parliamentarians at National Parliament House, 7 August 2018, Dhaka

and youth representatives which gave her a fairly good idea about the progress the youths of Bangladesh have made in politics and policy making process.

Visit of the Envoy to Rohingya Camps in Cox's Bazar (9-10 August 2018) was another significant part of her programme. This enabled the Envoy to hear directly from the Rohingya youths about the atrocities they and their families were subject to in the Rakhine state. She also engaged with young people from local community and humanitarian volunteers.

challenges and potentials of young people in Bangladesh. The visit also generated much attention among the youth in our country with the UN System in Bangladesh highlighting the visit through their own social platform. Envoy's office regularly twitted and posted photos on flickr and the Bangladesh media also interviewed and published news items on the visit.

The Envoy left Bangladesh with a very good impression about the state of young population in Bangladesh. She



UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake with the participants at the International Youth Day event, 6 August 2018, Savar, Dhaka

All these gave her the first account of the Rohingya crisis in its entirety.

The Youth Envoy's visit was indeed a great recognition by the UN to Bangladesh's advancement in the field of youth empowerment. It brought appropriate attention to the

profusely praised our political leadership in this regard. She also thanked the Mission for the coordination of the entire visit and the government for the excellent arrangements and hospitality.

UN writes the future of International Migration: as the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration gets adopted in Marrakech

The Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) was envisaged as the corner stone to govern and better manage international migration with a 360-degree approach. This non-legally binding document had been finalized through a two years long state-led consultations held at the United Nations and thereafter, formally adopted through a high-level intergovernmental conference in Marrakech, Morocco in December, 2018.

This 'Migration Compact' is one of its kind, expected to bridge any policy vacuum existing at global level through its efficient implementation and augmenting international cooperation. Bangladesh takes immense pride as the term 'Global Migration Compact' was first conceptualized and coined in United Nations by her delegation in April 2016.

Before the Marrakech Conference, few Member States including US and Hungary openly announced their dissociation from the Compact saying that preservation of national sovereignty is the utmost priority. This undermining the noble cause of working together for one humanity in a multi-lateral context. Unfortunately, such xenophobic nationalist sentiment is still on the rise. The UN Secretary-General rightly said at Marrakech that leadership will be crucial in bringing the Compact to life, and in avoiding the myths and disparaging discourse that have become all too frequent.

It is important to demystify migration and demystify the Compact to public. The GCM does not have the status of a 'legally binding' treaty; it is not binding on countries that are committed to it. From implementation point of view, GCM is very flexible and nimble. Understandably, it contains few teeth—few actions that countries must take beyond what they are already doing or before a specific deadline. Most importantly, the Compact can no way make a Member State compromise with its 'national sovereignty'.

Other than these, there are several challenges confronting the implementation of the GCM. The Compact does not depend directly on financial contributions from the Member States to establish a monitoring and compliance mechanism to effectively measure progress. National 'responses' are recommended but are not based upon objective measures of achievements. The success of this compact largely depends on how member states interpret certain languages in the text, specifically built around most controversial issues. In order to strike a balance in negotiation, some areas were left vague, while in

most of the cases debates ended in a status quo, providing member states to carry on with current practices though not with full compliance in promoting human rights and wellbeing of migrants.

Nevertheless, GCM is groundbreaking in the sense that it represents the first multilateral framework for international cooperation on

migration governance and provides a repository from which Member States can draw to initiate and implement programs which serve both national and global interests and advance the human rights and dignity of the migrants. The effective implementation will be a litmus test for the political willingness of member states to work for the sake of humanity.

