

# Contemporary Development Debate: Bangladesh in the Global Context



**Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)**

1/46 Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000





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# **Contemporary Development Debate: Bangladesh in the Global Context**

**PROCEEDINGS**



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## Acknowledgement

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) organised a seminar on “Contemporary Development Debate: Bangladesh in the Global Context” on 05 February 2014 at BIISS Auditorium, Dhaka. Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP, Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was present as the Chief Guest at the seminar. As the Chief Executive of this Institute, I express my sincerest gratitude to the honourable State Minister Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP for gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest with substantive remarks, and kindly participating in the first working session.

Keeping in mind the vigour of this important subject and its implications to our foreign policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially Mr Md Shahidul Haque, the Foreign Secretary took the initiative, discussed with us and outlined the agenda and possible issues of the seminar. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided us all necessary guidance and cooperation to organise this seminar. I would like to thank the Foreign Secretary for extending all support and moderating a working session.

The programme brought a large number of senior officials from government agencies including Ministry of Foreign Affairs, members from diplomatic corps, high officials from important development partners, former ambassadors academia, civil society and diplomatic correspondents.

I would like to thank very distinguished session moderators, keynote presenters and discussants. I would like to extend my special appreciation to Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Chairman, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF); Mr Mesbah ul Alam, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Government of Bangladesh; Professor Dr Shamsul Alam, Member, General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission; Mr Neal Walker, UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh; Ms Sarah Cooke, DFID Country Representative to Bangladesh; Dr Ainun Nishat, Vice-Chancellor, BRAC University; Mr Md Ashadul Islam, Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Government of Bangladesh; Ms Saida Muna Tasneem, Director General (UN) and Mr M Riaz Hamidullah, Director General (Economic Affairs), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh; and Professor Dr Mustafizur Rahman, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue for their time and effort to make the seminar a success.

I also thank Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad, Chairman, Board of Governors of BIISS and distinguished audience for their remarks in open discussion. I am thankful to Dr Mahfuz Kabir for discussion and seminar coordination, Major Borhan Uddin Mahmud for administrative support, and all other officers and employees of BIISS for their whole-hearted effort.

This publication is an endeavour to present the narrative of addresses in the inaugural session; valuable presentation and discussion by distinguished scholars, high officials of Government of Bangladesh and development partners, and questions, comments and recommendations by the audience during the working sessions. I am quite sanguine that this proceedings will be a useful reading and reference material on the subject matter.

**Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, ndu, psc**  
Director General





## Contemporary Development Debate: Bangladesh in the Global Context

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) organised a seminar on “Contemporary Development Debate: Bangladesh in the Global Context” on 05 February 2014 at BIISS Auditorium, Dhaka. Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP, Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was present as the Chief Guest at the seminar. Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, ndu, psc, Director General of BIISS delivered the Address of Welcome. Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad, Chairman, Board of Governors of BIISS concluded the inaugural session.

### Inaugural Session

In his Welcome Address, **Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, ndu, psc**, Director General, BIISS, said that Bangladesh government has aimed to achieve the status of Middle-Income Country as per its overarching ‘Vision 2021’. It has been reiterated in the election manifesto 2014 of the present government. Economic and social indicators described in the ‘Vision’ are closely associated with the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, the time frame of achieving most of the Goals will end in 2015. The world is now heading towards grasping new development targets for the post-2015. Since 2000, when the United Nations endorsed the Millennium Declaration after its millennium summit, these targets have become milestones



in national and global development efforts. The frameworks have helped the member countries galvanise development initiatives and guide global and national development priorities. Hence, further efforts and a strong global partnership are needed to accelerate the pace of current development targets and formulate a new set of goals for the post-2015 era. The world leaders met at Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June 2012 at ‘Rio+20 Summit’ where they endorsed an outcome document named ‘Our Common Future’. The document is very much significant from Bangladesh perspective too. And Bangladesh needs to work hard in order to endorse a concrete policy to achieve the sustainable development goals as well as the current MDGs. Simultaneously, Bangladesh needs to make sure that the development aspirations are fulfilled and climate change issues are also addressed properly in the emerging perspectives within and the architecture of post-2015 development agenda.



Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed expressed his gratitude to the State Minister Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP for gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest. He thanked Mr Md Shahidul Haque, the Foreign Secretary and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for extending support and cooperation in organising the seminar. He also expressed his deep gratitude to the distinguished personalities, scholars, session moderators, keynote speakers and discussants for participating in the seminar.

**Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP**, in his address as the Chief Guest, recalled that in 1999, the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina joined the world leaders in adopting the landmark Millennium Declaration at the UN. Subsequently, she and her government pledged to fit the MDGs into Bangladesh's national planning processes. The government did move mobilising its own resources and capabilities. After a decade, as the world recognises Bangladesh's phenomenal success in early attainment of some of the key MDGs, much of it is attributed to the government's commitment and early actions. In 2008, as Bangladesh Awami League returned to the government, in the "Vision 2021" document, it focussed on attainment of those global Goals. And, the government related



the MDGs to the country's national aspirations and changes, trends and perspectives. He noted that Bangladesh is around 700 days away from completion timeline of the MDGs. While the country has fared well in terms of most of the MDG targets and indicators, the global scenario *vis-à-vis* many MDG targets may not give enough to become complacent. Some of the populous and climatically vulnerable regions lag behind on a number of targets. He noted that *'the strength of an organisation is the weakest link in the chain'*. Transposing that at the global scenario, one would note that the global efforts are inevitably tied to its 'weakest and crucial link', that is, inadequate funding. In a broader sense, what MDG 8 captured as 'global partnership' or 'means of implementation'.

By now, it is widely recognised that resources for attainment of the MDGs were inadequate in the developing world. It was particularly evident in the LDCs, much of Africa, SIDS. Midway through last decade, as the world faced challenging and often uncertain period, especially in the wake of Triple F (*Food-Fuel-Finance*) crisis, how the efforts of much of the developing world got constrained has been explained. In fact, much of their precious development gains got wiped out. Millions even fell below the poverty threshold again, especially in Africa and the Asia-Pacific. Hence, within the emerging development architecture, the new set of Goals and corresponding Targets must have clear and robust support mechanism. And, also there is a need for an enabling environment at the global level. The global scenario has undergone considerable change over the past decade in respect of ODA and also flow of trade in goods, investment, technology; and remittances. Therefore, in the knowledge-driven contemporary world, as much as finance, 'technology' needs to be recognised as an enabler for all countries, for all people.

The debate on SDGs is intensifying in New York, where the Member States, UN entities, CSOs, private sector, all are engaged intensely. Countries, individually or along wider interest group formations, are advancing ideas or pursuing specific sector as possible SDGs. Clearly, the process and discussions are becoming much more complex and difficult to predict, unlike the MDG



process. One reason is that while the MDGs were for the developing countries only, SDGs will be for everyone. At the same time, over the past decades, much broader transformation has taken place or, are in sight within and among countries, from Latin America to the Asia-Pacific. Therefore, the developed and developing countries have much higher interests at stake in the way the Goals emerge. Also, this time round, countries like Bangladesh want that the Goals should be framed based on values and principles like equity, inclusion, common but differentiated responsibility, respective capacities, etc. In fact, before the global process began, Bangladesh undertook broader, national consultations and developed her own perspective on post-2015. By the middle of last year, the country submitted a set of indicative goals, targets and indicators as well to the UN. At the same time, Bangladesh also engaged with the global consultative processes.

Given the spread of the exercise and the intricacies, Bangladesh is deeply engaged within traditional group formations, like LDCs (G77), as also within groups of countries with specific interest. Both the evolving 'substance' and the 'process' appears crucial. The areas that are of particular interest to Bangladesh include, for instance, population dynamics and water. The country's approach is determined taking into account a balanced view of its broader national orientation, interests, long-term growth and development perspectives and evolving regional dimensions. Bangladesh recognises that the region around is transforming, rather fast: courtesy SAFTA, in the next few years, robust regional trade in goods and services is expected; courtesy ASEAN, by 2015, up to Myanmar, ASEAN would move towards a seamless economic space; courtesy RCEP, under ESCAP, Asia-Pacific regional economic integration is moving to a next level with considerable visible opening up of the region from North Asia up to South Asia and beyond. BCIM is likely to shape up as a prospective production-distribution-transportation hub in between.

The world beyond 2015 would be much more complex and uncertain, yet enabled to tap so much of potentials. South Asia or the region beyond is expected to unlock and emerge much more than what is known over the decades. Increased connectivity in so many forms and a youthful population, for instance, hold promises for a climate-vulnerable country like Bangladesh as well. It would also be useful for Bangladesh to take note of the fact that mid-way through the implementation timeline of the SDGs, the country is expected to emerge as a Middle Income Country as well. That should make the country's national preparations much more dynamic, flexible and visionary.

**Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad**, Chairman, Board of Governors, BISS, noted that as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) deadline approaches, the post-2015 development agenda is generating increasing enthusiasm among the policy makers and other stakeholders. Since the adoption of the MDGs by the UN in the year 2000, people of Bangladesh have achieved commendable success in efforts to pursue these goals. Targeted policies and proactive programmes of the government, supplemented by private sector and NGO efforts, generated enthusiastic and effective participation of the target groups, resulting in this success. Bangladesh has been widely acclaimed for her success towards achieving the MDGs in areas of reducing poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality and empowerment of women, child mortality, maternal health, combating and preventing spread of HIV/AIDS and other endemic diseases and immunisation. In spite of severe limitations, the country



is also making serious efforts at achieving environmental sustainability through addressing mitigation and adaptation issues. It is making its best efforts to enhance cooperation with the development partners in all these areas.

The Rio+20 is another milestone for environmental sustainability. Although the summit did



not produce any breakthrough agreements or commitments, it succeeded in focusing attention on and prioritising global sustainable development goals on the international agenda. It has garnered further support for the concepts of “common but differentiated responsibility” and “providing opportunities for all citizens and all countries”. The need for creating an international fund to promote a worldwide “Green Economy” has also been further emphasised. The world after 2015 will be largely different from what it was at the turn of the millennium. For example, the global population is projected to rise by another two billion to nine billion by 2050. And this will lead to depletion of the world’s resources more than anything else.

Issues such as increasing inequality and a changing poverty landscape, human mobility and migration, insecurity and social exclusion, climate change, degradation of the environment and consequent challenges to sustainability of development require a comprehensive approach to the post-2015 framework. For that approach to be successful, it must take into account efficient integration of all aspects of population dynamics into policy, operation and implementation. Successor to MDGs must be able to address upon good governance, strengthening the accountability and transparency of institutions, empowering people through ensuring greater and comprehensive human security.





## Working Session I

### Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and Bangladesh: Achievements Made, Challenges Faced and Remaining Tasks

The Working Session I titled “Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and Bangladesh: Achievements Made, Challenges Faced and Remaining Tasks” was moderated by Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad, Chairman, Board of Governors of BIIS. Professor Dr Shamsul Alam, Member, General Economics Division of Bangladesh Planning Commission made a presentation, while Mr Ashadul Islam, Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division and Ms Saida Muna Tasneem, Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke as designated discussants in the session.



**Professor Dr Shamsul Alam**, Member General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission, in his keynote presentation, outlined Bangladesh’s achievement and success in meeting the MDGs and Bangladesh’s proposal on the post-2015 development agenda. In the beginning of his presentation, he provided a brief background of the millennium declaration and MDGs, noting that in the year of 2000, leaders from 189 countries met in the historic Millennium Summit in New York and agreed the United Nations Millennium Declaration based on the UN global conferences of the 1990s. He mentioned that the MDGs reflect a set of actions and targets that was adopted by 193 nations in 2002 based on the Millennium Declaration. He added that a framework of 8 goals, 18

targets and 48 indicators were set to measure progress towards the MDGs over the period from 1990 to 2015. However, from January 2008, 21 targets were reset and 60 indicators have been used to monitor the MDGs progress. Quoting the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, he viewed the MDGs as the most successful global anti-poverty push in history.

Dr Alam spoke quite a bit on the status of MDGs in Bangladesh. He informed the audience that Bangladesh has already met some targets of MDGs like reducing poverty gap ratio, attaining gender parity at primary and secondary levels education, under-five mortality rate reduction, prevalence of malaria, containing HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs, children under five sleeping under insecticide treated bed nets, detection and cure rate of TB under DOTS etc. He noted that out of 8 MDGs Bangladesh has achieved the major targets of Goal-1, Goal-3, Goal-4 and Goal-6.



He elaborated that Bangladesh has impressive achievement in attaining Goal-5 (improve maternal health) but could not fulfill the targets yet. He told that although Bangladesh is on track to achieve the net enrolment target, the drop-out rates remain high. Besides, enrolling the last 10 per cent of the children, ensuring quality of education for children who are already enrolled in schools, and promoting gender equity in tertiary education, remain as major challenges. He, however, expressed concern that the threat of climate change can diminish the hard earned beneficial impacts of years of growth and development. He suggested that while Bangladesh has been convincingly moving towards achieving most of the goals, some of the goals will need more time to be achieved. To sum up Bangladesh's status in MDGs, he mentioned that out of 60 indicators 34 indicators have specific figures to attain by 2015 against which Bangladesh already attained the figures in 9 indicators, 11 indicators are on track and expected to be achieved by 2015.

Professor Dr Alam reviewed the goals and major targets of the MDGs at a glance. While discussing Bangladesh's achievement in meeting each of the MDGs, he mentioned that Bangladesh already achieved one target (poverty gap ratio) among the six indicators of the Goal 1 and other two targets (proportion of people below national upper poverty line and prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age (6-59 months)) are on the track. Among the three indicators of Goal 2, only one (net enrolment ratio in primary education) is on track. For Goal 3, two of the five indicators (ratio of girls to boys in primary education and ratio of girls to boys in secondary education) have been achieved already and remaining three targets are not likely to be achieved by 2015. All the targets of Goal 4 are well achieved one (under-five (6-59 months) mortality rate (per 1000 live births)) being already met and other two (infant (0-1 year) mortality rate (per 1000 live births) and proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles) being on track. He informed that most of the indicators of Goal 5 need attention, only two (maternal mortality ratio and contraceptive prevalence rate) are on track. He noted that Goal 6 is a well achieved one; five of the nine indicators (prevalence of malaria per 100,000 population, deaths of malaria per 100,000 population, proportion of children U5 sleeping under insecticide treated bed nets, detection rate of TB under DOTS, and cure rate of TB under DOTS) are already met and two others are on track. He also informed the audience that Bangladesh made least progress in the Goal 7 (environmental sustainability) and Goal 8 (global partnership for development); most of the indicators of these goals will not be achieved by 2015.

Dr Alam also discussed the felicitation of Bangladesh's MDG achievements by the international reports and other international recognitions. He mentioned that The World Development Report-2013 described Bangladesh as one of the few countries that did commendable progress in both human development targets and economic growth. The Human Development Report-2013, UNDP considered "Bangladesh [as] among the 18 countries of the world that have made substantial progress in achieving MDGs". He mentioned that as recognition of MDG achievement Bangladesh was granted awards. For example Hon'ble Prime Minister was awarded with 'UN MDG Awards 2010' for Bangladesh's success in reducing under five child mortality rate (MDG-3); South-South Award 'Digital Health for Digital Development' in 2011 for innovative idea to use the Information and Communication Technology for progress of the health of women and children; 'Diploma Award' in June 2013 from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), for its achievement in the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG-1); and South-South Award once again in September 2013 in the 68<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly.



