

**Opening Remarks by Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen , Ambassador and the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh , Chair of the Special Event on “Migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda” at the side-line of the Fourth Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals  
Conference Room 4 (NLB), 6.15 -7.30 pm, 18 June 2013**

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**Excellencies, distinguished panelists, ladies and gentlemen**

A very Good evening.

It is my great pleasure to convene today’s event on “**Migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda**” at the side line of the fourth session of the Open Working Group(OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals. As you are aware, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh in collaboration with International Organization of Migration has organized this very important event.

This week, we are in the midst of the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of OWG and having very stimulating and engaged discussions and reflections on population dynamics, more focused to migration. The theme “**Migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda**” parallels OWG’s ongoing discussions on population dynamics. This evening, we will have the opportunity to discuss how can migration be explicitly part of the post-2015 framework on development? If so, what would related goals or targets look like? We hope that this side event will offer an occasion to exchange views and to share insights on how migration can be included in the new UN Development Framework, including in a set of SDGs, and look forward to your active engagement.

Migration was not included in the MDG framework, despite the references in the Millennium Declaration and well-known implications of migration on most of the MDGs. However, there is no doubt that migration - a megatrend of the 21st century - will undoubtedly matter more after 2015. While we also note that migration was not reflected adequately in the recently released report of the High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, we urge for the rightful integration of migration with specific goal and /or target in the actual post-2015 development agenda. The good news is that there has been an increasing acknowledgement and recognition by different stakeholders of developmental dimension of migration and the need for including migration in shaping the post-2015 development landscape is echoed widely. "Population Dynamics " has rightfully been selected as one of the eleven thematic consultations. You all are aware that the Global Thematic Consultation on Population Dynamics was held Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 12-13 March 2013 and resulted in the "Dhaka Declaration on the Global Leadership Meeting on Population Dynamics in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda ". Again, the convening of the "High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development" on 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> October this year in UN reflects the willingness of the international community to engage more on the issue of migration.

Excellencies ,ladies and gentlemen ,

Coming from a country which has around 8 million migrants living abroad, we are fully aware of the strong linkages between migration and development. Impact of such a large migrant population on Bangladesh economy has been notable: share

of remittances in our national income has seen rapid growth over the past decade - rising from 4% of GDP in 2001 to 14% in 2012. Remittances that Bangladesh receives is actually six times of ODA received and twelve times of FDI received. We have seen that remittances also leave a noticeable pro-poor effect in Bangladesh - as 13% of remittance-receiving households were below poverty line compared to 34% for non-receiving households. Over the past few decades we have seen how temporary migration and remittances have contributed to poverty reduction, human capital formation, increased social mobility and attainment of number of social and economic development goals. Migration has also empowered women and members of their families. That is why, Bangladesh has declared overseas employment sector as a thrust sector. We have taken progressive steps to mainstream migration within the overall national development process including in the poverty reduction strategy.

There are good reasons to assume that factors like diversified demographic developments, rapid urbanization and climate change, inter alia, will have impact on the rise of migration flows in the next decades. Research has shown that there are enormous global economic gains from international migration. Even for disaster risk reduction and climatically vulnerable countries, international migration can be an adequate response. Yet, in the last couple of years changes in immigration policies of many receiving countries have restricted labour mobility. Costs for migration remain high and the conditions in which migrant workers live are frequently characterized by hazardous work environments, discrimination and insecurity.

Against this background it is most welcoming that the UN Task Team Report on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda acknowledges better managed migration as an essential enabler for inclusive social and economic development. Economic and other contributions of migrants to their sending and host countries need to be more fully harnessed in a post-2015 development framework. Despite these promising references in the UN report, increasing opportunities for labour migrants is however far from being on top of the development agenda.

The calls for going beyond aid and focusing on other means to achieve development goals are becoming stronger. Increasing access to more opportunities for those seeking to gain a livelihood abroad is one such way to promote development in addition to Official Development Assistance (ODA). We must always remember that although the link between migration and development is complex, yet, international migration does and will continue to have a significant positive impact on poverty reduction and development and which no longer afford to be ignored.