Indeed, the adoption of GCM in Marrakech in the backdrop of a volatile global political

environment which is often not welcoming to the migrants and refugees, is a major achievement for multilateralism. The implementation and review of GCM need to be innovative and promote partnership building. The GCM envisaged a quadrennial platform at the United Nations named "International Migration Review Forum", in which Member States will update each other on the progress made regarding its implementation and guide the UN system. Bangladesh and Spain have been appointed 'co-facilitators' by the President of the General Assembly to lead an intergovernmental consultation process to determine the modalities for this review platform. This appointment may be seen as the recognition of Bangladesh delegations intense, sustained and constructive engagements in the proceedings and negotiations in the lead upto the adoption of GCM.

The newly launched 'UN Network on Migration' to provide support to the Member States and help capacity building for implementing the Compact is a major policy shift on part of UN in ending its silo approach. It may pose a challenge for IOM to carry on with its leadership role (only being a related organization to UN) to bring all the migration related expertise from different UN entities on a single platform and ensure system-wide coherence under this network.

It is important to establish the linkage between migration and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, it is construct, is deeply rooted into the SDGs. The Compact being a premier instrument

for incorporating migration into the development agenda, its effective implementation would establish migration as a matter of choice and not a necessity, apart from upholding human safety, rights and dignity. Yet it is the political willingness of member states that can make it happen.



Co-facilitators (Mexico & Switzerland) gaveling the adoption of the draft text of Global Compact on Migration, UNHQs, 13 July 2018



Foreign Secretary Md. Shahidul Haque facilitating an interactive dialogue during the Marrakech High-level Intergovernmental Conference, 11 December 2018, Marrakech, Morocco

Developing an International Legally Binding Instrument under the UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)

Humankind has exploited the seas for centuries, and this has frequently led to conflicts. In 1982, after decades-long discussion and exhausting efforts, the international community created an overarching framework for legal governance of the seas which is known as UN Convention of the law of the sea (UNCLOS). Over time, this convention has evolved into a powerful body of law and is treated as the constitution for ocean affairs. Bangladesh signed the convention in 1982 and ratified in 2001.

Though UNCLOS established a broad framework for the regulation of our oceans, there are some critical gaps in it. Two of such gaps were addressed

held in September 2018, where delegations mostly reiterated their longstanding positions. The fundamental questions like those regarding Common Heritage of Mankind or application of 'freedom of high seas' on MGRs remained unresolved in this session. Bangladesh, as a member of Group of 77 and China, supported the applicability of Common Heritage of Mankind principle. Diverging views on other issues remained. To advance this process, we strongly advocated for text-based negotiation at the soonest, to sustain the momentum for developing ILBI. The chair is supposed to circulate, some kind of such a text before next session. Few developed



First Session of Intergovernmental Conference of BBNJ, 4-17 September 2018, UNHQs, New York

by signing agreement in 1994 on Seabed Mining Provisions, and in 1995 by signing the agreement on Conservation and Management of Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, commonly known as UN Fish Stock Agreement (UNFSA).

Due to rapid technological advancements since the adoption of the UNCLOS in 1982, another critical gap of the convention came forth on the issue of marine genetic resources (MGR) in the area beyond national jurisdiction.

MGRs have been gaining importance from 1960s due to its commercial value for developing lifesaving drugs for many complex diseases, cosmetics, enzymes and other products, though it is a very lengthy and exorbitantly expensive process to achieve commercially viable products from MGRs. The deep sea has great potential for new discoveries of MGRs and at the same time deep sea is the most poorly explored area in the ocean. The "Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)" adopted in 1992 has its scope only within the national jurisdiction of a State. So, the



Marine genetic resources

conservation and sustainable use of marine genetic resources in the area beyond national jurisdiction remains a grey area as it was. To address this gap, an ad-hoc working group under UN General Assembly had been consulting the issue for a decade and came up with the decision of forming a preparatory committee (PrepCom) to make substantive recommendations to General Assembly on the elements of a draft legal text for conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, commonly known as BBNJ process. After holding four sessions in two years, the PrepCom Chair submitted his report to the UN General Assembly. Then the General Assembly decided to hold four sessions of Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) by early 2020 to develop an International Legally Binding Instrument (ILBI). The first session of IGC was

held in September 2018, where delegations mostly reiterated their longstanding positions. The fundamental questions like those regarding Common Heritage of Mankind or application of 'freedom of high seas' on MGRs remained unresolved in this session.