Dr Alam touched upon the unfinished agenda of Bangladesh as identified by The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013, which will require few more years to achieve. These are: too many children are still denied their right to primary education; environmental sustainability is under severe threat, demanding a new level of global cooperation; most maternal deaths are preventable, but progress in this area is falling short; gains in sanitation are impressive — but not good enough; rural-urban gaps persist — access to reproductive health services and to clean drinking water; and the poorest children are most likely to be out of schools. He expressed concern that less than 700 days remain and Bangladesh is getting closer to the terminal year of MDG which is 2015.

In the final part of his presentation, he noted that the GED prepared post 2015 development agenda. He informed that GED of the Planning Commission comes up with proposed 11 goals along with 58 targets with corresponding 241 measurable indicators in P2015DA, after having several national and sub-national consultations. He noted that in this proposed P2015DA emphasis has been given, particularly, on population, poverty reduction, inequality, nutrition, education, employment, health, gender equality, governance, sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and development partnership. He told that Bangladesh's proposal on post 2015 development agenda has already been sent to the UN on 6 June 2013. Very few countries have proposed their agenda in due time. He finally mentioned the 11 goals proposed by GED including: Goal 1: Unleash human potentials for sustainable development; Goal 2: Eradicate poverty and reduce inequality; Goal 3: Ensure sustainable food security and nutrition for all; Goal 4: Universal access to health and family planning services; Goal 5: Achieve gender equality; Goal 6: Ensure quality education and skills for all; Goal 7: Increase employment opportunities and ensure worker rights; Goal 8: Ensure good governance; Goal 9: Promote sustainable production and consumption; Goal 10: Ensure environmental sustainability and disaster management; and Goal 11: Strengthen international cooperation and partnership for sustainable development.



In his designated discussion, **Mr Md Ashadul Islam**, Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Government of Bangladesh talked about the strength of the presented paper and added his perspectives on Bangladesh's achievement, challenges and unfinished businesses in terms of meeting the MDGs. He said that the paper was well written by the member of GED who steered the whole process of tracking down the achievement of MDGs consultation and preparation for the post-MDG proposal. He had very few comments on the content of the paper as it addressed most of the issues related to progress, challenges, and remaining tasks on the part of Bangladesh. He focused on the unfinished businesses of MDG, and talked about the issue of resource gap which is

hindering the process. He said that the time is approaching. Bangladesh can try to identify the pockets where MDGs are falling behind. And based on that, the country can take intensive effort to reduce achievement gap. Many of the key persons involved in managing the services of MDGs particularly in the areas of primary education and women empowerment, primary health care, that is, sanitation are not adequately aware of the MDG timelines. He emphasised on the necessity of vigorous and extra effort in terms of undertaking projects or programmes and close monitoring to narrow down the achievement gap. He also noted that by increasing cooperation



with development partners particularly UN system agencies and coordination among the partners and implementing ministries, progress in meeting MDGs can be further enhanced. He informed that Bangladesh has already submitted its proposal for post-2015 development goals. He urged to increase coordination among the implementing bodies in order to ensure Bangladesh's effective engagement with the global process of finalisation of post-2015 development agenda, which is very diverse and complex.



The other designated discussant, **Ms Saida Muna Tasneem**, Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, focused on why Bangladesh was successful in meeting many of MDGs which she thought would set tone for why Bangladesh should continue to be successful in post-MDG development goals. She considered, referring to 2013 UN Human Development Report, that innovation in social policy was one of the key factors behind Bangladesh's success in MDGs. She noted that in the 68<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, Bangladesh's Honourable Prime Minister was very active and participated in four of the five high level dialogues particularly on MDGs, on post-2015 sustainable development high level forum and so on. Bangladesh was invited, as

Ms Tasneem informed, because the development community, the United Nations, the International Civil Society, the Global Compact, everybody identified Bangladesh as a role model in achieving MDG targets. That is why they are focusing and targeting how this country thinks about the post-2015 development agenda. She mentioned that Human Development Report has identified three reasons behind Bangladesh's success in MDGs: (i) innovation in social policy, (ii) political commitment and (iii) focus on women empowerment. She considered that Bangladesh's focus on the women who comprise 50 per cent of the total population, strong political commitment which has a very core planning and budgeting as well as innovation in social policy that included private sector led economic growth, these all supported and supplemented the success in MDGs as well as high economic growth in the country.

Ms Tasneem also discussed the gaps in the MDG achievement by Bangladesh. She mentioned that Bangladesh needs to focus on nutrition and hunger factors, reduce school dropouts, increase women participation in tertiary education, enhance credit facility and entrepreneurial opportunity for women and create employment for people by augmenting industrialisation in manufacturing and services sectors and so on. One key challenge for maintaining sustainable economic growth for Bangladesh is the lack of sustainable energy resources. Sustainable financing that is how to finance sustainable development is another area which requires attention. This can be attained by innovative partnership between the private and the public sectors as well as charity and other different kinds of sources. Therefore, as she emphasised, the entire community needs to engage, not only government, not only the United Nations. She thanked the development partners who have placed Bangladesh among the top 10 country programmes in the world, though only a handful partners were able to fulfil their ODA commitments. She stressed that Bangladesh needs investment more and more from the global private sector if innovation in social policy is to be supported by private sector led investments. She suggested that Bangladesh has to combine both investment and innovation in social policy in the post-2015 period. She emphasised on the



necessity of political stability, projection of secular national image, inclusive development vision by incorporating left behind women, bottom 50, disabled, ethnic minorities, religious minorities, slum dwellers and urban poor. She finally stressed upon democracy, human rights and fighting corruption. She believed that Bangladesh would continue to succeed in the post-2015 period.

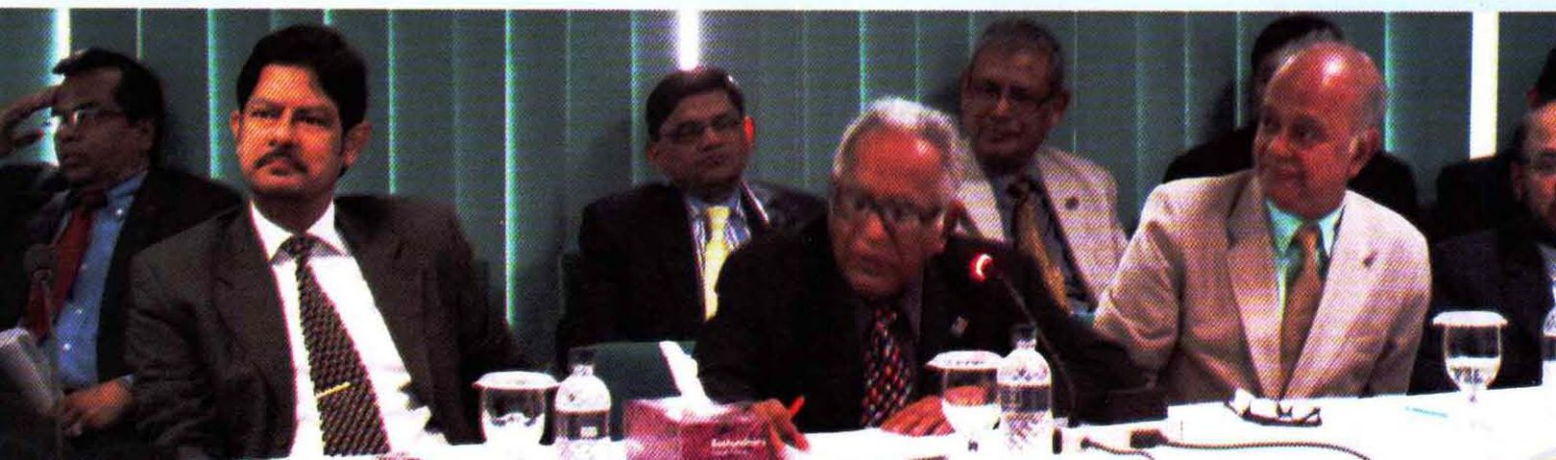
## Open Discussion

**Dr M Enamul Haq**, former IGP and Member, Law Commission, and currently visiting professor at United Nations University thanked the presenter for successfully bringing many issues in a very brief presentation. He asked for elucidation on Professor Alam's point that the donors very cleverly avoided their commitment for ODA. He also asked whether the demand of the donors for waiver of their ODA commitment is only applicable for Bangladesh case or it is true for other developing countries.

**Mr Tarik Ahasan**, DG (IO), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, asked two questions to the presenter and the discussants. His first question was about methodology of determining of the achievement of the MDGs. He mentioned that the presenter has outlined the achievements of different indicators of Goals 1, 2, 4, and 6. He asked the question whether it is necessary to achieve all the indicators to claim that the Goals are achieved. His second question was about the impact of the downward GDP growth on the prospect of achieving the MDGs by Bangladesh in the coming days.

**Dr Momtaz Uddin Ahmed**, Professor of Economics, University of Dhaka, said that the presentations of the seminar could have included representations from the civil society in order to reflect upon the non-governmental perspective on Bangladesh's MDG performances. He opined that civil society was not adequately represented in the overall process of formulating the MDGs as the goals were set by the governments not the civil society. He considered the post-2015 period as a bit challenging and expressed his desire to hear a good presentation on post-2015 development agenda in the coming sessions.

**Ambassador Ashfaqur Rahman** said that there is strong commitment by the current government and the previous government for the MDGs, but international community has a clear gap in their commitment for ODA. He expressed his concern on the future funding commitments. He asked whether there is any international organisation other than the UN such as the EU and the United States who can give real push to the political commitment of the international community. He said that it is a globalised world and in globalisation political commitment by international community is essential for endeavours like the MDGs.





**Dr Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed**, PKSF, noted that from the presentation it is reflected that Bangladesh could not achieve Goal 7 which is environmental sustainability up to the mark. He raised the question whether Bangladesh is achieving other goals by dint of the consideration of environmental sustainability. He also asked that in the post-2015 period whether it is possible to attain sustainable development goals without the donors' funding, as it is reflected that donors were reluctant to finance the MDGs. His question also included whether it is practical to achieve other SDGs by considering environmental perspective.

**Mr Suhel Ahmed Chowdhury**, Former Commerce Secretary, said that the ODA commitment of 0.7% is a more than 30 years old issue. He asked whether there is anybody who is monitoring that goal. He opined that despite three decade of negotiation and several UN conferences, ODA commitment of 0.7 per cent is yet to see satisfactory progress. There must have a certain kind of mechanism to monitor the progress.

**Mr Nazmul Arifeen**, Research Officer of BISS said that one of the major criticisms of the MDGs is that it neglects the poorest and most vulnerable, since the goals are based on average progress at a national or global level. In measuring progress, there is a risk that some people will fall through the net. In some countries MDG progress looks impressive, while the situation for the very poorest is actually getting worse. His questions were: how the post-MDG goals are going to address this shortcoming? What kind of measures do you suggest to ensure that goals are implemented so that the very poorest receive the utmost benefit?

In response to the questions and comments, **Dr Shamsul Alam**, about ODA assistance, said that for other goals there are definite indicators to measure the progress, but the goal 8 was kept very open. Not all the countries have deviated from the promises; Nordic countries played a very commendable role. But largely ODA commitments were not fulfilled. It is more general not just for Bangladesh. Africa got the most attention. For Bangladesh, it has achieved its successes mostly utilising domestic sources, which is very praiseworthy. He said that Bangladesh needed US\$500 Billion every year to meet the targets while it received only US\$ 200 Billion ODA. In post-2015, responsibility will fall to everyone, both developing and developed.

On methodology, he said that goals are full of aspirations, nothing to measure. There are few targets for each goal and for all indicators there are no measurements, only qualitative statements are available. Largely it can be said that indicators are measured when they are measurable and verifiable. GED produces MDG progress reports every year. The next one will be coming at the end of this year. On the impact of GDP growth on the attainment of MDGs, he said that Bangladesh growth is impressive. Bangladesh attained a 6.2 per cent growth in the last year while developing countries average was 5.3 per cent, India has only 4.5 per cent and Pakistan has only 3 per cent GDP growth. He hoped that in the coming five year plan careful consideration will be given on how much is needed in what sectors.

On Ambassador Ashfaq's question, he agreed that there should be a real push to the political commitment of the international community. On the question on environmental sustainability, he said that it is not only Bangladesh but the entire world is falling behind to meet the Goal 7. In the post-2015 development agenda, as Rio+20 also emphasised, environmental sustainability will



get a big attention. Post-2015 will be two-way cooperation, not one-way traffic like the MDGs. Developed countries and big developing countries have big role to play in cutting the emissions. We could not achieve satisfactorily in the Goal 7 but it is not less important. It will be given highest priority in the post-MDG period.

On the last question he said that blames cannot be given to the MDGs that it ignores hard core poor. In Goal 1 there is one indicator specifically saying the percentage of people living below the minimum dietary condition should be reduced to 14 per cent by 2015. There is a clear indicator to measure the success the MDGs in reaching out the hard core poor.

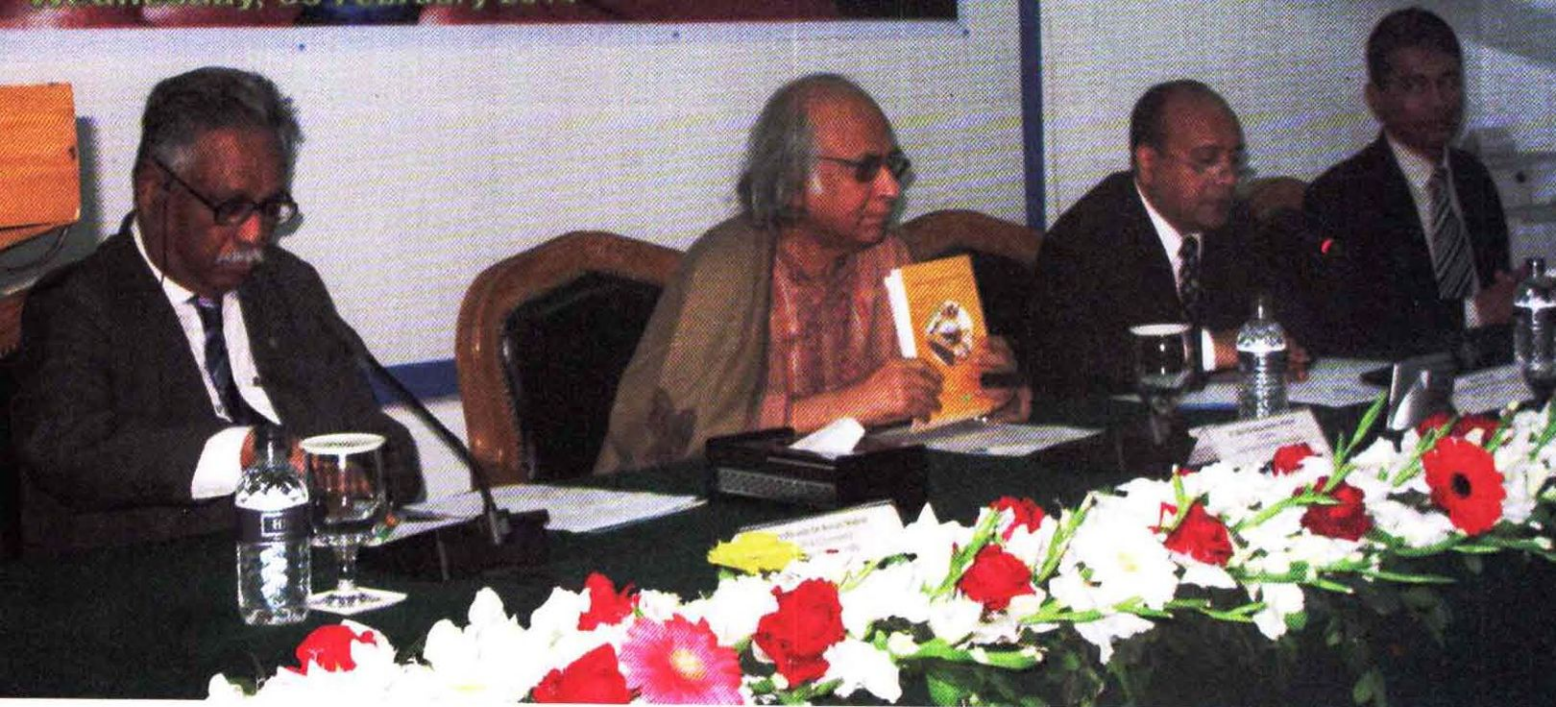
**Mr Md Ashadul Islām** emphasised on the aid effectiveness. He said that Bangladesh receives a good amount of aid every year and it is very important that the country utilises the aid in an effective way.

