



Remarks by Mr. Tareq Md Ariful Islam, Deputy Permanent Representative, on SG's priorities for 2020, 22 January 2020

[Mr. President]

I join others in thanking the Secretary-General for sharing his priorities for 2020. Year 2020 is of particular significance. The year would see convergence and culmination of a number of important and landmark occasions and processes, 75th Anniversary of the UN being the high point of all. So, this year is heavy on mandate. While being a challenge it can also be a wonderful opportunity to rise to the expectation of the people of the world.

In this backdrop, Secretary-General's priorities for 2020 are very important since they serve to map out where things are not going right and where member states should focus their efforts on. The priorities are aligned with the SDGs and address the challenges and realities that the UN is facing. We commend Secretary-General's emphasis on SDG implementation as this year also kicks off the Decade of Action. As we do so, we hope that the interests and challenges of developing countries including LDC graduation, emergence of new frontiers and technologies, climate challenges, would receive due attention and urgency. The mandated reviews and processes taking place this year should be able to bring some tangible outcomes.

We are happy see that the priorities the Secretary-General has outlined also find close resonance with our national priorities. We stand ready to contribute to any efforts undertaken here, in taking forward these priorities to their desired outcome.

We welcome Secretary-General's Report on the Work of the Organization which provides a good overview, grounded in reality, albeit sobering.

In the face of the emerging realities, multilateralism is our best bet and we have to prove through action. We have to restore people's trust not only in UN but also in institutions and political establishments. Communicating UN's work to the people of the world is crucial in this regard and we feel the UN can do a better job to this effect.

The report rightly focuses on making the UN more transparent and accountable for better implementation of its mandates which is the ultimate objective of the ongoing reform exercise. But this has to be complemented by a 'shift in mindset'. We wish to see that the new generation of UN country teams and the reinvigorated resident coordinator system are in a concrete way helping member states achieve the SDGs.



We also wish to see UN making tangible progress in resolving various crises and conflicts plaguing the world. This has to take place over the entire peace and security continuum embracing a whole-of-pillar approach. We are encouraged that the Rohingya crisis has not escaped the attention of the report among other conflict situations in the world. Strengthening the rule of law and accountability for human rights violations are critical enablers for conflict resolution. In this regard, UN's legal arms are to be pressed into action more. As a current member of the Human Rights Council, we expect that its mechanisms would be enjoying greater support of member states to fulfill their respective mandates.

Human displacement continues to be a global problem as it has turned out for Bangladesh, hosting 1.1 million Rohingyas forcibly displaced from Myanmar. UN's humanitarian assistance programmes are doing a tremendous service to such peoples caught in conflicts, but that should not relegate the primacy of political solution.

While the UN's development architecture has proved to be useful, it has to further shore up efforts to address development needs and challenges of developing countries. The VNR process is a useful tool and we will be happy to share our development experiences as we present our VNR this July, our second in three years. Financing for development remains a big concern for all the developing countries. To address this, all the tools and strategies that UN has come up with, have to be put to the best use with support of our development partners.

Nothing but climate change can be more existential a threat to a climate vulnerable country like Bangladesh. We need to put together our collective efforts to bring us back on track to realize the Paris Agreement. The Fourth Industrial Revolution brings about enormous opportunities, but the challenges it poses to relatively technologically constrained developing countries have also to be accounted for.

We would continue to support UN's pursuit of peace and security through our contribution to UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding with particular focus on prevention. Signs coming from UN's early warning systems need due cognizance for conflict prevention. The disarmament agenda should be allowed to make progress to compliment the development and human rights pillars. In view of the increased fatalities of UN peacekeepers, we feel it's time for the General Assembly, the most representative body, to look into the matter seriously.

We have every confidence in Secretary-General's leadership and would extend my delegation's full support to his endeavours.

I thank you.