Bangladesh, as a member of Group of 77 and China, supported the applicability of Common Heritage of Mankind principle. Diverging views on other issues remained. To advance this process, we strongly advocated for text-based negotiation at the soonest, to sustain the momentum for developing ILBI. The chair is supposed to circulate, some kind of such a text before next session. Few developed

countries were opposing the whole process since its commencement, due to their technological edge over other countries on MGRs in the high seas. Now the issue is, why this process is so important for a developing country like Bangladesh and what could be our stake. The first and foremost concern is, this will be a legally binding instrument. We must secure our interests here even if those show up in near or remote future. We have certain stakes in this process, although we do not have such sophisticated technical capacity or knowledge base right now for researching or exploiting marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The principle of Common Heritage of Mankind (CHM) has been captured by UNCLOS regarding exploiting resources at or under sea floor beyond national jurisdiction. No single country/entity, however, has absolute rights on those resources. The benefits from exploitation of such resources by any State/entity, however, should be shared among all the states. International Seabed Authority (ISA) has been exercising this mechanism under UNCLOS. We,

the developing countries, are strongly advocating for application of this principle so we could be benefited from exploitation of MGRs beyond national jurisdiction. Not necessarily, this benefit sharing should be monetary in terms. Our second direct benefit is capacity building, knowledge sharing and technology transfer. This would help us explore the MGRs available in our exclusive economic zone initially, if need be in partnership with developed countries. A major concern is conservation of biological diversity in the seas and to avoid any environmental impacts from such research works or exploitations. There are a lot more of issues on the table for further discussion in this process, which we believe will start unfolding once the text-based negotiation starts from next session of the IGC scheduled in March 2019.

Developing 'Mining Code' for deep sea minerals

The International Seabed Authority (ISA) is in final phase of completing the regulatory process for deep sea mining. The "Mining Code" refers to the whole of the comprehensive set of rules, regulations and procedures issued by the International Seabed Authority to regulate prospecting, exploration and exploitation of marine minerals in the international seabed Area (defined as the

objectives and made presentation at the 24th session in 2018. There have been many issues to be incorporated in this complex model to address concerns. MIT has been working on improving their model and its supposed to present it in the next session of ISA in 2019 for further consideration by the States Parties and stakeholders. On environmental protection front, an effective regulatory framework



24th Session of Intergovernmental Seabed Authority, July 2018, Kingston, Jamaica

seabed and subsoil beyond the limits of national jurisdiction). The ISA was operationalized in 1996 as an autonomous body under the 1982 UNCLOS and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the UNCLOS. This is the organization through which States Parties to the UNCLOS shall, in accordance with the regime for the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (the Area) established in Part XI and the Agreement, organize and control activities in the Area, particularly with a view to administering the resources of the Area.

There is growing commercial interest in deep-sea mineral deposits as a result of projected rising demand for copper, aluminium, cobalt and other metals. These resources are used to produce high-tech applications, such as smartphones, and green technologies, like electric storage batteries. Since its establishment in 1996, ISA adopted exploration regulations for three minerals in the deep-sea floor, namely polymetallic nodules, polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich crusts. Till date, twenty-nine contractors are in exploratory works on these minerals. In 2014, the ISA started working on the regulation of exploiting the minerals. Since then, the draft set of regulations have been discussed in each of its sessions and sent back to Legal and Technical Commission of ISA for addressing the concerns raised during such discussions and submitting these to next session for further consideration by the States Parties and stakeholders.