**Ms Saida Muna Taneem** responded to the queries of Professor Momtaz Uddin Ahmed saying that Bangladesh government places great importance to the civil society participation. She noted that civil society in Bangladesh played important role not only in development goals but also in human rights goals. She mentioned that much of the credit to the woman empowerment and its branding worldwide goes to the women rights group. She also informed that among the three reports on post-2015 development goals sent to the UN Secretary General, one was civil society driven. In the national and international consultations, much of the goals come from civil society. In any debate related to development, the participation of civil society is very essential.



At the end of the session, the moderator **Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad**, Chairman, Board of Governors of BISS, concluded by thanking the keynote presenter, designated discussants and the participants in the open discussion for enthusiastically participating and enlightening the audience present. He said that this is the beginning of the debate and that is why government is presenting its perspective. He hoped that BISS will subsequently arrange seminars where participation will be ensured from academia, business and civil society.



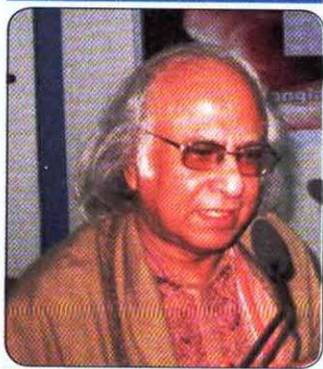


## Working Session II

### Rio+20 Outcome and Global Processes Related to Sustainable Development: Bangladesh Perspective

The Working Session II titled “Rio+20 Outcome and Other Global Processes Related to Sustainable Development: Bangladesh Perspective” was moderated by Mr Mesbah ul Alam, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Government of Bangladesh. A presentation was given by Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Chairman, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation in this session. The designated discussants in the Second Session included Professor Dr Ainun Nishat, Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University and Dr Mahfuz Kabir, Senior Research Fellow of BIISS.

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**Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad**, Chairman, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), discussed the Rio+20 outcome, other processes related to sustainable development, and Bangladesh perspectives. He started by referring to the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and the five documents that were adopted/agreed there. One of them is Agenda 21 and another is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC focused on climate change management, particularly mitigation at that time; and the Agenda 21 on social development. In the Agenda 21, sustainable development was defined with reference to economic development, social development, and environmental protection. And there was a fourth element: human being must be placed at the centre of the whole process. But, unfortunately, the focus on the human being is often forgotten. People often talk about the three-legged animal but do not go into the heart of the animal. In Rio+20 Conference held in June 2012, the same definition has been reiterated in an eloquent manner. In respect of the focus on the human beings: ‘It is recognised that people are at the centre of development’ thus starts Clause 6 of the Rio+20 Outcome Document. Then, the Clause goes on to say that social development, equitably distributed economic growth, and protection of the environment need to be simultaneously pursued for sustainable development.



In Bangladesh, sustainable development so conceived was not much in currency at the time of Earth Summit or much later—in any circle: official, academic or civil society. Even now, it is not very widely appreciated in the country. As to climate change, awareness was rather limited even in the 1990s, particularly in government circles. However, some research and awareness raising activities began to take place during that time. Internationally, the emerging menace of climate change began to be taken seriously following Brundtland Commission Report, *Our Common Future*, issued in 1987, which was an important milestone, followed by Rio Earth Summit and the adoption of the UNFCCC.

He also referred to another important agreement enshrined in the Rio+20 outcome document, which relates to green economy. First, the proposal was to establish a green economy roadmap. But many countries including Bangladesh argued against the proposal because it was felt that it could, then, be used as conditionality in the context of developing global partnerships. Eventually, the straitjacket approach was dropped and greening the economies was adopted as a policy imperative, recognising differing circumstances across countries so that each country would adopt policies and strategies suited to their own circumstances and aspirations.

He suggested that Bangladesh can develop its own programme with reference to greening of its economy. But, Bangladesh does not emit much greenhouse gases (GHGs) in terms of either per capita per annum or total annual amount emitted. On per capita terms, it is only 0.3 tonnes per annum. In developed countries, it is, by and large, between 10 and 20 tonnes, while in China 4 to 5 tonnes and in India about 2 tonnes. The highest per capita annual emission is in Qatar, at around 50 tonnes per annum, although the size of the population is very small. Bangladesh's per capita per annum emission is in fact about one-sixth of the average of the developing countries.

However, greening of the economy has other aspects to it. For instance, parks and open spaces in towns and cities are essential for the people to spend times in those places for enjoyment and also for healthier mind and body. Maintaining the integrity of water bodies such as rivers, *haors*, and wetlands are critically important for aesthetic, economic and health reasons; and so are cleanliness through effective waste management, and improving people's behaviour with respect to waste disposal and taking care of their immediate natural environment. These are hugely important environmental issues, but often remain unaddressed and the degradation continues unabated.

Sometimes, all the environmental issues are lumped together labelling them as climate change issues. In fact, climate change issues are a sub-set of environmental issues. Of course, all the climate change and other environmental issues are intricately related. Therefore, while climate change issues must be addressed, the other environmental issues must also be adequately dealt with.

In Rio+20 conference, it was decided that sustainable development goals (SDGs) would be developed on the basis of open and transparent dialogues. In January 2012, an Open Working Group (OWG) was established by the United Nations tasked to prepare recommendations on SDGs. It is, as agreed, a 30-member group; but given the interest among many other countries, an innovative constituency-based system of representation was used so that most of the seats are shared by several countries. Countries sharing a seat usually speak through one of the member country representative. Bangladesh has been put together with Saudi Arabia and South Korea, with whom this country has little in common. So, it was agreed by the representatives of the countries to speak separately; and these countries have been speaking separately from their own perspectives,



not as a group. In the OWG, pertinent issues concerning sustainable development goals are being discussed. So far seven sessions of the OWG have taken place and another six are planned, the last (the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting) on 14-18 July 2013. After that a report is expected to be available. Things have begun to come together as the work has been progressing through successive sessions.

The broad themes being addressed in various OWG sessions include: poverty eradication, food security and nutrition, health and population dynamics, education, gender equality and women's empowerment, water and sanitation, energy, economic growth, industrialisation, infrastructure, employment and decent work for all, promoting equality, sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable consumption and production, climate, marine resources, oceans and seas, ecosystems and biodiversity, means of implementation, peaceful and non-violent societies, and capable institutions.

It is noteworthy that both the HLP (High Level Panel appointed by the UN Secretary General) and the UN Task Team have put the proposal for a framework or narrative invoking several fundamental principles back in to the map as it were. In fact, the HLP Report talks about five major shifts in the economies, which are: Leave No One Behind, Put Sustainable Development at the Core, Transform Economies for Jobs and Inclusive Growth; Build Peace and Effective, Open and Accountable Institutions for All, and Forge a New Global Partnership. The UN Task Team Report also talks about several fundamental principles and values (such as equity, inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, human rights, freedom, peace and security) to underpin the post-2015 development agenda. Both the Reports have, however, left out certain important issues and aspects, but have highlighted the need for a framework and that is absolutely necessary.

There is little in either Report on the means of implementation. The HLP Report has suggested that more work is necessary in order to establish a proper framework for financial and other means of implementation of the adopted post-2015 agenda. Indeed, the post-2015 goals and associated targets and indicators will, as agreed, be so formulated as to be applicable to all countries, one way or another. Hence, unlike the case of the MDGs which were conceived to be implemented by developing countries within a donor-driven framework, the means of implementation of the post-2015 agenda will need to be shared by all countries and the basic principle to be invoked in this context can be 'common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities.' To do this is very important, given the rather frustrating experience relating to the means of implementation of the MDGs. In fact, the expected financing for the MDGs has not come forth from the developed countries. The MDG-achievements by various developing countries including Bangladesh, by and large, are to be attributable to the utilisation of their own resources.

Regarding the MDGs, he also made it clear that the framework proposed in the Millennium Declaration involving the fundamental principles of freedom, equity, tolerance, solidarity, respect for nature, and shared responsibility was totally ignored while picking the MDGs. Therefore, while globally and in many countries including Bangladesh, many key targets under different MDGs have already been achieved or are on track for achievement by 2015, a sustainable development pathway has not been initiated, nor was it expected to be.

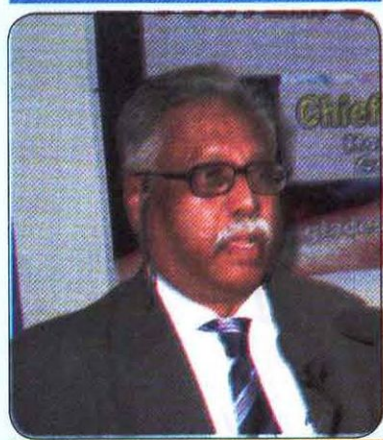
Regarding country contributions to the formulation of the post-2015, he said that two documents have been forwarded from Bangladesh, one by the government and the other from civil society. Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad coordinated the Civil Society inputs; and also the government input



half way through, which was then coordinated by Dr Shamsul Alam, Member of the Bangladesh Planning Commission. Both the documents have been prepared through participatory processes. Also, both have many similar recommendations. An important difference, perhaps more in terms of emphasis, between the government and civil society reports is about the global governance. The civil society report is very emphatic that the global governance needs to be reoriented and reorganised including the management of World Bank and the IMF to give effective voices to the voiceless developing countries.

Speaking on the UNFCCC climate negotiations, he said that Bangladesh has been making its contributions effectively concerning different aspects: mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, finance, capacity enhancement, and loss and damage. Given time limitation, he said he was not discussing the ongoing climate negotiations within the framework of the UNFCCC, which he felt would be taken up by Dr Ainun Nishat.

In concluding, he noted that the UN system talks about post-2015 development agenda, while the Rio+20 process talks about post-2015 SDGs. So, there is a slight difference in the two approaches; but he felt that the conceptualisations will come together and there will be one set of SDGs. He has contended that convergence has already been emerging and, by the end of 2015, there will be a short, focused and combined list of SDGs with associated targets and indicators, debated and adopted by the UN General Assembly.



**Dr Ainun Nishat**, Vice-Chancellor, BRAC University, said that the global leaders have picked a target that by the 2015, they will produce at least four major documents: one is the revision of the MDGs, although he did not know whether the new MDGs will be rephrased, reworked or few more will be proposed; the second set will be a new one — SDG or Sustainable Development Goals as Dr QK Ahmad discussed the possibilities to merge and develop into a new set. When MDG-1 discussed poverty, they discussed per capita income per head, which was maybe PPP US\$ 1-2 per day. But in SDG population should be satisfied and the ultra-poor should be addressed. That will be the difference between MDG and SDG. But the third documents possibly which is going to be the

most important for the survival of the earth is the legally binding agreements on climate change. So, this time what Bangladesh is aiming at is to have legally binding documents/agreements or a document that will have a legal force behind it. It will include mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, finance and capacity building. He reckons what will be the documents on mitigation, which is straight forward. The target that is on December 2015 and the venue has also been fixed which is Paris. European Union and government of France are pushing hard so that they have the documents. The world does not understand how to formulate it because it is very vague—how to have a legally binding document on capacity building or how to have a legally binding document on technology transfer. Because the patent right with the technology is being handled separately. But this is a very ambitious goal and the goals have been agreed by all countries of the world, as there is no difference in the opinion. This is the problem Bangladesh





faces. The countries say something but when there is an attempt to develop a working paper or the implementation plan and they would go back to their own original thinking. And the stumbling block is not coming from the USA only, but also from China and India.

But the fourth document that is equally important is the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction. That is also to be modified by 2015. These four processes would produce outcome, if implemented effectively then obviously the world will see removal of poverty and inequality. He added that Hyogo Framework of Action talks about disaster risk reduction. If risk is defined in disaster risk reduction, it will be 'hazards multiplied by vulnerability'. The moment Bangladesh goes into climate change arena there will be hazards and a term called 'adaptive capacity' comes to the forefront. Hazard is defined as exposer divided by adaptive capacity. On other words, if adaptive capacity is low for the same disaster, the risk is high. And if adaptive capacity is zero, then risk becomes infinitive. For example, countries like the Maldives and Kiribati are surrounded by water, it is not possible talk about adaptive capacity and therefore their risk would become almost infinite. They have to move to the land because their land would go underwater in, perhaps, 150 years time.

He also addressed the relationship between global process and the national process. Because it is important to keep focus on what is going on at international level, because the funding will come from global process. So Bangladesh should get prepared at the national level so that it can receive the fund. In the previous session, there was a suggestion that 0.7 per cent of GDP to be given to the developing countries. But there are many problems. There is one statement that LDCs should receive the funds as grants and non-LDCs would receive it as some kind of funding such as soft loans or there could be some other kind of financial support. A lot of money, around US\$ 100 billion that has been proposed for climate green fund would be going to the private sector, not to the state. It is time to get prepared to understand the relationship between private sector and public sector and how the fund should move.

For financial aspect, for technology Bangladesh needs to understand what is going on globally. For example: at the international level Bangladesh is not receiving the technical support the country is supposed to get. One has to put a tender and accept the lowest bid. But the lowest bid does not give the best technological solution rather a poor technological solution because it would be an obsolete technology. Change in mindset is needed to move at the global level. The global slogan is, 'think globally, act nationally'. It is difficult to act nationally on some issues. The best example is water—it requires action at the regional level. These are issue to be addressed in the post-2015 development process.

In climate change negotiation, certain buzzwords and acronyms are used. One acronym is MRV: Measurable, Reportable and Verifiable. That is not only in adaptation and mitigation but also on finance. Now, the developed countries would like the given money to be verified. Developing countries want to use the money in their own way which is unlikely to be accepted soon. Therefore, they would like to see how the fund is utilised. There are other two acronyms. One is NIE, another is MIE. NIE is National Implementing Entity which will give the money to be used. If they are not satisfied with fund management process, MIE route will have to be followed. MIE is Multilateral Implementing Entity where one has to go through the UNDP or the World Bank. Bangladesh has



failed to qualify as NIE because judiciary management is not acceptable to them. They are giving the money, so they have right to satisfy how the fund will be utilised.

