

Nelson Mandela Peace Summit

Statement

by

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Hon'ble Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

**Hon'ble Chair
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen.**

I thank you for convening this peace summit on the occasion of the 100th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela.

Nelson Mandela began his political life as a leader of his people to fight apartheid in South Africa. Later, with his sacrifice, dedication, compassion for people, he became the undisputed leader of the humanity. Peace, freedom, unity have been his life-long mantra.

Excellencies,

Peace is no more absence of war. Defining peace, our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman stated in this Assembly back in 1974, and I quote: "Our total commitment to peace is born of the realization that only an environment of peace would enable us to ... mobilize and concentrate all our energies and resources in combating the scourges of poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment". Unquote

The vision of Bangabandhu to establish peace has guided us all along. We believe and practice friendship to all, malice to none. We attach highest priority to peace and development. Our investment in poverty alleviation, public health, education have allowed us to ensure wellbeing of our people and reduce inequality. We have created opportunities for individuals through innovative means and thus established peace through socio-economic development.

Our peacekeepers are saving lives and ensuring peace in many parts of the world.

We are working with the international community in sustaining peace through conflict prevention, development and promotion of human rights. Bangladesh has introduced the culture of peace resolution in the UN General Assembly.

Excellencies,

The Agenda for sustainable development encompasses all aspects of human development – from hunger to inequality.

However peace continues to elude us. Conflicts remain a formidable challenge today. Human rights and fundamental freedoms, which leaders like Mandela fought for, are yet to be realized truly. People in many parts of the world suffer from hunger and malnourishment.

On the other hand, racism, populism and intolerance are on the rise. People face discrimination, forced displacement, torture and even genocide due to their ethnic and religious identity. In my own country, over one million Rohingya have taken shelter to evade atrocities in Myanmar.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Like Nelson Mandela, in 1971 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led us to liberate the Bangalee nation from the oppressors. They both spent major parts of their life in prison, fighting for the freedom of their people. Bangabandhu was sent to jail time and again for standing up for the freedom of people. While in prison he wrote diaries, which has now been published as ‘Unfinished Memoires’, and ‘Prison Diary’, recording his struggle for peace for his people.

Excellencies

As a tribute to the great leader Nelson Mandela, we are delighted to endorse the political declaration adopted by this Summit for establishing global peace.

Excellencies

To achieve our target for peaceful future, we must commit to:

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, and protect religious and ethnic minorities from discrimination and exploitation;

Fourth: Fight terrorism, through stopping the flow of financing to terrorists as well as supply of arms to the terrorists and their outfits;

Fifth: Promote and protect human rights in any circumstances and nurture culture of peace and non-violence.

Excellencies

Let me conclude by recalling Mandela, who said, “as long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, no one can rest in peace.”

Let us work together to achieve his dream.

I thank you all.

Khoda Hafez.

**Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live-forever**

