**Press Release**

**“Bangladesh is an example of how a country should be approaching its development and growth” -Abdullah Shahid, the President of the UN General Assembly**

**New York, 28 March, 2022:**

“Bangladesh is an example of how a country should be approaching its development and growth, whether it is in terms of economic development, education, social indicators, technology, banking, rural development or women’s empowerment. And perhaps this is the greatest tribute that the current government of Bangladesh under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is paying to Bangabandhu by implementing his vision of what he wanted for the country” said Abdullah Shahid, the President of the UN General Assembly (PGA).

He was speaking at the reception hosted by the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to celebrate the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh. The event was attended by more than 100 Permanent Representatives & Ambassador, high officials of the UN Secretariat and other dignitaries.

Paying rich tribute to the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the PGA said, “for all those amongst us today who have not had a chance of knowing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, my request to you would be to read his speech of 7th March 1971, which today has been included in the Memory of the World International Register at the UNESCO”.In this regard, he recalled Bangabandhu’s unwavering belief in democracy, passion for social justice, cultural inclusivity and identity that led to the liberation of Bangladesh.

He lauded Bangladesh’s contribution to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, which led to the UN’s recognition of 21st February as the International Mother Language Day. He recalled Bangabandhu’s leadership in this regard, which has culminated in placing this issue so high in international agenda.

He said, “Today, Bangladesh is a vibrant multi-party democracy, with a rising economy”. The UN General Assembly’s recommendation to graduate Bangladesh from the LDC category last year is a testament to Bangladesh’s sustained socio-economic development despite the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. He commended Bangladesh’s continued investment in people, especially for the empowerment of women.

He closed his remarks by pronouncing Bangladesh’s national slogan: “Joi Bangla”.

In her welcome speech, the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Ambassador Rabab Fatima highlighted Bangladesh's long struggle for independence under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Referring to Bangabandhu’s famous foreign policy dictum “Friendship to all and malice towards none” she said, “Our abiding faith to multilateralism comes from this very ideology”. “The great ideology which has been enshrined in the UN Charter is the ideology of the people of Bangladesh”*,* she stressed, citing from Bangabandhu’s maiden speech in the UN General Assembly in 1974.

“That legacy lives on even today. In the UN, we lend our voice and leadership to all those issues that aim at building an inclusive and equal global society. Our leadership in peacekeeping and peacebuilding issues, culture of peace, and our calls for global peace and stability, vaccines equality, eliminating the digital divide, promoting climate action and justice, migration issues and the rights of migrants, or working towards establishing gender equality and the rights of children–are manifestations of our commitment as a responsible member of the UN” she added. In this regard, she underscored Bangladesh’s bold decision to respond to the call of humanity and give shelter to over 1 million Rohingyas fleeing Myanmar in the face of mass atrocities.

Reflecting on the transformative changes and socio-economic achievements of Bangladesh during its 51-year journey as an independent nation, she said, “Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is leading this journey from the front”. Under her leadership, the country is on track to becoming a developed country by 2041.

She concluded her remarks by reiterating Bangladesh’s commitment to uphold multilateralism and make value-driven contribution to all important UN discourses.

This is the first in-person reception at the Bangabandhu Auditorium of the Mission after a long hiatus of two years due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The guests were treated with traditional Bangladeshi cuisine.

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