The point is huge fund would be employed. But the concern is regarding the volume of the fund. World Bank, ADB, Islamic Development Bank and African Development Bank pass out every year approximately US\$60-80 billion, and developing countries are taking US\$100 billion top of that, so fund is there. But the question is whether the developing countries are in a position to receive it and use it effectively. So it is necessary to work on that particular aspect. He said that the world is now divided into groups. In climate change negotiation there is no voting. Therefore, all 195 countries must agree. And there is a new debate on how countries should group and there are 4 major group — G77 and China, European Union, Umbrella Group and Environmental Integrity Group. Inside group G77 and China, he talked about difficulties. There are various powerful groups. AOSIS or small island groups as well as African countries are very powerful. Non-existent group is SAARC. Even ASEAN is a weak group there.

Bangladesh follows the Cartagena Dialogue and the LDC group. But another group is emerging which is called the Group of 20 Countries. And that is dominated by the BASIC group which is Brazil, China, South Africa and India. With the BASIC group the list of Annex-1 countries designed in 1992 must be changed. He questioned whether Singapore and South Korea can be called developing countries; or Qatar is developing country with the highest per capita income in the global level. Therefore, there are lot of issues. Bangladesh follows some of the meetings with due diligence, but it cannot be said that in all processes the country follows due diligence. The first problem is continuity. In the final meetings in Rio, decisions were taken and in a Prepcom meeting the documents are being finalised. Bangladesh delegation fought but failed to insert water related concerns, because those were drafted before. Therefore, water did not exist in Rio+20 documents. Bangladesh needs to work hard at the international level and also needs to be prepared to move at the national level.

He concluded by saying that Bangladesh has excellent documents but has weak process in the implementation aspects. So, the indicators are useful, Bangladesh can talk about the indicator at the global level. Time has come for Bangladesh to set similar indicators at national level and implement them with new.



**Dr Mahfuz Kabir**, Senior Research Fellow of BISS, focused on the outcome of Rio+20 and said it is important as the government and other development partners are doing a lot in this regard. But there is always a glass half empty. There is a lot of avenue to identify the problems and gaps so that profit can be made. The targets of Rio+20 have been outlined in 'The Future We Want'. Rio+20 gives a common vision which otherwise differs by country. The big players like the US, China, India set policies according to their own agendas and developing countries have to follow them ignoring national interest. The Rio+20's common vision document has a goal — the growth and development should be sustainable so that that all institutions can function and prosperity should be shared by all

the citizens of the globe. And it is necessary to achieve the target of the green economy. The developing countries are catching up with the process.





Bangladesh has set the growth target of 10 per cent as per Vision 2021 and 8 per cent by the year 2015. But the country is lagging behind. The manufacturing sector is the highest polluter which is the big contributor in the growth process. There is a trade-off between growth and environment because, the growth is causing pollution. This is important for a country like Bangladesh. But the problem is that Bangladesh is expanding its economy; the industry sector will contribute 40 per cent of the total GDP by 2021 which is a huge burden because industries are emitting carbon. In his point of view, the government of Bangladesh seems to be passive in green national accounting.

Carbon has different forms including hydrocarbon which is polluting the environment. Even agricultural sector emits methane. It is also a big threat for the global climate change. The PKSf has recently done a study on environmental audit of micro enterprises. There are many small and medium enterprises which are the backbone of the industrial growth. These studies are needed for further understanding of the fact. This document is the environmental accounting – a system of national accounting which has started back in 1992-93 and there were a lot of discussions in two decades on environmental accounting. Finally, the UN system has come out with SEEA (System of Environmental-Economic Accounting), an experimental economic system accounting which provides the theoretical background. And the next document is the Central Framework which is the framework for analysis of the whole issue.

In Bangladesh Bank, half of the electricity is coming from solar panels. In fact, Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Atiur Rahman has introduced the highest number of 'green' programmes any central bank for which he was termed as 'the greenest governor of the world' by Vice-President of the World Bank. There are other organisations like PKSf specialising in green programmes. Other sectors should also come in so that Bangladesh can become champion among the LDCs in the global forum on the green economy. The number three is the document on the application and extension: how should Bangladesh have the numbers on the green economy. India has already started green national accounts. It has suggested a framework by seriously criticising the Central Framework and other documents produced by the UN back in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

A Bangladeshi economist named Partha Dasgupta, Professor of Cambridge University, is leading the green national accounting in India. Now, the question is what the implication is for Bangladesh. There is a need for understanding the numbers. If Bangladesh has the numbers, then the country can have the tools for green diplomacy. That is what is required. He commented that Bangladesh is doing well. The country has many programmes from many institutions and the government has prepared many good climate change documents. But still, if Bangladesh has the good numbers, then, the country can be a champion. The number two is whether it is interested. The government has good remarks on the documents and Bangladesh government will try to do something on green accounting. Australia started green accounting ten years back. If Bangladesh focuses on green accounting, then, it needs to start right now because it will take a long time. If Bangladesh has data, then, the country will have strong ground that Bangladesh is doing well and other countries will also come. It should be aim of Bangladesh's next step.

## Open Discussion

**Mr Tarik Ahsan**, Director General (International Organisations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the developed countries are responsible for climate change. And naturally the expectation is that it is the developed countries which should foot the bill of the cost of mitigation, adaptation etc. But of late, there is a tendency of the developed countries to bring forward some innovative ideas — innovative sources of financing, like taxing the international travel and also sharing the



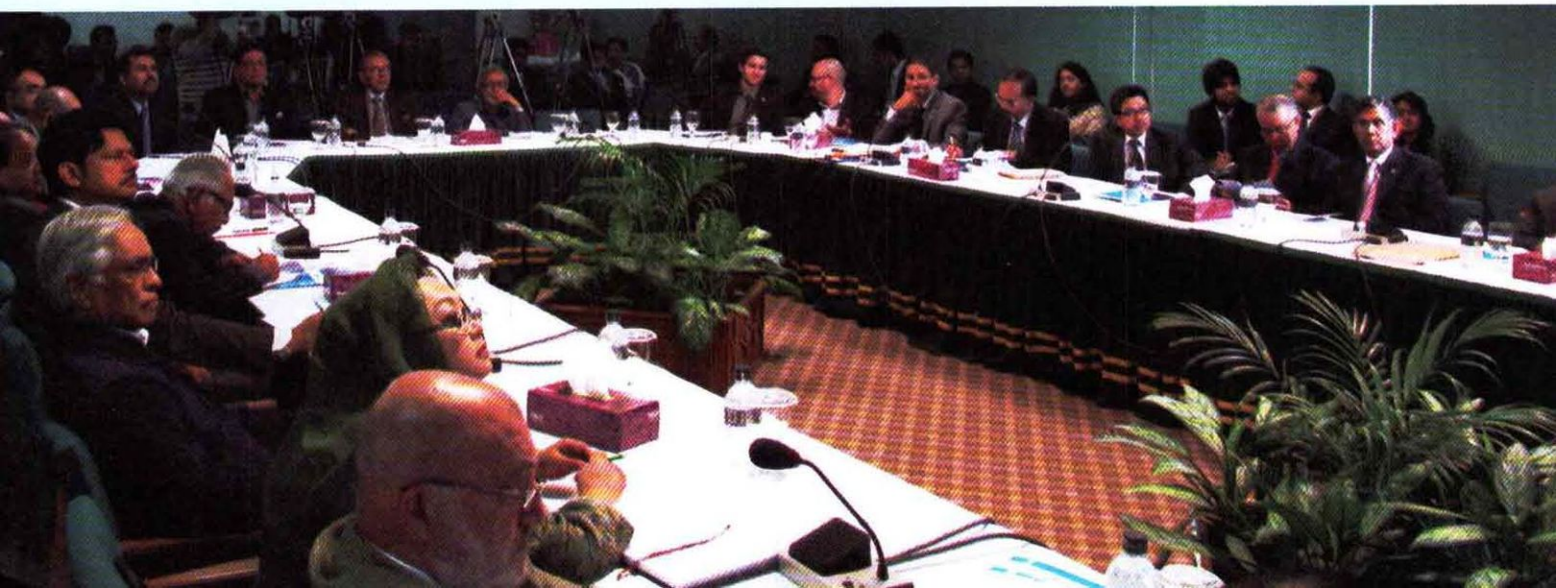
burden of responsibility with major developing countries. He questioned that where Bangladesh stands on those approaches of the developed countries.

**HE Mr Alexander A Nikolaev**, Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary, the Embassy of the Russian Federation, asked whether there is any criteria to judge what is more dangerous to global climate change—unlimited emission or unlimited deforestation?

**Mr Abu Salah Md. Yousuf**, Research Fellow, BIISS, questioned about the green economy and how far Bangladesh is prepared to measure green accounting.

**Dr Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed**, Project Director, PKSf, asked about green economy. It is not only carbon emission; it also covers contamination and pollution. For example, in Bangladesh, wetland contamination, waste management, biodiversity loss, ecosystem loss all is covered in the green economy. Accounting green or carbon is not a big matter for Bangladesh which is a least developed country. Bangladesh emits around 0.3 tonnes per capita per annum as Dr QK Ahmad mentioned. But sometimes, carbon emission is more highlighted rather than other environmental pollutions at the local level. But in the Bangladesh context carbon emission is not the priority; the priority is poverty alleviation and right to development. 50 per cent of the people are not getting energy and 30 per cent people are still below the poverty level. If Bangladesh wants to increase their standard of living, the country should continue development. And development and carbon emission go side by side. Bangladesh talks about mitigation and low carbon development. But poverty alleviation and adaptation is priority. Bangladesh should go for mitigation, low carbon development and green economy, provided that there is financial and technological support from the development partners. This is because the country's priority is rather to reduce the emission than the development activities. So, green economy from Bangladesh perspective is different from developed countries' perspective. In the post-2015 legally binding agreement, another important aspect, in addition to adaptation and mitigation, is transparency which will be included in the legally binding agreement. It will be helpful for all developing and developed countries alike.

**Mr Neal Walker**, UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh, speaking from his personal view said that, Bangladesh in a way needs to jump over the antiquated models of carbon. Bangladesh is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in terms of its bad air pollution. He argued that part of the equation of poverty is the quality of air and water. He opined that it is a wrong thinking that Bangladesh burns so much less carbon compared to the rich countries, so the country should not worry about it. There are models in which Bangladesh





can achieve green economy. It can achieve not only income and poverty alleviation, but also a quality of life improvement which are directly associated with development. He said that Bangladeshis should not think that since they burn so much less carbon compared to other countries, they should build all brick factories they want and burn all carbon they want. It is not a comparative analysis relative to other countries of the world as much as it is about the quality of life in Bangladesh and how creative they can be to jump start an economy which gets a way around that problem.

**Mr Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury**, Senior Journalist and Columnist, opined that the issues that are being discussed are theoretical in nature with having little relevance with what is happening in the ground. He had hardly seen any seminar in remote districts like Patuakhali, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet and other places. People are often told that there is big fund internationally and nationally for all these issues. It is needless to say Bangladesh is the most vulnerable to climate change including such problems like droughts, floods and cyclones. He felt that there is hardly any national campaign in Bangladesh to sensitise people on these issues. The catchphrases are hardly understood by the overwhelming majority of people of Bangladesh who have the biggest stake in this situation. He opined that the concerned stakeholders should spread their arms to Bangladeshi people and that would be the big job they can do about this subject.

In his response to the comments and questions from the floor, **Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad** started by appreciating Mr Neal Walker's comments. He said that Bangladesh was and is consciously trying to address the issues concerning recouping and maintaining environmental health, although the outcome is not as satisfactory as one would like it to be. A lot more remains to be done, but Bangladesh has serious resource limitations both from within and without.

Bangladesh opposed the proposal for adopting a green economy roadmap at the Rio+20 Conference because countries differ in terms of circumstances and abilities and because of the apprehension that it could be used as conditionality in global partnership building. Indeed, greening of the economy is not mitigation only; it has other aspects as Mr Neal Walker has elaborated. He felt he need not repeat them.

Within the framework of Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) adopted by the government in July 2009, a Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) was established and a total budgetary allocation of the equivalent of about US\$400 million was made to it over the past 5 years. Various projects in different parts of the country have been financially supported from this Fund, quite a few already fully implemented. Emphasis has been given to relatively more vulnerable areas. The projects financed from this Fund have been/are being implemented mostly through government ministries. Less than one per cent of the total amount allocated to the Fund has been provided to NGOs that are implementing small, mainly adaptation activities in different parts of the country.

Another Fund known as Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF) has been created with contributions from development partners, and the money available in the BCCRF is now about US\$200 million. This is being used to implement several projects, mainly related to adaptation but also to mitigation. The projects already funded include multipurpose cyclone shelter construction project, agricultural adaptation in climate risk prone areas of Bangladesh, afforestation and reforestation for climate change risk reduction in coastal and hilly areas of Bangladesh, construction of modern food grain storage facilities, solar irrigation programme, and community climate change project (CCCP). The CCCP is the NGO window, which is being



implemented by the Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) in particularly vulnerable areas of the country through NGOs but also involving the relevant communities in the process.

However, if climate change continues to worsen, it will not be possible for a country like Bangladesh to go on adapting, even if resources are available. The situation will in the course of time go out of control. If Bangladesh improves its quality of air and water and undertakes other mitigation activities, but greenhouse gas emissions go on increasing globally, a country like Bangladesh is sure to be undone. Therefore, global emissions must come down drastically so that the intensifying climate change can be arrested and reversed. In his view, the expected 2015-legally binding climate agreement may not happen as scheduled. Even if it happens, it is not to be implemented before 2020. That may be already too late. Global leadership has not yet risen to the occasion to do what is needed. It appears that the whole issue of arresting climate change has been put on the backburner.

If economic and climate change issues are simultaneously addressed, people's ability to cope with adverse circumstances should certainly improve. In fact, in Bangladesh, scientists have developed saline and submergence tolerant rice varieties—obviously noteworthy successes in responding to some of the consequences of climate change. But, if climate change continues to worsen, there will be more frequent and more devastating natural disasters (cyclone, sea level rise and salinity ingress, floods, changing and shifting rainfall patterns, more river erosion, increasing losses of agricultural land, etc.) and, as a result, it will be increasingly more difficult to respond effectively, and a time will come when a widespread socio-economic collapse may be the inevitable consequence, not only in Bangladesh but also in many other countries around the world.

On the question of global climate financing, negotiations have not made much headway. An amount of US\$30 billion was committed by the developed countries to be provided to developing countries, during 2010-2012, as the First Start Fund. It is claimed that more than the committed amount has been provided. But, this money was agreed to be grant, new and additional. It is essential to establish clarity on this issue as some available estimates show that only about one-third is new and additional, while the other two-thirds are out of funds committed earlier, ODA, and even soft loans.

As we negotiate within the UNFCCC framework on climate financing, it is generally suggested by the developed countries that in future private sector would be the main source. But, the private sector exists to make profit. Hence, private investors may be interested in mitigation projects in developing countries such as solar or wind electricity; but they would not be interested in adaptation activities in remote rural areas because there are no profits to be made. Hence, developing countries emphasise on the public climate financing. There is also talk about innovative sources of climate financing such as air travel taxes, maritime taxes, etc. but, any proposal in this context on reducing the rate of increase in military expenditure of the developed countries does not seem to be considered by those countries as even worth discussing. This source alone can make a very significant contribution to climate financing if used.