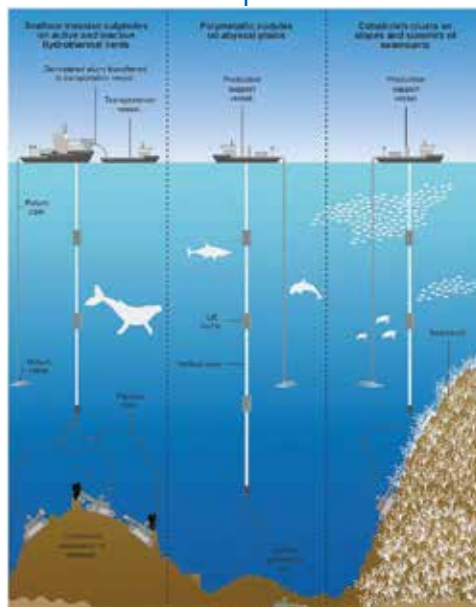
The major issues of concern are adopting a suitable financial model for realizing common heritage of mankind principle, payment mechanism, impact on land-based mining, environmental protection etc. As requested by ISA Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has developed a financial model for deep sea mining in line with ISA

is needed to avoid lasting harm to the marine environment, based on high-quality environmental impact assessments and mitigation strategies. These, in turn, must be based on comprehensive baseline studies to improve the understanding of the deep sea, which remains understudied and poorly understood, as opined by many delegations and civil society organizations.

The mining code currently under development lacks sufficient knowledge of the deep sea and a thorough assessment of environmental impacts of mining operations that are necessary to ensure effective protection of deep-sea life.

Bangladesh has been stressing the need for robust exploitation regulations reflecting international standards in line with the Agenda 2030 for sustainable Development Goals, in particular goal 14 to ensure benefits for all humankind, and requested a dedicated section on common heritage and equitable benefit-sharing. We strongly advocated for sharing of scientific knowledge, strengthening the capacity of women, increasing training opportunities for scientists from developing countries and progressing towards SDG 14. We would also like to see a compatibility between this prospective 'mining code' and prospective 'international legally binding instrument on conservation and sustainable use of marine genetic resources in the area beyond national jurisdiction, commonly known as BBNJ' as they share many common concerns and principles.

No mineral exploitation can occur until all elements of the Mining Code are finalized. Since deep sea mining would be the first of its kind, there are still many unknowns. That is why the ISA, States Parties, Stakeholders need to work prudently for finalizing a sound regulation which would encompass an environment friendly economic process benefitting all.



Extraction of deep sea minerals

Operational Activities of the United Nations and UN Funds and Programs: Major Engagements of Bangladesh

United Nations Development System Reform: Bangladesh had a busy year with the operational activities of the UN in 2018. The main activities were related to the United Nations Development System (UNDS) reforms initiated by the UN Secretary-General to make it more “Fit for Purpose” and for aligning Funds and Programs towards achieving the sustainable development goals under 2030 Agenda. Bangladesh was well-represented by the mission in all major negotiations, briefings and discussions. Bangladesh delegation represented the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group as its chair until September, 2018 and raised appropriate issues in forums including at Group-77 presenting to the reform that might affect the LDCs and Bangladesh. Mission also communicated the summary of such discussions that take place at the UN to the relevant ministries/divisions in Bangladesh regularly. Bangladesh has been included in the Strategic Advisory Group of the Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda (Joint SDG Fund) as a member which is headed by the Deputy Secretary-General.

Good Practices in **South-South and Triangular Cooperation** for Sustainable Development



United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

UN OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Funds and Programs: 2018 was also the first year of implementation of the new Strategic Plans (2018-2021) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United

Executive Boards of the Funds and Programs in 2018. Bangladesh was elected in the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UN-Women as member for 2019-2021 term and subsequently as the vice president of the Bureau of the UNICEF Executive Board for 2019.

