



BANGLADESH

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in New York at the General Debate of the 54th Session of the Commission of Social Development on Agenda item 3(a) ‘ Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world, New York 3 February 2016.

Thank you Mr. **Chair**,

1. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Thailand on behalf of G-77 and China.

At the outset let me congratulate you for being elected as the Chair of 54th Session of Commission of Social Development. This session of C soc D is important, as it is the first Functional Commission, after a successful conclusion of few landmark conferences and summits, that were held last year in 2015 namely; Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Climate Summit in Paris and Post- 2015 Summit in New York.

Mr. Chair,

2 The adoption of historic ‘**Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of action in 1995**’, put **people** for the first time at the center of development agenda. It also identified Poverty eradication, social inclusion and full employment and decent work for all ---- as the key elements for social development. Five years later, in 2000 the Millennium Declaration also reiterated the call to reduce extreme poverty and hunger.

3. In the last two decades, humankind has achieved unprecedented social progress. Poverty has declined across the world and people are healthier, more educated and better connected than ever before. Yet progress has been uneven. Social and economic inequalities persist and, in many cases, have worsened. Because of poverty, unemployment or due to their identity, certain individuals and groups confront barriers that prevent them from fully participating in economic, social and political life. In recent times world has seen the highest number of movement of peoples often escaping violence & other crisis situation. These have immense impact and has huge social cost.

4. Inclusiveness and shared prosperity have emerged as core aspirations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A central pledge of the 2030 Agenda is to leave no one behind and to see all goals and targets met for all nations, peoples and for all segments of society. This core message echoes the commitment made at the World Summit for Social Development.

Against this backdrop, I believe, the priority theme ‘Rethinking and strengthening social development in the cotemporary world’ is very timely.

Mr. Chair,

5. In paragraph 7 of the Copenhagen declaration, it was reaffirmed that, in both economic and social terms, the most productive policies and investments were those that **empowered people** to maximize their capacities, resources and opportunities. Thus it is imperative to ‘**empower people**’ to strengthen the social development. Peoples’ empowerment has been at the heart of my government’s development agenda and the resolution titled ‘**People’s Empowerment**’ was adopted by the member states by consensus. People empowerment is a model,

the brain child of our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who believes that people can face emerging challenges successfully if they are empowered.

6. We believe, we can strengthen social development by eliminating all sorts of **discrimination** and **extremism**, by including the **excluded people and vulnerable group of the society** and guaranteeing their participation in governance and by ensuring them jobs and decent living. Investment in human resources and education, for both men and women is simply a necessity to strengthen the social development.

Mr. Chair

7. Without empowering women ----- half of the total population of any country, we cannot think of strengthening social development. Women are at the forefront of our national development initiatives. Special programmes directed to female education, maternal health care services, women entrepreneurship through collateral free credits, vocational training for women, extended period of maternal leave, 10% quota for women in public service, 50 seats are reserved for women in the National Parliament, social protection for vulnerable women – to name a few, which have contributed positively in mainstreaming women into development agenda.

8. We think migrants, as vulnerable social group, should receive more attention especially in the present context migrants crisis in different parts of the world. Limited access of migrants to good education and health care, lack of political voice and migration policies often limit the opportunities available to **migrants**.

As the current Chair of Global Forum of Migration and Development (GFMD), Bangladesh urges all member states to guarantee all migrants workers the basic rights and dignity, as they contribute to the economies of both the sending countries as well as destination countries

9. Despite our many social, economic, political and environmental challenges and more importantly resource constraints, we have made substantial progress in bringing the issue of disability to the forefront. Our resolution entitled ‘Addressing the socioeconomic needs of individuals, families and societies affected by autism spectrum (ASD), developmental disorders and associated disabilities’ was adopted by member states in 2012. Moreover, the government has introduced a number of safety-net programmes for the vulnerable groups of the society such as ‘old age allowances, widow allowances, disabled allowances, disabled stipend.

Mr. Chair

10. Policy formulation and implementation at the national level are vital for strengthening social development in the contemporary world. Enhanced international cooperation is the pre-requisite for sustaining social development in developing and least developed countries. Official Development Assistance (ODA) is still the largest source of development finance for many LDCs. It is a matter of grave concern that instead of increasing, the ODA to LDCs has fallen by \$3.9 Billion in 2014, which is drop of more than 13%, according to the data published by the OECD. Without incremental and predictable ODA, it is impossible for many LDCs to achieve social development. For ensuring sustainable social development in the poorest countries, they must get duty-free quota-free market access to the global markets at easy and compliable terms, as agreed at the WTO.

As a current Chair of LDCs, Bangladesh urges all stakeholders to fulfill their commitments so that LDCs can have sufficient resources at their disposal to augment social development.

Mr. Chair,

11. As the vision, principles and goals of Social Development summit are widely reflected in the 2030Agenda. We hope that the Commission would continue to serve as a **forum** for sharing experience in promoting people-centered and inclusive development, policy coherence and integrated approach to social development within the context of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you all.