Then, regarding the US\$100 billion to be mobilised per year starting from 2020, the focus of the developed countries is on mitigation. But, for developing countries, particularly LDCs and SIDS, adaptation financing is extremely important so that at least 50 per cent of the money



should be allocated to adaptation. This is one of the important demands of the developing countries.

Moreover, no concrete financial pledges have been made for the period 2013-2019, except that it may be at the same level as the First Start Financing, i.e. about US\$10 billion a year, while the demand from developing countries is to raise the annual climate financing step by step to about US\$70 million by 2016 and, then, on to US\$100 billion by 2020.

Regarding a question on emissions and deforestation, he said that if emissions and consequently global warming and sea level continue to rise, a part of Bangladesh will be salinized and may be permanently inundated. The Maldives and similar other island countries may disappear under water. Even in the USA, 29 States have experienced long and severe drought about two years ago, then there was hurricane Sandy, and now there is a cold wave sweeping parts of the country. In fact, the whole world is being affected.

On the question of poverty measurement, he said discussions are going on within and outside the United Nations. It is widely recognised now that the poverty is multidimensional. Apart from income it has to do with health, education, skills, sanitation, housing condition, livelihoods, social capital, culture, human rights, and human dignity etc. Even the Human Development Index (HDI), which includes education, health, and income does not go very far. Now, there are methods available or being developed for multidimensional poverty measurement (MPM). An appropriate method of MPM should be used.

On the basic needs consideration (upper poverty line), Bangladesh has reduced poverty to about 26 per cent already, while in terms of MDG target, it was supposed to be reduced to 29 per cent by 2015. But, the problem is, it is essentially income poverty. If poverty is measured with respect to human dignity, then maybe three quarters or more of the country's population will be below that line and similar outcomes will be found in developing countries around the world.

Available estimates suggest that over a billion people are now extremely poor in the world, who live not only in the LDCs and other low income countries but also in middle income countries and, not insignificantly, even in developed countries. This is surely a sad commentary on the ingenuity of the global community, given that global wealth and scientific and technological advancements are now at unprecedentedly high levels. The greatest message that he said he took away from 1992 Rio and 2012 Rio+20 conferences is that the human being has to be at the centre of development.

Regarding innovative financing, **Professor Dr Ainun Nishat** said that two components are being discussed: one is air travel and the other is bunker fuel which is with the shipping industry. The European Union and especially Norway are pushing on this. Bangladesh's position is that holiday makers, travellers in business class and first class should be taxed. But the poor people who are going from Dhaka to Dubai in search of a job or a cleaner, they should not be taxed. The EU is pushing for tax even for commuters and others. Bunker fuel is going to produce a huge amount, if it is taxed properly. From Bangladesh side, as of today, it has no objection. Regarding, the cost of mitigation, he noted that funds are available. But the question is who is going to pay. That is where the debate started in 1992, the list of 38 countries that are identified as developed countries is being challenged. Russia has a proposal to review it. In 1992 convention, there is a clear article which says that it should have been reviewed in every five years. The list of OECD countries



cannot be developed countries, that definition is being challenged. But how does someone get US\$100 billion? Two calculations are available: one was produced under the UN initiative and the second one was produced by the US government.

Regarding the Russian ambassador's question about unlimited emission versus unlimited deforestation, he noted that both have to be addressed. Deforestation and degradation of forests has to be stopped. Indonesia claimed US\$1 billion from Norway with the promise that they are not going to cut down the forests anymore. Whether that is happening, nobody knows yet. This acronym is known as RED (Reduction of Emission from Forests by Avoiding Degradation and Deforestation). But the main issue is the global agreement with respect to total emission was that the level of emission will not be allowed to go beyond 450 ppm by 2020. It has already exceeded 400 ppm. World Bank is already preparing the world for four degrees rise in temperature, may be corresponding to 500-600 ppm. In order to keep the emission level to 450, the world has to address both emission control as well as stopping deforestation. Global temperature has already gone up one degree, the global promise is not to allow it to go beyond two degrees, and preferably pull it back to one and a half degrees. The title of this report is Four Degrees. He said that he would ask the world to be prepared for six degrees. That will reduce the food grain production to half of what is happening now, may be even lower unless the scientists can come up with big varieties.

With respect to Neal Walker's question, he fully agreed with him. Bangladesh has to address the emission at the global level but it should act at the national level. But he would address the brick fields and other related issue from pollution point of view. He praised the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment of the Constitution for inserting the Article 18A wherein, for the first time, the state of Bangladesh has officially recognised the duty of the state to protect nature, environment, air, water pollution, wetland and others. The country has all the laws and regulations, but the national or political commitment came only two years back. He hoped the government will implement the commitments it has made by regulatory measures, because all the laws are in place.

**Dr Mahfuz Kabir** noted about 'carbon neutrality' hypothesis. This is very dangerous because some companies are emitting carbon but also planting trees. It is like someone is cutting one's



head and compensating him/her. These companies are coming quite prominently. That should be taken care of. Other than carbon emission, the second issue is experimental eco-system accounting, it is not only carbon accounting. The SEEA document on EEA deals with it. Bangladesh is emitting low carbon, which is clearly a perception. The number should be there. That is why accounting is needed. There is a report from Waste Concern in 2010 jointly with Ministry of Environment and Forests which is an inventory of hazardous waste. If the document is closely reviewed, it will be found that the emission of carbon and that of waste water is terrifying. There are carbons in many forms. That should be properly accounted in the context of national accounting.

At the end of the session the moderator **Mr Mesbah ul Alam** thanked the panel speaker, distinguished discussants and the learned audience for their active participation.





### Working Session III

## Emerging Perspectives Within and Architecture of Post-2015 Development Agenda: Bangladesh Perspective

The Working Session III titled “Emerging Perspectives Within and Architecture of Post-2015 Development Agenda: Bangladesh Perspective” was moderated by Mr Md Shahidul Haque, Foreign Secretary, Government of Bangladesh. Mr Neal Walker, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh, Ms Sarah Cooke, DFID Country Representative to Bangladesh, Mr M Riaz Hamidullah, Director General (Economic Affairs), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Professor Dr Mustafizur Rahman, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue spoke as designated discussants.

**Mr Md Shahidul Haque**, Foreign Secretary, opened the third working session with the expectation that the distinguished panellists will put forward their ideas as to how Bangladesh should place



itself in the emerging architecture of post-2015 development agenda. He said that it is extremely confusing, even to those who try to keep track of things, as to how these debates are evolving. He explained there are three parallel, interconnected processes led by the Secretary General himself, the other one by the member states which is follow up of Rio+20 and the third is whole civil society and UN debate. First, a process like this is difficult to monitor. Second, there are number of broad issues. The third is, people in the groups have their own interest, some groups come with very political agenda, some groups have technical agenda and often they clash. He further mentioned that there are fundamental differences between formulation processes of Millennium Development Goal

(MDG) and post-2015 development agenda. There are a number of reasons. Not only that the MDG process was led by the UN, often sarcastically said in a ‘window lead roof’. It was drafted by people or colleague here. It was meant to operationalise Millennium Declaration with two broad pillars — development and equity and governance. He mentioned it as ‘low hanging fruit’ and noted that it was a very simplistic way of assessing impact and progress of development. That is where it was and at the end everybody signed up to the MDG.

The process for post-2015 development agenda is totally different. Secretary General took the lead about two years back initiating there a series of consultation actively at civil society level, at



country level, and at UN level, within UN agency coordination mechanism. And that has led to the situation where Bangladesh is right now. He noted that it is necessary to look at where Bangladesh would place itself in the process, in which sense and from what moral, high grounds. Before talking about post 2015, it is necessary to clarify that MDG was good and certainly has made progress and it was necessary for some countries to easily measure where they stand in assessment of some indications, social indicators in general. Referring to Professor QK Ahmad, he mentioned, important and crucial issues like climate change, water, inequality have not been incorporated into the debate. This is one contentious issue. The second is that the politico-economic situation of 2000-2001 is totally different than 2013-2014. Geopolitically, there was calmness in both politics and economy in 2000, as opposed to that, currently, there is huge turbulence in global social, economic and political sectors. He notified that there is tension over how geopolitical centre of gravity is shifting-whether it is shifting or it is not shifting from Europe to America to Asia-Pacific. That is a tension.

The other one is the whole FFF (food, fuel and finance) crisis. That has unsettled some of the space created in 2000 for a peaceful, easy, and friendly negotiation. Therefore; he opined that this time not only the process is different, negotiation is now equally difficult than that of 2000. He mentioned that now states are just making postures, not selling their actual position in terms of what position they will take on the text when actual negotiation starts at the end of this year. They are just saying what they want and what they will not accept. He mentioned that there are fourteen broad clusters discussed through the three processes. Within those broad clusters, on seven clusters there is almost a consensus because these seven basically emanate from MDGs. He mentioned that the one that has not been accepted and raised a lot of controversies is the MDG-8, the whole issue of partnership and the means of implementation, which is the big debate. Other issues that have come out that will make negotiation phase more difficult, he informed, are water, climate change, inequality, trade, technology, rule of law, governance and human rights. He mentioned that all these give a broad view why this would be difficult.

The first panel discussant, **Mr Neal Walker**, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh opened his speech by stating his interests in post-2015 development agenda and the new



development discourse that might come out of the MDG process. He discussed three perspectives which were Bangladesh's experiences with regard to MDGs, Bangladesh's achievement compared to other least developed countries (LDCs) and the post-2015 global process with the key issues under discussion. He noted that Bangladesh's progress has been fantastic. He emphasised on the baseline year and stressed to look into the condition of the country during the baseline year on 1990-2000. During 1990s, under MDG-1 (poverty), Bangladesh had 57 per cent (nearly 59 million) of its population living under one dollar/day which has now been reduced to 31 per cent. In the area of MDG-4 (child mortality), the mortality rate of children aged under five years were 146 deaths per 1000 lives during

1990 which has now reduced to 44 deaths per 1000 lives. The maternal mortality rate was 574 deaths for 100,000 lives birth which has reduced to 194 deaths for 100,000 lives birth. He noted



that although Bangladesh's population has increased massively since 1990, the number of infant and maternal death continues to lower which is the most spectacular achievement.

While comparing the achievements of Bangladesh with other LDCs of the world, he noted that Bangladesh is, by far, the most populous country among 45 LDCs of the world. He drew attention to facts that most Asian LDCs including Bangladesh has done remarkable in two factors: one in poverty and the other in reducing child mortality. The African LDCs are not likely to attain any of the MDG goals except some of the targets underneath the MDG goals like primary enrolment in education or HIV prevalence. But one may not count all LDCs in the same line since some African LDCs have performed very well regarding MDGs like Rwanda and Mali which have ranked the fourth and the fifth amongst the LDCs for the attainment of MDG goals. While mentioning small island states, he noted, these countries are likely to attain targets related to accessibility to water and 'under five' mortality rate, but they are struggling with other goals. He insisted that all LDCs including Bangladesh are struggling on the issues of malnourishment and environmental factors. He noted that Bangladesh, along with Cambodia, enters 2014 as the top performing LDC with regard to MDG measurement. He mentioned that Bangladesh started its journey to attain the targets of MDG in the 1990s, much earlier than the MDGs were postulated which gave Bangladesh an advantage. He noted that in Bangladesh, there was national prioritisation of development goals before the goals were listed as MDGs. And, he mentioned, the success of Bangladesh owes a lot to national investments. He informed that the national investments of Bangladesh in MDG goals continued without regard to the political parties in power and both political parties considered these as national priorities. He added that development partners also provided critical funding to this attainment in addition to the funds of national budget. He also mentioned the vibrant role, expertise and commitment of NGO community in Bangladesh to achieve the success. Mr Walker emphasised that the convergence of political will, innovation across relevant areas, commitment and funding by national and international organisations helped Bangladesh to create its success story. But there is still much work to be done.

He mentioned certain key considerations driven by successes and failures of the MDGs. He noted that although poverty alleviation is under MDG-1, he suggested that poverty reduction is not only related to income generation and therefore holistic view is critical. He suggested including decent work, social protection, and access to productive assets as part of poverty alleviation. He noted that without success in these issues, inequality is likely to worsen. He also talked about food and security issues under MDG-1, where he acknowledged that Bangladesh has achieved a lot in food security issues but also reminded that the absence of hunger does not guarantee nutrition. Bangladesh has a challenge of malnourishment of young people which is a profound threat to its future development. But he expressed satisfaction on the fact that Bangladesh has included nutrition as a key goal of the post-2015 development paradigm. While mentioning MDG-2, he focused on quality of education and mentioned that higher rates of enrolment at primary and secondary must ensure quality. He noted that the gap between quality of education between private and public schooling is going to be crucial for national success. On maternal mortality, although the achievements are spectacular, he noted, it will be far more difficult to reduce the 194 deaths to that of 20 or below than it was to reduce 574 deaths to 190. He expressed hope that Bangladesh would make an explicit commitment to do this.



He also mentioned that progress varies from country to country regarding the MDGs and therefore, in post-2015, defining universal objectives will be difficult. Adjusting universal objectives at national development level is necessary. He also noted that there is no MDG goal on governance and the MDG-3 related to gender is very narrowly focused on representation and quotas. Therefore, including good governance and gender equality among global objectives effectively is crucial for equitable and sustainable development. He further stressed on the need to develop implementation framework that is inclusive to the needs of all countries. He talked that Bangladesh is poised to contribute significantly to global debate regarding the issue. He informed about the global consultation at the UN on post-2015 agenda and mentioned that consultations at the UN, state and civil society level as well as at the citizen level (by online survey) are done to know about how people perceive the world beyond 2015. The outcome of these consultations will determine the future paradigm. He stressed on the need to realise the new environment, the complexity of the issues that were not incorporated and to address issue of changing technological circumstances. In mentioning post-2015 agenda, he stressed on the need to continue to develop priorities of the MDGs but looking towards social equality and human rights. Another priority for Bangladesh is food security and nutrition and it must remain in the global debate and objective. Gender equality is critical in Bangladesh because in the country there are complex issues like child marriage. Bangladesh has identified good governance as a goal keeping in line with its commitment to strong democracy and inclusive development. He finally stressed on the issue of global partnership and insisted that developed countries should be held accountable to their commitment to make development truly global.

In identifying the future steps of Bangladesh, he suggested that Bangladesh should keep up the pressure and strengthen alliance with people in Bangladesh. It is necessary to create consensus and make decisions to move forward. Bangladesh has strong legitimate voice in the process and should keep its voice loud, clear and strategic in the new post-2015 framework.