Bangladesh’s impressive performance in improving women and children related indicators helped achieving such recognitions. As one of the leading countries in financial innovation and inclusion, Bangladesh played an important role towards publication of Blended Financing Mechanisms, issuance of Impact Shares at the New York Stock Exchange and facilitating Municipal Investment Financing initiative for SDG financing undertaken by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

Leveraging Financial Contribution:

In addition to its value-driven engagements, Bangladesh chose to enhance its financial contribution to create ground for some political leverage and validate our graduation trajectory. Accordingly, with generous support from the government, Bangladesh made substantial

enhancement in its voluntary contribution to various initiatives of the Secretary-General and to the UN Funds, Programs and specialized agencies which earned much



Panel discussion at Bangladesh Rising Conference, 12 May 2018, Harvard, Boston, USA

Nations Children Fund, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Women and other Funds and Programs. Bangladesh delegation actively participated in the First regular, Second regular and Annual sessions of the

appreciation from important quarters.

Towards Leadership Role in South-South Cooperation: With global convergence on 2030 Sustainable Development



Pannel discussion at Bangladesh Rising Conference, 12 May 2018, Harvard, Boston, USA



Bangladesh's Workshop on Public Service Innovation through South-South Network at the UNHQs, 30 November 2018

Agenda, importance of sharing successful ideas across national borders to help transform developing countries in the south has got traction during post-2015 years. After successfully leading the LDC group, the Bangladesh aspires to attain leadership position through sharing its phenomenal innovation experiences in providing better public service delivery under South-South Framework. Bangladesh for the third consecutive year participated in the Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expo-2018 held in New York where the Bangladesh delegation attended 4 panel discussions including the high-level plenary event and also organized a side event showcasing the effectiveness of the South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) platform that connects 29 countries and organizations for sharing ideas.

Mission facilitated publication of 5 good practices from Bangladesh out of total 100 best practices in the UN Office of the South-South Cooperation's publication titled "Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable

Development". It is a testimony of Bangladesh's gradual march towards a leadership role among countries of the global south. Bangladesh also participated in the GSSD-2018 preparatory consultation conference held in Cairo, Egypt during 30-31 July, 2018. The discussion in Cairo focused on the role of South-South Cooperation in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the context of the 40th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40). Bangladesh was in the panel of the political plenary where scaling-up of South-South Cooperation for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was discussed.

Steps towards sustainable graduation: Already in the process of graduation from LDC category, Bangladesh is

committed to move through the post-graduation phase successfully. With active support from the Economic Relations Division, Mission organized a workshop titled "Supporting LDCs for Smooth Transition towards Sustainable Graduation" in October, 2018 which was attended by high-level officials from UN and member states. The objective was to sensitize the UN system about incentivizing countries to sustain their invaluable achievements for graduating successfully. UNOHRRLLS, UNESCAP, Permanent Mission of Maldives and Bhutan co-sponsored the event. The event was attended by the Under-Secretary General of UN Office of the High Representative for LDCs, Landlocked States also agreed the occasion.

BANGLADESH RISING CONFERENCE:

Connecting Diaspora:

Bangladesh Mission extended its full support in holding the Non-Resident Bangladeshi Conference titled 'Bangladesh Rising' the largest of its Kind, at



Officials of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN and Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC at Bangladesh Rising Conference, 12 May 2018, Harvard, Boston, USA

Harvard Faculty Club, Boston on May, 12, 2018 which was organized by the Boston based International Sustainable Development Institute. Featuring participants from Bangladesh and USA, the purpose was to find common grounds for their involvement and working for the development of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Mission was also engaged in organizing joint events with Asia Pacific Development Effectiveness Forum (APPDEF) of UNDP, Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), UN-ESCAP and other UN entities to increase its strategic engagement and outreach.

