



Statement by His Excellency Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh on the occasion of commemorating the 20th anniversary of “World Summit for Social Development”

General Assembly Hall at the United Nations, 11 December 2015

Madam President,

First of all, I would like to appreciate you for convening this high level plenary meeting in a very timely manner since we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development after adoption of the 2030 sustainable agenda. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the Secretary General for his report on Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/143.

Madam President,

Bangladesh aligns itself with statement given by South Africa on behalf of Group of G-77 and China. However, I would like to share my views and my country's experience on Social Development on my national capacity.

At the World Summit for the Social Development, UN member states reached an agreement to put people at the centre of development. The Summit provided the opportunity to the world community to focus its attention at the highest political level *on the nature and the roots of social trends*. The Copenhagen declaration and program of action represents a unique consensus on three objectives of social development namely eradication of poverty, promoting full and productive employment and fostering social integration.

Madam President,

During last two decades, the world has made much progress in social sector particularly reducing poverty. But progress has been uneven across regions and within countries. Major global trends such as climate change, recurring economic, food and energy crisis, refugee movements demonstrate that----- achievement in reducing poverty, creating employment or promoting social inclusion---- can be quickly weakened or reversed by *economic shocks, natural disasters or political conflicts*. Countries are required to design and implement policies and strategies for social integration that should promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and also to address the specific needs of social groups such as young people, persons with disabilities, migrants and indigenous peoples.

Madam President,

Bangladesh stresses importance on effective enforcement of labour laws with regard to migrant workers, inter alia, those related to their remuneration, their working conditions and condition of their health, safety of work and right to freedom of their associations. We believe proper attention should be given to educate girls and women empowerment. Women, half of the total population, should be integrated in main stream economic activities.

We call for the UN system to continue to support national efforts of the member states to achieve inclusive social development in a coherent and coordinate manner. In this regard, Bangladesh underlines the fact that fulfillment of all official development assistance commitments is crucial, including the commitments by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 percent of gross national income for official development assistance to developing. In particular the least developed countries will need special attention and adequate resource flow to boost their social development.

Madam President,

Bangladesh has made commendable progress in respect of most of the social indicators in last two decades. It has sustained a GDP growth rate of 6+ percent in recent years that has played a positive role in eradicating poverty.

The robust growth has been accompanied by corresponding improvement in several social indicators such as increase in the life expectancy (which is 70.4 years in recent years) and lower fertility rate (2.3 in 2014), despite having one of the world's highest population densities. The population living below poverty line is 24.8% in 2015 which was 56.7% in 1991. In 1990, 66% children under five were under weight which came down to 33% in 2014.

Significant progress has been made increasing equitable access in education. The net enrolment ratio in Bangladesh in the primary school is 97.7 %. Bangladesh has already achieved gender parity in primary and secondary enrolment. The proportion of population using safe drinking water and improved sanitation is 98% and 56% respectively -which is the highest among the South Asian counties.

Bangladesh is known to be as the champion country in achieving MDGs which was possible due to the commitment from the highest political level. For this reason, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina received the **UN award** for her remarkable achievements in MDGs particularly in reducing child mortality rate in Bangladesh in 2010.

Madam President,

Finally, I would like to conclude my statement by urging all stake holders to renew their commitments to further advance social development by intensifying their efforts to implement Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action within the context of 2030 sustainable development agenda. We expect the role of the Commission for Social Development should be strengthened as a potential platform for following up the social dimension of the SDGs.