The second panel discussant, **Ms Sarah Cooke**, Head of DFID Bangladesh, opened that the MDGs are unprecedented international consensus and commitment to global development and



has led to huge human development outcome globally. She noted that what has not been discussed is the necessity to ensure that no one is left behind in the process, regardless of age, sex, gender or disability. She reiterated that Bangladesh has achieved a lot with regard to the MDG outcomes — more girls, modern schools, maternal mortality cut dramatically as well as empowerment of women. In determining the next of the MDGs, she mentioned about the UK Prime Minister David Cameron was honoured by the UN Secretary General to co-chair high-level panel of global development framework of the UN. The high-level plenary report was published in May last year. Noting the report as 'bold and optimistic', she mentioned that the report concluded that it is necessary to eliminate extreme poverty from the

face of the earth. The outcome of national consultation of Bangladesh was very positive in this regard. Both recognised, in order to eradicate extreme poverty, it is necessary to go beyond the MDGs. It is necessary to tackle the causes of poverty and its symptoms. In explaining what comes



next after 2015, she stated, the post-2015 agenda must cover areas where the MDGs were not very strong. In addressing the causes of extreme poverty and its symptoms, there are a number of key areas that the high-level report identified. It identified the importance of open society and open economy. In identifying the post-MDG issues, she also mentioned about effective institutions to address the risk of conflict and provide a stable and peaceful environment for business to thrive. The need to ensure the voice of all people in the decision that affect them was reflected by her. The challenge is to bring all members of global population within an effective justice system and accountable government.

She mentioned that the high-level report also talks about transformation in sense of economic growth, job for young people and the importance of making the growth inclusive and increased equality. In analysing the commonalities between Bangladesh national consultation and global high-level plenary report, both highlighted a single framework for poverty eradication and sustainable development. There was widespread support for increased support for women. The UK believes that women must be centre of the next agenda. She stressed on that the UK supports the standalone goal on gender equality covering economic, political and social issues and women empowerment. And sustainable development is also heart of both reports. It would be central to long term eradication of extreme poverty and to tackle challenges of climate change, and resolve scarcity, poverty reduction and global growth. She stressed on the need to reflect the needs of the poor people in the reports and consultations. It is necessary to produce more with least resources. The work of the high-level panel coincided with the global, national and thematic consultations. The panel itself included representatives from business, government and civil society from all regions of the world. It heard directly from hundreds and thousands of people from all over the world listening to what poor people themselves say about their needs and what is important to them. The high-level report is bold and optimistic and states that 'we can and must be the generation that ends extreme poverty'. In practical and concrete terms, the report states about bringing people and planet together in a single agenda for post-2015. Mentioning it as an historic opportunity, she detailed the process of post-2015 agenda consultation and expected the process will develop new sustainable development goals. She noted that it is a universal agenda and a pride to both developed and developing countries and mentioned that every country has responsibility in the next framework. Resources should be mobilised around the new global partnership. The new global partnership have the role of everybody. Government, business, civil society, citizen are to be emboldened in the new partnership. There is still a lot way to go to the final goals are agreed at the UNGA in September 2015. Mentioning that Bangladesh has extremely important role to play internationally as an LDC, she expressed hope that Bangladesh will be active in New York and engaging heavily within the discussions of Open Working Group and the negotiation that follows to eradicate poverty, transform economy and bring sustainable development.

Another panel discussant, **Professor Dr Mustafizur Rahman**, Executive Director of Centre for Policy Dialogue opened his discussion with four themes — participation, issue of coherence, emerging tension and information and data revolution. As a representative of civil society, he noted that Centre for Policy Dialogue has launched a global initiative called the 'Southern Voice' that seeks to mobilise the voices of Southern think tanks to define the targets and goals of the MDG discourse. On the issue of participation, he mentioned, inclusive development should be





explained in an inclusive manner. During the 1990s, the MDGs were mostly a developed country's discourse. The Northern countries set the agenda and all the Northern institutions working on Southern issues participated in the process. The Southern voice was not there. This time the process is all inclusive. He mentioned that CPD is trying to bring in perspectives and results of research and analysis of 48 Southern think tanks in defining the goals. He mentioned the 8<sup>th</sup> goal as the weakest link that did not serve well. He emphasised on realistic thinking.

He expressed satisfaction in the national attempt to include local civil society in the process of consultation. On the issue of coherence, he noted, the MDG is one of various initiatives taking place at the global level. He mentioned the Istanbul Programme of Action in support of the LDCs where heads of states from all countries assembled and accepted the Programme of Action in support of the LDCs for next ten years. The first commitment stated the desire to reduce the number of the LDCs to half. To commit it, the MDGs will have to service this need. But in the Bali Conference, it was observed that countries have not been able to come into consensus and come out with limited Bali agenda therefore Doha Development Round and trade negotiation could not follow the goals of the MDG. There was no discussion on duty-free quota free or getting into services market, especially the labour market. The only progress was the possibility of high-level meeting in July 2014. So, there lies lack of coherence between the MDG and other global commitments. This is significant.

The third point he talked about is the emerging tension. It is good that both development and sustainable development are being discussed. But he questioned on the implementation of them in case of Bangladesh. Bangladesh has huge coal resource but the country has not been able to exploit this resource considering environmental concerns. Bangladesh has to look for costly energy solutions. A country like Bangladesh cannot allow that 75 per cent of its resources lie in ground. So, the country is going for second and third base solution. Therefore, initiative to exploit these resources in clean manner as well as transfer of technology and related support is necessary. If Bangladesh wants to go for sustainable development, there has to be technology transfer, there has to be support to go for that type of exploitation. This is one tension. He also mentioned that on issue of decent wage, there is clear cut tension between the development of production relation and the development of productive forces. If Bangladesh wants to create decent jobs, but if gives minimum wages below the poverty line for a family of three, then there will be problem. He also talked about value chain and equitable distribution. He stressed the fact there has to be regeneration of information as well as new information for proper outcome. To achieve the target of good governance, accountability and transparency, it needs to develop information and there the need of data revolution comes. The main challenge is to go into detail and resolve the issues. He noted that period of new development discourse will coincide with demographic dividend. To make it into real dividend, it is necessary to resolve tensions and generate information.

The final designated discussant, **Mr M Riaz Hamidullah**, Director General (EA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, started his discussion by saying that he would take the participants through the space of process, substance and then, within substance, with due focus on





means of implementation. Where does Bangladesh stand? He noted that coincidentally, at the time when this meeting was taking place, New York was sleeping. He informed about the last session of the OWG, the Open-ended Working Group, taking place in New York. The timeline remains that by this month it would conclude with its work and then, as it remains, the great minds will get active meaning between February to August, when New York would also be going to summer, people would be trying to give shape, a little invisibly, to the SDGs that will surface by Fall as the summit in New York is convened. It is important, as Professor Nishat and Professor QK Ahmed have also mentioned, to keep three markers in the canvas.

Those are the Climate Change Summit in September 2014, and summit or high-level discussion on financing for sustainable development and Monterey (2002). These are very critical. Not a single reference to Monterey has been heard of since 2002.

He noted that in climate discourse, as noted by Professor Nishat, the MDGs, the SDGs and also the two other processes are coming to a convergence by the end of 2015, which is making it very fascinating but at the same time infinitely difficult to comprehend. No previous experience or work or reflection could help of last four or five decades. And then what is also keeping up is, if one may summarise or participate in those discussions, perhaps one way to capture is, to see through some sort of function of power, actors and partnership. Partnership, as Professor Nishat said, all kinds of odd, he used the word 'odd', combinations are happening. He questioned: Where is the G-77 traditional grouping, Africa, the LDCs? And reflected, perhaps these are sizzling out. He mentioned that, these are very important to keep in mind when one looks into substance.

While discussing substance, he used the word 'murky' to bring in 'the punch'. He noted there are two ways to look at it. One is what are the elements which are surfacing? He referred to the fourteen clusters of goals mentioned by the Foreign Secretary. Among this, seven are emerging. The way he sees it is, certain goals are emerging 'a little' clearly, like inequality, access to dignified and decent jobs, hunger, food, nutrition, security in one basket, health, education, and some are unhappily with little difficulty accepting 'quality aspect'. And then on skill and vocational training, there is still considerable debate on sustainable growth and inclusive development, there is still a debate on whether these should cross cutting one or standalone one. Interestingly, on the issue of energy, he noted, there is already overarching sort of consensus. But the ones Bangladesh, for instance, is focused on and the ones that are great dear and critical for the country, in terms of existence and sustenance, are water, oceans and seas. It is seen, suddenly, there is a great surge or focus on oceans and seas and someone may quit this as a sort of diversity tactics.

On the tactics plane, he said the group dynamics is absolutely unprecedented. Usually, in such negotiations, G-77, LDCs, Africa, and obviously the Northern or the industrialist countries, would come along the lines of European, American and others. Those lines are just not there. Interestingly, in this regard, these groupings are essentially driven by interests. This is something unheard of, this is something very difficult to fathom. The way the OWG discussion is followed, from one meeting to other, there is a candid assessments by the OWG co-chairs, that the last time countries met, discussed and realised, this time there is complete difference in terms of process



and mechanism. To sum it up, if a country was round up with some 'x' country, 'y' country or a group of ten countries previously, next time it would shift into another block. It is that dynamic one may say. He noted that baskets of proposals are always coming. If one goes back to last four months, there are three baskets which have emerged. One has essentially come from a basket from the SBSN network of which the Foreign Secretary has referred to. The other is, few months back suddenly the General Assembly President floated his own thinking and said 'these are my proposals', and very recently, this month, there has something that is South-centered. This one may say are certainly not exhaustive. Any one looks at it, it would be evident. But what is necessary is the end game. As one sees it, the end game is to push it into certain directions. But at the end of the day what is clear that the elbow room is getting compromised. The reason is, as been heard enough from HLP to all other places, there is very categorical directive pronouncement, which should be simplistic and so forth; but important enough this should be small in number. When one say small in number, people have a sense essentially it would not cross ten, eleven or twelve. If that is the case then it is becoming difficult because as a function of power, actor and partnership; if one is able to club a completely unthought-of undiscussed goal into the scheme and that may get through; then what would happen to something Bangladesh has long been looking at the most plausible to get into that box, it would get sidelined. For example, he mentioned migration, population dynamics and water. He noted, with reference to Professor Nishat, who said it very categorically that water is not just at all wash agenda. Water has at least five pillars to look at.

Moving into the means of implementation, he noted, the matrix of means of implementation, development cooperation that one has known for last four or five decades, particularly thanks to OECD, perhaps is now going through radical transformation. What is now being talked about particularly from 'friends of North' is smart or catalytic ODA to be targeted. LDCs 0.1520 should also have something for SIC as well as for Africa. South-South triangular cooperation should come into a box, but everyone should be mindful is that something would really affect a country, for example, Bangladesh. While noting about corporate or private finance, he questioned, should not Bangladesh leverage it? And, what does Bangladesh understand by leveraging? He also mentioned about remittance. He further pointed: when one says development finance to leverage, what are the other innovating financing elements that Bangladesh has to leverage? Philanthropist, family foundation, pension fund and anything else beyond, is not clear. The discussion is not going into that phase yet.

There is also the element of technology transfer. The key challenges, if summarised, is centrality of states, the way one have known the developing to flow through; the issue of 'people first', and how to configure that in equation; where is right to development, when the entire discourse is about development; how to secure balance between human rights, equity and sustainability, the balance between concern and interests, the balance between implementability and data backing of SDGs and the balance between differentiated circumstances, differing needs, divergent capacities, finally, commitment with a question mark.

## Open Discussion

**Mr Sheikh Mohammed Belal**, Director General, East Asia and Pacific Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, talked about right to development. He mentioned that the issue which most



contributed to development discourse has been left out. If there is the option to choose between East and West is given, he believes, most people will look to East. In the development debate, the country that liberated almost 500million people is China. He questioned: In this whole development debate how Bangladesh is making effort to take lessons from the country that liberated its people from poverty and contributed most to this debate? He further stated, referring to the discussions of Mr M Riaz Hamidullah, that he is aware there are issues of governance, and human rights. But at the end, people's desire and needs are crucial.

**Mr Ashique Rahman**, Research Fellow of BISS, asked about the decision making process of post-2015 development agenda. It is mentioned that three simultaneous processes are going on along with consultative process at the national level to incorporate concerns of developing countries. He questioned about the possibility of bottom-up process in place of top-down process. Mr Rahman also queried about the possibilities of including the elderly population in the next agenda. It has long been a concern for developed countries and becoming a concern for developing countries as well.

**Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad**, Chairman, Board of Governors of BISS started by commenting people's goals is a good indication to determine what must be given priority. He added to the concerns expressed by Professor Mustafizur Rahman and questioned how the technology transfer and financing of mitigation and adaptation as well as development will be ensured and what can be done nationally and how the nation can persuade those better endows to rise to their responsibilities.

**Mr Md Shahidul Haque**, Foreign Secretary, Government of Bangladesh, referring to the question asked by Ambassador Ashfaqur Rahman, asked about the issue of resources and implementation. He questioned who will share the cost of implementation of targets of MDGs since this is the dimension where negotiation will be difficult. He questioned: Where the money will come from? How bilateral donors and international civil servants will negotiate?

In his response to the comments and questions from the floor, **Mr Neal Walker**, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh, said that China has been very active within the UN regarding South-South and South-China cooperation and these groups are trying to share their





experiences not only through the UN system but directly and bilaterally as well. He noted that much progress has been made with regard to China working with the UN system although there is no obligation to do so. It is a matter of pride as far as the UN is concerned. On the decision-making in post-2015, he said that the decision-maker will be the General Assembly, the leaders of the world. He mentioned that although Millennium Declarations and MDGs were drafted in a short time and dark room, but they were debated in the General Assembly and were signed off by the 196 countries in 2000 and owned by the member states. Anything coming out of the post-2015 must also pass the test to make sure that countries take the high road. Countries make the commitment about what citizens are expecting and citizens are working for. One of the courageous decisions made by the Secretary General is the UN is doing its own research and setting up agenda. UN has its own agenda of human rights, social development, and gender equality and so on. So UN is also working on behalf of those who are marginalised and unable to speak up for themselves. So at the end the decisions of post MDGs will be made by the governments of the world. The process that is being followed now is a bottom-up process. To fit into that, he hoped that UN will be articulate enough and coherent enough so that the resulting framework is good. On the issue of financing, he suggested, there should be a parallel process that includes push to the OECD countries to put up the money they committed over many years as well as push back the least developed countries. There are enormous resources in countries like Bangladesh. With regard to the success in the MDGs in Bangladesh, the national commitments to MDGs have been as important, if not more, as the ODA that come in. He stated that he does not encourage dependency mentality and at the end these goals need to belong to the countries that have the most to gain from their implementation. If the country has the most to gain then the country would be making those investments itself. That is really critical to keep in mind. But at the same time it is necessary to consistently push for more investments in ODA. It can also be taken out of the military budget as Professor QK Ahmad suggested.

In his response to the comments and questions from the floor, **Dr Mustafizur Rahman**, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, thinks that right to development reflects a different perspective. As opposed to the first set of MDGs, the second set of MDGs will take a right-based approach. If it is based on right-based approach, in the constitution of all countries, there is right to food, information, housing, health etc. But unless one have permanently endorsed act, for example, in India there is right to food act. If one is hungry, one can have food at two rupees per kg. So one should look at that perspective and aim at the right based approach. It is not that someone is giving education: someone is addressing poverty alleviation, it is the right of the people. On the issue of financial resources, he stated, it is very disheartening to see how the global scenario will evolve over the next fifteen years. There was financial crisis and the crisis before that and capitalism is facing a lot of trouble and financial crisis is becoming more frequent. The architecture of finance will become very difficult. Taking that into account, Bangladesh should put mind into is how Bangladesh generates its own resources. If Bangladesh can generate its own resources, that will be very important. For example, if one talks about the tax GDP ratio, one of the lowest even by South Asian standard. He questioned: What is the tax effort? What is the percentage of people within the tax net? This is one issue. He also talked about Global Integrity Report published every year and it shown that 1.5 billion USD goes out of Bangladesh through



capital flight through over-invoicing, offshore accounts etc. He questioned: Who will address those? It is necessary to put the houses in order. He noted that he is not very sure whether all the finances will be coming either from development partners, in recent times only the UK government, which has enhanced its contribution. Almost all the others, except one or two, have reduced the aid. Not only the financial resource, if one opens up the labour market, not only the good market, then, three percentages of labour markets of developed countries will generate 150 billion dollar worth of market. Take global, make global trade regime fair. That is also another way. About remittances, he noted, there is difficulty with regard to sending money when people go. So, financial resources can be generated in other ways. That is my point on financial resources.