Mission's Media outreach

Press Wing of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations (UN) in New York is upholding the image of the Mission as well as Bangladesh through its media outreach such as issuing press releases, holding press briefings, organizing press conferences and interviews, publishing booklets and other publicity materials, showcasing special success stories of Bangladesh, hosting sessions for exchange of views with journalists and so forth. Mission's Press Wing is providing

Mission's work at the UN. As a result of this endeavour, the overall quality of news has improved, which has been appreciated all around. As many as 93 press releases, 4 press conferences, one annual event of exchange of views and numerous press briefings and interviews in 2018 alone speak about the scale of media engagement and media interaction of the Mission. Another important task for the Mission's Press Wing each year is to cover the visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister during

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Bangladesh Shows Compassion

Faced with an influx of Rohingya refugees from Burma, Sheikh Hasina teaches her neighbors a lesson in sympathy.



Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina meets with a Rohingya child (left) at a Rohingya refugee camp, near the border town of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, on Sept. 12. PHOTO: AP/WIDEWORLD/GETTY IMAGES

Few people would have predicted a year ago that the face of compassion in an Asian refugee

REUTERS



SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 / 1:42 PM / 8 DAYS AGO

Exclusive: Bangladesh PM says expects no help from Trump on refugees fleeing Myanmar

Michelle Nichols

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina **Wired** speaks with a reporter during the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, U.S. September 18, 2017. REUTERS/Stephanie Keith

দৈনিক ইত্তেফাক

'বাংলাদেশের প্রতাপা মিগনদের বাস্তবতার পরিচয় দিবে'
১৫ নভেম্বর, বুধবার ১০ নভেম্বর, ২০১৭ ১১:১০:০০ বি



'বাংলাদেশ প্রতাপা করে চলমান সমস্যাটা অনুঘোষী কোনওরকম বাস্তবতার পরিচয় দিবে' মিগনদের 'কৃতী সমাজ' কৃষ্ণশক্তিভার নিউইয়র্কে জাতিসংঘে সমাজ কল্যাণ ইন্টার-পার্সোনেলি ইন্ডিয়ান (আইপিইউ)-এর পরিচয়

IPS INTER PRESS SERVICE

HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES
Q&A: An Uncertain Future Ahead for Rohingya in Bangladesh



regular press feeds about Bangladesh's engagements, roles, contributions and achievements in the UN and the issues of our interest particularly the Rohingya crisis to the embedded & accredited UN's media correspondents and journalists of international media regularly as well as to the local and mainstream Bangladeshi journalists. This is a very strong and vibrant Bangladeshi media in New York - no fewer than 19 weeklies, 20 online news portals and 4 television channels, all in Bangla and run by Bangladeshi diaspora. Mission regularly met these media representatives to enhance their understanding about the

the General Assembly high-level week in September. Hon'ble Prime Minister attends numerous important events, delivers many statements, holds many bilateral meetings with her counterparts, gives interviews to prominent media houses and attends press conference. All these events are covered and fed to different media houses back in Bangladesh and the media team of Hon'ble Prime Minister in real time. Press Wing has been doing this enormous task successfully every year in collaboration with Hon'ble Prime Minister's Press Wing. There was no exception to that at the 73rd session of UN



Bangladesh Mission's annual interactive event with journalists, 2 January 2018 at the Mission



General Assembly in 2018. During this session, Mission could organize Hon'ble Prime Minister's interview with Reuters and Voice of America. Moreover, round the year, the Press Wing has organized local and foreign media interviews with the team leaders of the high-level

relationship with UN Department of Public information (DPI), in particular with Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit and Office of the Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General. Mission's Press Wing also covered events of national

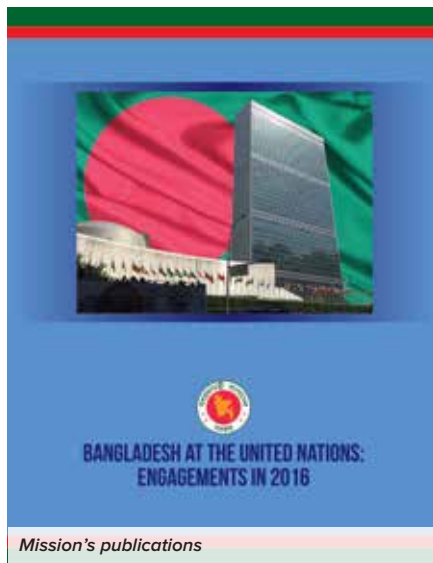


Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's press conference after attending the high-level week of 73rd UNGA, 28 September 2018, Bangabandhu Auditorium, Permanent Mission, New York

B a n g l a d e s h delegations.

