

High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Address

by

Her Excellency **Sheikh Hasina**

Hon'ble Prime Minister

Government of the people's Republic of Bangladesh

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Mr. Chairman,

Assalamu Alaikum and Good Morning to you all.

I am pleased to join the inauguration of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The Rio plus 20 mandated the establishment of such a Forum to build on the “strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development”.

Sustainable development in Bangladesh is imperative for our nation’s survival, particularly due to the “climate change”. As a frontline state vulnerable to climate change, Bangladesh is in the forefront of climate discourse. A major challenge of climate change for Bangladesh is global warming. An increase of one degree Celsius in temperature would result in a meter rise in sea level submerging a fifth of its land mass. It would create over 30 million “Climate Migrants” causing turmoil in a country already densely populated. We are obliged to give emphasis on the three pillars of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - with adaptation and mitigation programs.

Our deep concerns of the challenges that we face have compelled us to remain active in the Open Working Group for SDGs. It also motivated us to submit to the United Nations a set of nationally agreed targets for the Post-2015 Development Agenda. At the moment, this august Forum is faced with two exercises, which is now approaching a crucial stage. They are the debate on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and the negotiations on a long-term climate

change framework beyond 2020. The Forum must recognize these two issues and provide visionary leadership and sincere commitment for achieving common goals for the sustenance of our world.

The Forum will also need to recognize the special needs of the LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS in realizing sustainable development goals. Most countries in these groups are lagging behind in attaining the various MDGs. Bangladesh has made notable success in some MDGs due to our efficient use of available resources, local leadership, indigenous capabilities and innovations. Our experience has been that expectations as well as commitments are equally important for sustainable development. That is why the pledged 0.7% of GNP as ODA and 0.2% of GNP as ODA for the LDCs by the developed countries as well as the transfer of technologies to the LDCs, and the other deprived groups, are so important.

The rapid pace of scientific and technological advancement is bringing dramatic socio-economic progress within states. They are also drawing states closer and making our world small, with its accompanying challenges. It is now at a stage when its future depends on the decisions we make. The abundance of natural and technological resources at our disposal today, however, offers the Forum the opportunity to make right choices in the face of the new challenges of our time. Our decisions must be aimed at ensuring the welfare of each and every human being and encompass all living species to have a sustainable world - a world that we would like to leave to our children and to the future generations.

I thank you all.