In her response to the comments and questions from the floor, **Ms Sarah Cooke**, Head of DFID Bangladesh, talked about the transformative shift identified by the high-level report. And she also mentioned, that the important message of the high-level panel proposed, is that no target is reached unless reached for all groups. They wanted the data to be disaggregated according to income, gender, age, people with disability, and a very clear target that have been met by all relevant income and social groups. This is very important step forward in terms of high-level panel report. From the MDGs, it is already known what worked and what did not. She focused on a clear proposal to step forward and making a line between what worked and what did not. Therefore, propelling from below is extremely necessary to eradicate poverty by 2030. She also hoped that the commitment of 0.7 per cent of GNI is met. The UK government is committed to meeting its 0.7 per cent target. But she also noted that other sources of funding. The domestic resource mobilisation is important. The role of private sector and the issue of technology transfer are also important. It is necessary to look out to what other financial resources are available to deliver the post-2015 agenda.

In his response to the comments and questions from the floor, **Mr M Riaz Hamidullah** informed the fact that for the last two years consecutively ODA from the OECD countries has declined. On the issue of technology, he stated that as much as money matters, from climate change to development, technology also matters. He noted that there is dichotomy in knowledge driven society, it is said that science, technology, innovation which should be new paradigm of development, but there is contradiction. When it comes to that, in terms of technology, development and transfer, there is so much of hurdle. It was also explained that at the issue of technology, for example, countries like LDCs, these are not asking for technology which should be life style enriching. It should be life threatening or lifesaving ones. Of late, there is a very credible example which should help global community, not only the LDCs, to move forward. There is a motion General Assembly has adopted to move with technology bank for the LDCs. This is something truly noble where it is a partnership where the EU and all others have joined unanimously. Over the next one year or so the expense and success of the technology bank would really help not only for countries with differing circumstances like the LDCs but also for others how really one can lift up the difficulties of technology *vis-à-vis* IPR, and non-relaxation etc.

**Mr Md Shahidul Haque** mentioned in his earlier responses to designated discussants that Bangladesh would be strategic in its negotiation. He also informed that Bangladesh has been party



to the initial discussion and negotiation in drafting global report released prior to the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly and led a delegation to Foreign and Commonwealth Office to share the Bangladesh's thoughts. Although it is not a perfect report and criticised widely but certainly the report has some thrust formative issue. Foreign Secretary also informed about the exercise of members of ESCAP related to post-2015 agenda to see how ESCAP looks into some of the post 2015 issues. It came out with a very interesting report. The report identified seven principles and twelve goals. It is very relevant and Bangladesh is participating in it. It looks at post 2015 totally from a different angle. Seven principles include sustainable development with inclusive growth, national development needs, equity, source of finance and partnership, national statistical issues etc. In terms of twelve goals, that are transformative goals, zero-income poverty, zero hunger and malnutrition, gender equality, decent job for everyone of working age, health for all, improved living condition for all, quality education for all, liveable cities, environmental responsibilities and management of natural resources, disaster reduction, accountable and responsive government, strong development partnership and reformed global governance. These are the suggestive goals that came out from the Asia-Pacific region to test how Asia-Pacific countries are looking at it. He also informed a list of priorities of mass people about what they would like to see in the report that was identified through a vote. The list included better job for everyone (got the highest vote), access to clean water and sanitation, better transport and road, phone and internet access, reliable energy at home, governance, political freedom and equality etc. That is how people look into how the post-2015 would look like.

In his closing remarks, Foreign Secretary, mentioned that he will share with how the foreign office is struggling with some of the developments and how they are looking at it. As it is seen, the starting point is Rio+20 which play out the fundamental role of the debate. But it is seen the debate has moved quite far away from Rio+20 for issues like technology, water, ocean, governance and human rights. When positioning ourselves in 2030, talking about for the next fifteen years, it will be a radically different world. He shared about three reports. 'What are the global trends 2030?' That came out from the US National Security Intelligence. Then HSBC 2050, 'how 2050 will look in terms of economy?' And, the third is the report on global risk 2040. If three reports are taken together, one would see, by 2030 the world will be a radically different world in every possible ways — politically, geo-strategically, economically and socially. So the things that are being debated today would end up totally less relevant, if said in a milder form. That is where the uncertainty in the negotiation comes in. The issues that are being negotiated possibly would not be there to negotiate or would not be in reality. He shared another interesting report that have come out but got very little attention by the international community. A report published by Asia-Europe Foundation, International Institute for Sustainable Development and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies. They have given different goals. They have given four goals: the ultimate ends for post-2015 framework is human and planetary well-being, forget about goal, fix that goal and find out indicator. Second, Intermediate ends: human capital and social capital, let have the goal, look at targets, look at the indicators. Forget about 12, 14 and 17. Intermediate means: built capital and human capital, so, capital and human capital and the last, creation and maintenance of natural capital. So, they have moved away from traditional way of looking at it and brought in blue economy concept into the development. That is where



they are pinning down some of their ideas. It is to be seen how some of this eventually gets in the negotiating text and how to deal with it. It is almost sure that there will not be an extension on the MDGs, so it will be not even MDG plus, it will be a hybrid different kind of development goal where there will be possibly at the end a bit of MDGs plus as well as governance, development, human rights will feature in. In which way **it will feature in, what will** be the indicators, when we reach the targets is yet to negotiate. But it certainly has to reflect given the 2030 in picture radically different. He questioned: How will it be decided? He informed, the text will be negotiated starting from September 2014 for at least a year and then it will go to the General Assembly for adoption. He concluded by thanking everyone.

Rapporteurs: Mr Nazmul Arifeen, Mr Muhibbur Rahman and Ms Monzima Haque, Research Officers, BIISS; Coordinator: Dr Mahfuz Kabir, Senior Research Fellow, BIISS



## Annex



## Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and Bangladesh: Achievements Attained, Challenges Faced and Remaining Tasks

Professor Dr Shamsul Alam

Member, General Economics Division

Planning Commission

Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh

### The Millennium Declaration

At the verge of the last millennium, September 2000, the member states of United Nations, unanimously taken a resolution on its 55<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (UNGA), to reaffirm faith in UN Charter as for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world in the new millennium. Based on the United Nations global conferences of the 1990s the declaration became more commonly renowned as 'Millennium Declaration', committing to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets - with a deadline of 2015 - that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals. The declaration was framed under certain fundamental values for 21<sup>st</sup> century, which were Freedom, Equality, Solidarity, Tolerance, and Respect for nature and shared responsibility in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. All the member states recognized the unevenly shared benefit of globalization which requires common effort to overcome the situation and advance the human race in the new era. On the basis of upheld values and principles, the declaration included Peace, security and disarmament; development and poverty eradication; protecting common environment; human rights, democracy and good governance; protecting the vulnerable; meeting the special needs of Africa and Strengthening the United Nations as the center of attention for new millennium. The declaration was the origin of framing the Millennium Development Goals, focusing mainly development and poverty eradication.

### Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

'Millennium Declaration' embedded the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a framework of 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators which were set to measure progress towards the MDGs over the period from 1990 to 2015. However, from January 2008, 21 targets were reset and 60 indicators have been used to monitor the MDGs progress. MDGs range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 – form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and the entire world's leading development institutions. The MDGs are comprised with eight goals, which are, Goal 1: *Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger*; Goal 2: *Achieve Universal Primary Education*; Goal 3: *Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*; Goal 4: *Reduce Child Mortality*; Goal 5: *Improve Maternal Health*; Goal 6: *Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases*; Goal 7: *Ensure Environmental Sustainability* and Goal 8: *Develop a Global Partnership for Development*. The MDGs have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the poorest of the world. They indeed guided the efforts of the international community, particularly in the developing countries, to intensify the fight against disenabling factors, which stood in the way of realizing and harnessing the full human potential. During observing the occasion of 1000 days left for MDGs achievement by 2015, UN Secretary General Ban ki Moon said "The MDGs are the most successful global anti-poverty push in history.



The goals have helped set global and national priorities, mobilise action, and achieve remarkable results.” Since 2000, progress has been achieved in many of the targets identified under the MDGs, while other areas deserve further attention.

## MDGs in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has integrated Millennium Development Goals (the MDGs) within the economic and social targets of its Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-15). General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh has been monitoring and reporting the MDG status through the ‘Millennium Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report’ since 2005. The latest report on MDGs (2012) reveals that Bangladesh has already met some targets of MDGs like reducing poverty gap ratio, attaining gender parity at primary and secondary levels education, increasing immunization coverage, under-five mortality rate reduction, containing HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs, children under five sleeping under insecticide treated bed nets, detection and cure rate of TB under DOTS etc. Bangladesh has been convincingly moving towards achieving most of the goals and targets, while some of them can be attained with enhanced efforts.

## Achievements of MDGs in Bangladesh

Mr. Neal Walker, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh can be quoted-

“The world really needs an articulate Bangladeshi voice, a strong but concise statement on what is relevant for the nation and consequently, for the world’s least developed countries.”

Bangladesh has established herself as a role model of MDGs for her prominent achievement in Goal-1 (*Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger*), Goal-3 (*Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*), Goal-4 (*Reduce Child Mortality*) and Goal-6 (*Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases*). The success stories, performance and attainments of Bangladesh in some of these MDGs reveal the continually stalwart political commitment and problem solving attitude from the government accompanied by its pro-poor growth strategies.

Bangladesh being the highly densely populated and one of the least developed countries in world has been treated as a champion in the implementation of MDGs. The success story of Bangladesh in achieving MDGs is acclaimed globally when our Bangladesh’s success in reducing under five child mortality rate (MDG-3) was acclaimed globally and our Hon’ble Prime Minister was awarded with ‘UN MDG Awards 2010’. Bangladesh was also awarded with the South-South Award ‘Digital Health for Digital Development’ in 2011 for innovative idea to use the Information and Communication Technology for progress of the health of women and children which had a huge impact on attainment of MDG-3&4. In June’2013 Bangladesh received the ‘Diploma Award’ from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) during FAO’s 38th session Conference in Rome, for its achievement in the MDG-1 by the end of 2012. Besides the diploma award, Bangladesh along with other 37 countries honored with the ‘special recognition’ for their outstanding progress in fighting hunger and poverty. Finally, in September’2013 in the 68<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, Bangladesh was awarded with the South-South Award once again. The recently published Human Development Report-2013 of the UNDP titled “The Rise of the South” has placed Bangladesh among the 18 countries of the world that have made substantial



progress in achieving MDGs. They have identified three notable drivers of development: a proactive developmental state, tapping of global markets and determined social policy and innovation.

The World Development Report-2013 of the World Bank mentioned that development pessimism about Bangladesh in the past was understandable, but has been now proven wrong. Some countries have done well in human development indicators, and others have done well in economic growth, but Bangladesh belongs to a rather small group of countries that have done well on both fronts, the initial pessimism notwithstanding. This is the crux of the 'development surprise' that transformed Bangladesh. Bangladesh Poverty Assessment Report-2013 prepared by The World Bank states that "The depth of poverty was nearly halved over the 2000-2010 period, allowing Bangladesh to attain the depth-of-poverty MDG target of 8 percent at least five years in advance of 2015. Similarly, the poverty projections suggest that Bangladesh will achieve the first MDG goal of halving the poverty headcount sometime in 2013, two years early than the target."

Bangladesh has achieved remarkable progresses in the areas of poverty alleviation, reducing prevalence of underweight children, primary schooling completion rate, lowering the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), improving immunization coverage and reducing the incidence of communicable diseases. The 2010 survey data reveal that incidence of poverty has been declining at an annual rate of 2.47 percent in Bangladesh during 1991-1992 to 2010 against the MDG target of 2.12 percent. In this context it can be said that the target of halving the population living under the poverty line has already been achieved in 2012.

### Challenges faced in achieving MDG Targets in Bangladesh

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The Government of Bangladesh has been committed in achieving the MDGs within the given timeframe and well tuned her development strategies in line with the MDGs. Bangladesh is among the few countries who has prepared the *MDG Needs Assessment & Costing*, and based on that prepared the *MDG Financing Strategy*. Resource constraint is one of the major drawbacks of achieving the MDGs. According to the *MDG Financing Strategy for Bangladesh 2011* estimated a total requirement of US\$ 78.2 billion during 2011-15 for attaining all the MDGs in Bangladesh. Two scenarios, baseline and high growth, were considered in the study. **It was estimated that Bangladesh needed foreign assistance to the tune of US\$ 5 billion and US\$ 3 billion per year under the baseline and the high growth scenarios respectively. But received on an average US \$ 1.32 billion annually (from 1990 to 2011) that is far below what is required.**

The improvement of general governance structure to reduce costs of doing business is another challenge for achieving MDGs. In order to stimulate foreign investment and encourage regional investment in emerging and potentially high return sectors, establishment of Special Economic Zones along the international borders, encouragement of joint ventures with Non-Resident Bangladeshis and similar other efforts require a better investment climate. Without more concerted efforts for achieving better governance would not support speedy MDG attainment.

Achieving a higher growth trajectory is also a challenge for attaining MDGs. A policy regime that provides effective support to the growth of small and informal sector activities with significant poverty alleviation effects can boost up the growth and lower poverty. In particular, developing the capacity of medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs) to take full advantage of global trade



can prove critical in ensuring an inclusive trade regime in Bangladesh. Bangladesh, being a member of the LDC group at the WTO, Bangladesh needs to form strategic alliances with other LDCs in order to present a unified and strong position in the WTO negotiations in the area of services, as the country has a large endowment of less-skilled and semi-skilled labour which can repatriate significant remittances which is a very significant growth driver for Bangladesh. A comprehensive and time-bound trade strategy which captures Bangladesh's dynamic comparative advantages and outlines its transformation from a low skilled, low-value added economy to a moderately skilled and medium-value added economy is a must.

### Remaining Tasks of MDGs Implementation

The MDG report of Bangladesh (2012) indicates the challenges of achieving MDGs in several key areas. With respect to eradication of extreme poverty, all the four indicators related to the target of *'achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all'* need renewed attention and may even remain as one of the unfinished agenda. In Bangladesh the share of the manufacturing sector in GDP has increased, while that of agriculture has declined. However, the service sector has remained the dominant contributor to GDP and has sustained the same level of contribution throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Labour force participation rate in Bangladesh is low and has ranged between 51.2 percent and 59.3 percent over the last two decades. Unemployment as well as underemployment is especially acute among the young people between 15 to 24 years of age. In the emerging era of population dividend, Bangladesh has to commit further resources afresh to make the lower secondary education compulsory and improve quality of general and technical education in no loss of time. This age group comprises 8.68 percent of Bangladesh's population and 23 percent of the labour force. While Bangladesh has demonstrated its capacity for achieving the goal of poverty eradication within the target timeframe but attaining food security and nutritional wellbeing still remains a challenge to be tackled.