The Permanent Representative also gives interviews to reputed electronic and print media as and when required. In 2018, Washington-based prestigious diplomatic magazine 'Diplomatic Connections' published one such elaborate interview. Many other print media also published several interviews of the Permanent Representative.

Throughout the year, the Press Wing maintained close



Mission's publications



জাতিসংঘে বাংলাদেশ স্থায়ী মিশন
নিউইয়র্ক, যুক্তরাষ্ট্র

interest held in neighbouring states of New York, such as Bangladesh Development Forum at Harvard University in Boston as well as joint events organized by the Permanent Mission and the Bangladesh Consulate General in New York.

Press Wing's year-long, intense and constructive engagements with the local and foreign media has created a meaningful and smooth working relationship, which

went a long way in promoting our national image.

Mission's public diplomacy engagements



Observance of International Mother Language Day 2018 at Bangabandhu Auditorium of the Mission



Observance of International Mother Language Day 2018 at UNHQs in collaboration with United Nations and other member states



Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN and Bangladesh Consulate General, New York jointly hosting a discussion meeting on the historic 7th March 2018



Celebrating the 99th Birth Anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Children's Day 2018



Observance of National Genocide Remembrance Day, 25 March 2018 at Bangabandhu Auditorium of the Mission.



Officers, staff members and family members of Permanent Mission and Consulate General in New York rendering the National Anthem in correct tune simultaneously with the rendering of the same at the Independence and National Day ceremony in Dhaka. 25 March 2018.

Mission's public diplomacy engagements



Foreign diplomats at the Independence and National Day reception 2018



Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN and Bangladesh Consulet General, New York jointly observing the 'Mujib Nagar Dibosh 2018'



Bangladesh Mission celebrating Bangla Nobobarsha 1425



Bangladesh stall at the UN International Bazaar 2018



Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN Ambassador Masud Bin Momen delivering speech at the National Mourning Day 2018 at the Mission



Performers of 'Bangladesh Development Fair' jointly hosted by Bangladesh Permanent Mission and Consulate General in New York, 9 November 2018.

Mission's public diplomacy engagements



Mission observing the 48th Victory Day at its Bangabandhu Auditorium, 16 December 2018



A delegation from US Army War College in the Mission for a briefing session, 20 April 2018



Ambassador Masud Bin Momen with the artists of a concert dedicated to the forcibly displaced Rohingyas, organised by UN Chamber Music Society, 25 June 2018, Baruch Performing Arts Center, New York



Ambassador Masud Bin Momen speaking at an event on migration hosted by Yale University at New Haven, Connecticut, 14 November 2018



Ambassador Masud Bin Momen speaking at an event on 'Rohingya Crisis and Bangladesh's Humanitarian Approach' hosted by Quinnipiac University at Hamden, Connecticut, 26 October 2018



Ambassador Masud Bin Momen making a presentation at an event 'Rise for Rohingya' hosted by New York University, 20 February 2018, New York

