



জাতিসংঘে বাংলাদেশ স্থায়ী মিশন, নিউ ইয়র্ক  
Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the  
United Nations, New York



## Press Release

Let us build together an inclusive world for persons with autism: Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen at the UN

**New York, 03 April 2023:**

“We reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that 75 million people in the world who live with autism can make the most of their talents and participate fully in our societies. I urge all to work together to come up with innovative solutions to better integrate individuals with disabilities into the community and leave no one behind”- Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen made this call while speaking today at a high-level event titled “World Autism Awareness Day 2023: Inclusion for health through the life course” which was jointly organized by the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh, Qatar, World Health Organization and UNICEF at the United Nations Headquarters. Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar and Ambassador Muhammad A Muhith, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh delivered the welcome remarks.

In his keynote speech, Foreign Secretary Momen said that Bangladesh has seen tremendous increase in awareness on autism in the past decade, thanks to Saima Wazed, Chairperson of Bangladesh National Advisory Committee on Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, who was the inspiration behind these efforts. He highlighted the various initiatives of the Government of Bangladesh which includes, among others, enactment of Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013; Neuro-development Trust Act 2013; establishment of more than 100 Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorder centers and introduction of capacity building trainings for caregivers. “Simultaneously, with our national efforts, we had been advocating the issue at the UN, including through adopting UNGA resolution, and co-hosting the “World Autism Awareness Day” every year since its launching in 2007. We also made specific commitments in the Second Global Disability Summit 2022 to address the challenges Autistic persons face while receiving education and healthcare”, he further added.

In his welcome remarks, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh Muhammad A Muhith referred to various challenges that children with developmental disabilities face in accessing healthcare services, education and opportunities for social participation and underscored the importance of introduction of early interventions, Inclusive education, creative expressions, artificial intelligence enabled personalized assistive technology to better integrate individuals with disabilities into the community and leave no one behind.

Moderated by Mr Werner Obermeyer, Director, WHO, the event was attended by a significant number of Permanent Representatives, UN high officials, civil society representatives and media personalities.

In addition to that Foreign Secretary Momen had bilateral meetings with Under Secretary General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary A. Dicarolo, Executive Director of the UN Women Sima Sami Bahous, and Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General, Department of Political Affairs. He also had a bilateral meeting with the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations Björn Olof Skoog. During these meetings, Foreign Secretary briefed them about the developments concerning upcoming general election of Bangladesh, current situations in the Rohingya camps and Bangladesh’s partnership with the UN in various socio-economic sector. Foreign Secretary sought the support of the UN in the early repatriation of the Rohingyas to their homeland Myanmar in a voluntary, safe and dignified manner. The counterparts assured the Foreign Secretary of their understanding and commitment for continued partnership with Bangladesh.

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