We have heard in the fourth session of the Open Working Group that many speakers have called for a paradigm shift in our approaches to view migration as natural to the human condition. We have to move towards a future where the rights of citizen and migrants are valued equally as both an enabler and indicator of sustainable development. Migrants and migration need to be recognized as agents of development, for both sending and destination countries. I would like to underscore a few points that we may reflect on as we set out to identify the migration issues and priorities in the post 2015 Development agenda:

**First,** protection of migrants' rights should be the cornerstone of our migration policies;

**Secondly,** recognize the contribution of the migrants in the development process and in this regards improve the perception of migrants in their host communities as well as in the countries of origin. It is important to promote dialogue and cooperation among countries of origin and destination;

**Thirdly,** mainstream migration in development and sectoral planning;

**Fourthly,** promote regional and global cooperation to facilitate safe, exploitation free migration and improve migration management at all levels through policy coherence and cooperation;

**Finally,** recognize new and emerging challenges that impact on migration prospects and on migrants, such as complex emergencies, environmental degradation and climate change – and this is particularly significant for small island states and low-lying coastal and deltaic states such as Bangladesh , which are confronted with massive population displacement and mobility because of these phenomena.

With these words, I would like to conclude my introductory remarks and like to introduce the distinguished panelists:

- **Mr. Gregory Maniatis**  
Senior Advisor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration and Development  
***[n.b. Mr. Maniatis will need to depart promptly following his presentation]***

- **Ambassador Michael Gerber**  
Special Representative for Global Sustainable Development Post-2015,  
Switzerland
- **Mr. Olav Kjørven**  
Assistant Secretary–General, Director, Bureau for Development Policy,  
UNDP
- **Ms. Michele Klein Solomon**  
Permanent Observer of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
to the UN
- We will listen to the distinguished panels until 6.50 pm (*to be adjusted accordingly*) and then the floor will be open for discussion and Q &A session.
- I now invite **Mr. Gregory Maniatis** , Senior Advisor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration and Development to present his remarks.

I thank Mr. Gregory Maniatis for his insightful statement. I am told that, because of other commitment, the Mr. Gregory Maniatis may wish to leave now. Once again, I thank him for making it convenient.

- Now, I give the floor to **Ambassador Michael Gerber** Special Representative for Global Sustainable Development Post-2015, Switzerland  
I thank **Ambassador Michael Gerber** for his statement.

- Now, I give the floor to Mr. Olav Kjørven ,Assistant Secretary–General, Director, Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP.  
I thank Mr. Mr. Olav Kjørven for his statement.
- Now , I have the pleasure to invite **Ms. Michele Klein Solomon**, Permanent Observer of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to the UN .  
I thank you Michele for your statement .
- **6. 50 pm : Q&A session / Open discussion**

Now I would like to open the floor for Q&A session.

Seek questions/comments from the floor

Requests panelists to respond to questions/comments as appropriate

### **7.25-7.30 pm :Concluding remarks**

We have heard the reasons, once again, from the distinguished panelists and from the interactive discussion, why it is imperative that the next-generation development agenda include migration as part of the policy mix. We have also heard that much more needs to be done, and recognize the need for partnership and shared responsibility of the sending and destination countries address existing challenges, and in protecting and empowering the migrants .

While migration presents many opportunities, migration remains a considerable governance challenge at the local, national, regional and global levels. To reap the developmental benefits of migration, comprehensive, balanced and inclusive national policies on migration is emphasized, and at the same time we need to

strengthen bilateral, regional and global partnerships on migration, based on the principles of non-discrimination, empowerment, participation and accountability.

Governments, international organizations, business, and civil society and the private sector should work together to develop adequate governance structures for migration at different levels, and the workers' and employers' groups should help to identify the gaps and needs in labor markets. It was reiterated that it is essential to protect, respect and fulfill the human rights of all migrants, reduce the social and economic costs of migration, including by facilitating the transfer of remittances and lowering the costs of such transfers.

We have to vigorously continue advocating for migration to be recognized as an essential component of any future global development framework. Migration and development are highly interdependent processes, and it would be impossible to create a sustainable development framework without taking full account of the potential of migration to assist poverty reduction.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the distinguished panelists for their thought provoking presentations and all of you who have participated in this event.

The meeting is adjourned.

I thank you all.



