**Press Release**

**Foreign Minister Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen calls for renewed commitment and partnership of all stakeholders in rebuilding from the pandemic.**

**New York, 07 September 2021:**

“An essential component of our recovery effort from the pandemic must involve a peaceful environment in which all of us irrespective of our caste, creed, colour, race and religion can meaningfully contribute to our re-building efforts. There is no alternative to inculcate the Culture of Peace in our efforts to build back better in the post-COVID recovery.”said His Excellency AK Abdul Momen, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh while speaking at the United Nations High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace held on 07 September 2021 at the United Nations General Assembly.

This year’s High-level Forum on the Culture of Peace focused on transformative role of the Culture of peace in promoting inclusion and resilience in the post Covid recovery. The day-long event included an inaugural session, a plenary session and a virtual panel discussion.

In his remarks, the Foreign Minister recalled Bangladesh’s pioneering role in the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Culture of Peace since 1999 and organization of the high-level forum since 2012. Apart from the Foreign Minister, the President of the General Assembly, High Representative of UN Alliance of Civilization, Chef de Cabinet of UN Secretary General and the Representative of UNESCO delivered remarks at the inaugural session.

Recognizing the need for creating an environment for peace for a resilient recovery from COVID, the Foreign Minister invited the international community to mainstream culture of peace in all pandemic recovery efforts. He underscored the strong correlation between peace and development and in this regard, called for ensuring timely implementation of Agenda 2030.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister stated that a successful pandemic recovery must involve universal vaccination. In this regard, he referred to the unfortunate manifestation of the vaccine nationalismand called the world to stand united against such vaccince inequity. “It is time for development partners to be more humane and help the deserving without discrimination. Vaccine should be a public good” he added.

Later in the afternoon, a virtual panel discussion was held in the after involving civil society organizations which was moderated by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary General and High Representative of the United Nations. The permanent representative of Bangladesh Ambassador Fatima participated in the panel discussion as one of the panelists.

While speaking at the penal discussion Ambassador Fatima stressed on eliminating digital divide and restructuring conventional education system in ensuring uninterrupted access to education by all children. Expressing her concern at the alarming rise in inequality within and among societies, she urged the global community to address inequality in a holistic manner. She also called for increased efforts including dialogue for elimination of hate speech, xenophobia and discrimination across the society for an inclusive recovery.

The United Nations High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace was convened by the President of the General Assembly, pursuant to the annual General Assembly Resolution on the ‘Declaration on The Culture of Peace and Programme of Action’ tabled by Bangladesh and adopted unanimously with overwhelming co-sponsorships. A significant number of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, Ministers, civil society organizations attended the Meeting and delivered statements.

\*\*\*