**Press Release**

**Foreign Minister presents updated information on Bangladesh’s continental shelf to the UN**

**New York, 01 March 2022:**

Foreign Minister Dr. AK Abdul Momen presented updated information on Bangladesh’s Continental Shelf in the Bay of Bengal to the UN. The presentation was made to the 21-member Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) during its 54th session. He was accompanied by Rear Admiral Md. Khurshed Alam, Secretary and Head of Maritime Affairs Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other technical experts from Bangladesh. The presentation followed the official lodgment of Bangladesh’s amended submission to the CLCS on 22 October 2020.

It may be mentioned here that the original submission for the delineation of Bangladesh’s continental shelf was submitted to the CLCS in February 2011. However, due to unresolved maritime boundary disputes with Myanmar and India, the Commission was not able to examine the submission. Subsequently, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh resolved the maritime boundaries with its neighbours through international judicial bodies.

Based on the binding verdicts of the international tribunals, the Government of Bangladesh reviewed its submission and lodged a fresh version to the Commission on 22 October 2020. In the amended submission, delimitation lines prescribed by the Tribunals were used to determine the limits of Bangladesh’s continental shelf.

Through the presentation, Bangladesh provided scientific and technical data in support of its entitlement to continental shelf beyond 200 nautical milesin the Bay of Bengal. As per rule, a sub-commission formed for this purpose will examine the data and make recommendations endorsing Bangladesh’s entitlement. This will allow Bangladesh to begin exploration of natural resources in that area.

“Bangladesh is densely populated country with scarce resources. The final recommendation of the United Nations would provide a basis for the exploration, conservation and development of living and non-living natural resources that would help ensure our sustainable development, energy needs and the prosperity of our people”-said Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen.

The Government has been working on this submission for over a decade now. Preparation of this submission has been done under over all coordination of Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the contribution of expertise and resources from Bangladesh Navy, Petrobangla, BAPEX, Geological Survey of Bangladesh, SPARRSO, and BIWTA. Bangladesh also received legal and technical support from Commonwealth Secretariat and from UN Trust Fund.

“This submission is a major achievement for our country, especially at a time when we are pursuing our long-cherished dream to become a developed country by 2041. Our ability to utilize the living and non-living resources of the ocean will determine the course of our journey in the coming days”, said Foreign Minister.

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