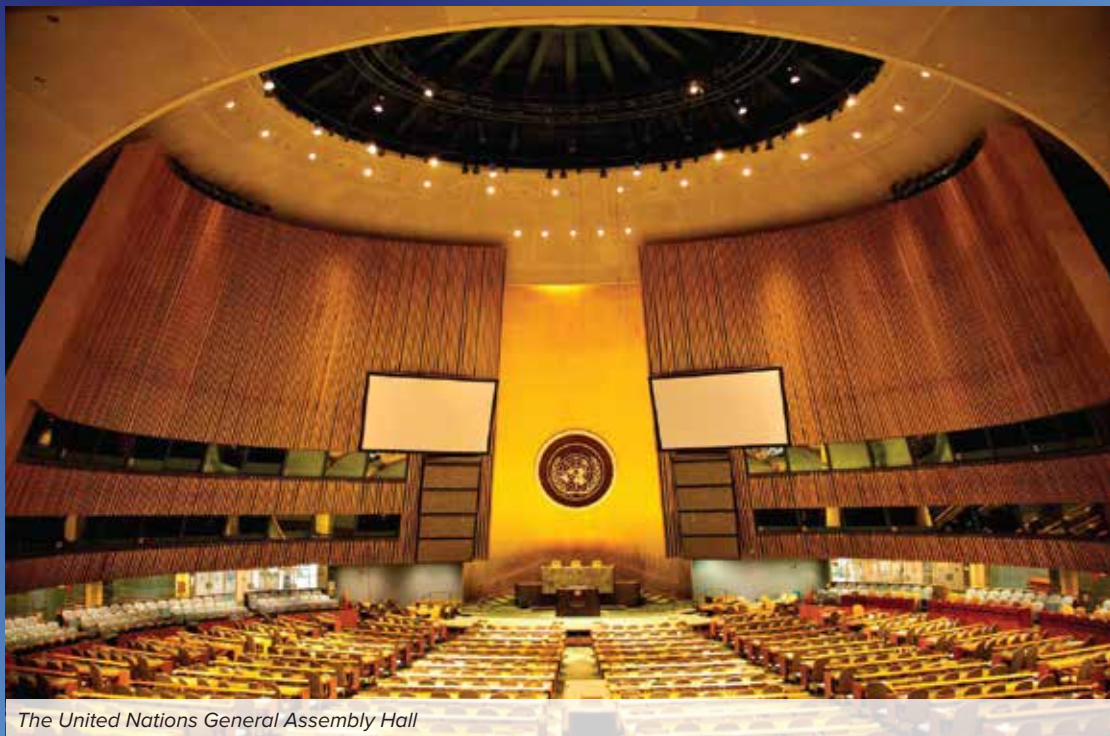
Officers and Staffs of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations, New York



From left (In the front row) 1. Nirupam Dev Nath, Counsellor 2. M. Monwar Hossain, PhD, Minister 3. Shanchita Haque, Counsellor 4. Tareq Md. Ariful Islam, Deputy Permanent Representative 5. Masud Bin Momen, Ambassador & Permanent Representative 6. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi, Minister 7. Iqbal Abdullah Harun, Minister (Economic) 8. Brig. Gen. Khan Firoz Ahmed, afwc, psc, Defence Adviser 9. Shah Asif Rahman, Counsellor 10. Md. Toufiq-Ur-Rahman, Counsellor 11. Md. Noorelahi Mina, First Secretary (Press) 12. Md. Humayun Kabir, Counsellor

From left (In the back row) 1. Md Abdur Razzak, Administrative Officer 2. Md. Didar Hossain, Assistant Consular Officer 3. Mohammad Shafiqul Islam, Personal Officer 4. Mohammed Monirul Islam, Administrative Officer 5. Md. Saifuzzaman, Personal Officer 6. Md. Rahmat Ullah, Personal Officer 7. Mohammad Shahidul Islam, Driver 8. Md. Jahangir Hossain, Administrative Officer (Acctt.) 9. Rezaul Islam, Driver 10. Gonda Raj Chakma, Office Assistance 11. Md. Kamal Hossain, Personal Officer 12. F M Shofiquzzaman, Personal Officer 13. Md. Abu Bakker, Administrative Officer 14. Md. Faruk Hossan, Administrative Officer

*Photo taken on 24 December 2018
Bangabandhu Auditorium, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations*



The United Nations General Assembly Hall



The United Nations Security Council Chamber