With respect to education; significant progress has been made in increasing equitable access in education (NER: 98.7 percent; girls: 99.4 percent, boys: 97.2 percent), reduction of dropouts, improvement in completion of the cycle, and implementation of a number of quality enhancement measures in primary education. However, this sector faces significant challenges in achieving the targets which include ensuring survival rate to grade V (which is now 80%); still dropout rate is 20%, improving quality of primary education, increasing share of education in government budget and increasing coverage and improving quality of adolescent and adult literacy programmes. Achieving gender parity at tertiary level still remains a big challenge. However, share of women in wage employment in the non-agriculture is hovering around 20 percent for the last two decades. The proportion of seats held by women in national parliament, though impressive, may hardly be achieved the target of 33% in 2015.

Though Bangladesh is on track to achieve the target of reducing Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel is yet to get closer to the desired level (50%, now is 32%). Moreover, the target of 'universal access to reproductive health' really needs particular attention for the sustainability of the success of reducing MMR. Notwithstanding the low incidence of the communicable diseases and the progress made, Bangladesh faces challenges in maintaining the trend. These include inadequate coverage of Most at Risk Population, limited technical and managerial capacity and lack of strategic information management.



It is likely that some of the goals of the MDGs would remain unfulfilled by 2015. Therefore, the world community must continue its efforts to make the earth free from hunger and poverty in the shortest possible time. In retrospect, it may be stated that one of the basic tenets of the MDGs is that a big push in terms of provision of resources and other efforts would accelerate progress beyond historical norms in respective areas and meet the goals. We have got only less than 700 days (Feb'14 to Dec'15) ahead to realise all the targets of MDGs and perhaps there will remain some unfinished agenda even if we put all our efforts by the time period left. Those unfinished agenda must carefully be re-crafted in the Post 2015 development agenda.

## Post 2015 Development Agenda

As we are approaching the target year for the expiry of the MDGs, some degree of consensus is however emerging to continue the ongoing work for completing the unfinished agenda of MDGs and to articulate a new set of goals in the post 2015 period primarily ensuring sustainability of development. Based on the experiences of MDGs the emerging expectations is that the new goals should keep the people at the centre of development and build a development framework which is right based, peace centric, inclusive, equitable and earth caring. UN Conference on Sustainable Development rearticulated the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely social, economic and environmental dimensions. The conference underscored that the Post 2015 Development Agenda should be action oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, inspirational, global in nature and universally acceptable to all countries, while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

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Bangladesh's proposal on Post 2015 development agenda was prepared in a more holistic, comprehensive and inclusive manner taking inputs from different stakeholders like government officials, representatives of NGOs, members of civil society, academics, researchers, development partners, media representatives, human right activists, and all of them were consulted in regional and national levels. GED, Planning Commission initiated rounds of consultations among the multiple stakeholders; the final national consultation was, however, inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister showing the highest level political commitment on framing the Post 2015 Development Agenda. As outcome of multi-level dialogues and consultations, the national document of Bangladesh contains 11 goals, 58 targets along with 241 measurable indicators. In the Bangladesh proposal on development agenda beyond 2015 submitted to United Nation, where the goals are as follows:

*'Unleash human potentials for sustainable development'*

- *'Eradicate poverty and reduce inequality'*
- *'Ensure sustainable food security and nutrition for all'*
- *'Universal access to health and family planning services',*
- *'Achieve gender equality'*
- *'Ensure quality education and skills for all',*
- *'Increase employment opportunities and ensure worker rights'*
- *'Ensure good governance'*
- *'Promote sustainable production and consumption'*



- ‘*Ensure environmental sustainability and disaster management*’
- ‘*Strengthen international cooperation and partnership for Sustainable Development*’

## Conclusion

As development budgets shrink and challenges mount, numbers of donor countries have already begun to seek waiver in their commitment to international development and even to reconsider the promises they made not only in the Millennium Declaration but also in the Monterrey Consensus and the G8's Gleneagles Declaration. In spite the dire need for resources in the current economic situation, growing reluctance to honour pledges cannot be ascribed to budgetary constraints alone, given the comparatively modest sums involved. The message must be that achieving the MDGs is not optional, because it is an essential investment in a safer, more human and prosperous world as per the ‘Millennium Declaration’. The goals are not just an “aid obligation” but the basis for political and economic strategies that will benefit all the world's citizens, and not just the least fortunate.



## Programme

Inaugural Session		
9:30 – 9:35	:	Recitation from the Holy Qur'an
9:35 – 9:40	:	Welcome Address <b>Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, ndu, psc</b> Director General, BISS
9:40 – 9:47	:	Address by the Chief Guest <b>Mr Md Shahrar Alam, MP</b> Hon'ble State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh
9:47 – 9:52	:	Remarks by the Chair <b>Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad</b> Chairman, Board of Governors, BISS
BREAK		
Working Session I		
<b>Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and Bangladesh: Achievements Made, Challenges Faced and Remaining Tasks</b> Moderator: <b>Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad</b> Chairman, Board of Governors, BISS		
10:00 – 10:10	:	Keynote Presentation <b>Professor Dr Shamsul Alam</b> Member, General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission
10:10 – 10:20	:	Designated Discussion <b>Mr Ashadul Islam</b> Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Government of Bangladesh <b>Ms Saida Muna Tasneem</b> Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh
10:20 – 10:50	:	Open Discussion
BREAK		
Working Session II		
<b>Rio+20 Outcome and Other Global Processes Related to Sustainable Development: Bangladesh Perspective</b> Moderator: <b>Mr Mesbah ul Alam</b> Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Government of Bangladesh		
11:00 – 11:10	:	Keynote Presentation <b>Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad</b> Chairman, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation
11:10 – 11:20	:	Designated Discussion <b>Professor Dr Ainun Nishat</b> Vice Chancellor, BRAC University <b>Dr Mahfuz Kabir</b> Senior Research Fellow, BISS
11:20 – 11:50	:	Open Discussion
Working Session III		
<b>Emerging Perspectives Within and Architecture of Post-2015 Development Agenda: Bangladesh Perspective</b> Moderator: <b>Mr Md Shahidul Haque</b> Foreign Secretary, Government of Bangladesh		
11:50 – 12:18	:	<b>Mr Neal Walker</b> United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh <b>Ms Sarah Cooke</b> Head of DFID Bangladesh <b>Mr M Riaz Hamidullah</b> Director General (EA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh <b>Professor Dr Mustafizur Rahman</b> Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue
12:18 – 12:48	:	Open Discussion
12:48 – 12:58	:	Closing Remark by the Moderator



## SHORT PROFILES

### **Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP**

State Minister

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of Bangladesh

Born in 1970 in Chittagong, Mr Md Shahriar Alam, MP spent his early life in Lalmonirhat and Rajshahi. He received his Bachelor of Commerce Degree from City College, Chittagong and obtained an MBA (Master of Business Administration) from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka. Mr Alam completed 1<sup>st</sup> CAPSTONE course at NDC. He started his career as a businessman in RMG sector in 1995. A prominent entrepreneur having interest in different fields, his main focus is on textile business that employs 25 thousand workers. As a leading exporter, his company has been exporting to major destinations which include, among others, Japan, Australia and Russia. His outstanding entrepreneurial success has helped him win the National Export Trophy in Knitwear Category for 2007-2008. His business house trains disables with the assistance from CRP and employs the highest number of physically challenged individuals. This led to CSR Award from global buyers.

Mr Alam has been enthusiastic to ensure effective representation of the new generation in politics and in the Parliament. As a Member of Parliament, Mr Alam has made enormous contributions in various capacities. While acting as the Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Information, he played a key role in finalising the draft of the Right to Information Act (RTI) and presented the RTI during various orientation programmes before the newly elected Members of the Parliament. Mr Alam also served as a Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Science & Technology. He acted as the Vice Chairman of All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Climate Change, Education and Poverty Reduction and Vice Chairman of All Party Parliamentary Group on MDGs, PRSP, WTO and Bangladesh Development Forum.

Mr Alam was also a member of the Preview Committee on Sangsad Bangladesh TV. He was a regular and active member of the discussion panel in the parliament session on budget and poverty reduction plan. An avid promoter of education, he spent the remuneration received as the Member of Parliament to run monthly scholarship programmes for junior school students. He has a personal dream to see a poverty-free Bangladesh. Having spent many years in north Bengal, he established the North Bengal Development Forum to pursue different development agenda of the region.

A widely travelled person, Mr Alam visited all parts of the world which include, among others, England, Canada, Russia, India, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, China, Kenya, UAE, USA, France, Japan, the Maldives, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, South Korea, South Africa and Denmark.

### **Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad**

Chairman, Board of Governors

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies

Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad received BA (Hons) and MA in Political Science, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. He also received Foundation training at Civil Officers Training Academy;



Senior Officers' Security Course; Chinese Language training for two years from the Language Institute in Beijing, China and Commonwealth Orientation, Commonwealth Institute, London. In his diplomatic career he was, *inter alia*, Ambassador (Grade-A) of Bangladesh to the People's Republic of China [He went on retirement on 10 November 2010. After that he was appointed Ambassador on contract], High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Singapore (March 2003-July 2007); Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations, New York (December 2001-March 2003); Consul General, New York (June 2001- November 2001); Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka (March 2000- June 2001); and Counsellor/ Minister, Embassy of Bangladesh, Doha, Qatar; February 1998-February 2000.

He attended a number of international conferences that include 14<sup>th</sup> ICFM 1984 (Dhaka); International Conference of Jute Growing Countries 1984 (Hangzhou, China); 7<sup>th</sup> SAARC Summit 1993 (Dhaka); SAARC Foreign Minister's Conference 1994 (Dhaka); SAARC Senior Officials meeting on Service Conditions of SAARC Secretariat Staff 1993 (Thimpu, Bhutan); Meeting of the SAARC Working Committee on Transport 1994 (Colombo, Sri Lanka) and International Meeting on Bosnia 1995 (London). He Also visited North Korea, South Korea, Brunei, Bahrain, Pakistan as member of official delegations. He chaired the panel discussion session on South China Sea in the 1<sup>st</sup> Peace Forum hosted by Qinghua University and headed the Bangladesh delegation in the WIPO Diplomatic Conference held in Beijing (2012). Also he attended and represented Bangladesh in numerous other important meetings, seminars and conferences during his long diplomatic career.

### **Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, ndu, psc**

Director General

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies

Major General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed was commissioned in 4 East Bengal Regiment, Bangladesh Army on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1983 with 9<sup>th</sup> BMA Long Course. Besides serving in various regimental appointments, he also commanded an Infantry Battalion. He had the unique opportunity of Commanding the 1<sup>st</sup> Bangladesh Battalion. He had the opportunity of serving as the senior operational staff officer and Senior Administrative Staff Officer of infantry brigade. In his credit he also had instructional appointments in both in Cadet College & Bangladesh Military Academy. Subsequently, he commanded an Infantry Brigade. Before joining BIIS, he was the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 19 Infantry Division.

Major General Ahmed has successfully completed various training curricula from both home and abroad. He attended the International Symposium Course of 2007 in National Defence University (NDU), Beijing (China). He is also a NESA graduate who attended and successfully completed NESA Executive Seminar in NESA Centre, NDU, Washington (USA). He is also a graduate of Defence Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur. He also completed Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) under Dhaka University, where he secured the first position and earned MIST Gold Medal. Besides, he has attended numerous seminars, conferences, workshops etc both at home and abroad.

Major General Ahmed served under United Nations in Mozambique as a peace keeper of ONUMOZ. He visited Mozambique, Swaziland, South Africa, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Turkey, China, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and USA.



**Mr Md Ashadul Islam**

Additional Secretary, UN Wing  
Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance  
Government of Bangladesh

Mr Md Ashadul Islam is actively involved in formulation of public policy, monitoring policy implementation process, financial management, managing UN system agencies working in Bangladesh, liaising with UN system agencies on issues of pursuing UN agreed development goals including MDG, implementation and monitoring of UNDAF action plan, chairing the inter-ministerial meetings as part of approval process of technical assistance projects, negotiating with multilateral development partners, UN agencies in particular, coordinating the development programme related activities between UN agencies and different government ministries and agencies, representing the country in different international forums and conference, ensuring the implementation of country's development plan (five-year plan) and development priorities. He previously worked in the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Communication, Finance Division, Planning, Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment. He is trained on financial management, IT, administration, negotiation, presentation, stress management, First Aid and fire safety.

**Ms Saida Muna Tasneem**

Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Government of Bangladesh

Ms Saida Muna Tasneem is a career diplomat. She is currently Director General (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh. Previously she was, inter alia, Counsellor (Political), Bangladesh High Commission, London where she looked after bilateral political relations between Bangladesh and the UK and was the Bangladesh liaison officer in the Commonwealth. She has served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Bangladesh Permanent Mission in the UN in New York. She was also Director for SAARC and BIMSTEC at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She also worked as Director for South Asia and in the UN and Human Rights Wing at the Ministry. She has represented the Government of Bangladesh in numerous international meetings on peace and security, human rights and humanitarian law, environment and counter-terrorism matters at the UN, Commonwealth, SAARC, BIMSTEC and other multilateral and regional forums. She graduated from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka.

**Mr Mesbah ul Alam**

Secretary  
Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief  
Government of Bangladesh

Mr Mesbah ul Alam obtained Master of Business Administration (Major: Human Resource Management) From ADUST, Bangladesh and Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (Honors) From Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh. He received in-service trainings, among others, on Managing At The Top (MATT-2) Stage-1 training from Civil Service Training College, Singapore; MATT2 Stage-2 training at University of Manchester, UK; Survey and Settlement Training at Department of Land Records and Surveys, Dhaka; and Planning and Project Management training at Academy of Planning and Development, Dhaka. Previously he was Secretary of Ministry of



Environment and Forests, Government of Bangladesh. He was the Member of Privatization Commission, Directing Staff of the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), Commissioner, Barisal Division (Additional Secretary), Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism and Ministry of Science & ICT.

### **Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad**

Chairman

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), Dhaka

Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad has been keenly promoting sustainable development in all its aspects. He is also currently the chairman of the governing council of Dhaka School of Economics. He is a former president of Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) and the founder chairman of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP). He was president of the Kuala Lumpur-based Association of Development Research and Training Institutes of Asia and the Pacific (ADIPA) and was vice president of the Rome-based Society for International Development (SID). He received the Ekushey Padak awarded by the Government of Bangladesh in 2009. He was a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) team that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. He has also been the Convener of the Drafting Committee for the Country Report of Bangladesh "Rio 20: National Report on Sustainable Development" for the Brazil United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (June 2012). He has played a key role in preparing the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) 2009. He was a Coordinating Lead Author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)-Third Assessment (completed in 2001) and Lead Author for IPCC Fourth Assessment (2004-2007).

After primary education at home under overall guidance by his father and secondary and higher secondary education in Rajnagar Porteous High School in Moulvibazar District and MC College, Sylhet, he studied at the University of Dhaka [MA (Econ); BA (Hons, Econ)] and at the London School of The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), London University [Ph.D (Econ)]. Dr Ahmad participated in the Bangladesh War of Liberation in 1971; worked in the Planning Cell set up by the War time Bangladesh Government. He has to his credit 34 books and over 200 learned articles published at home and abroad.

### **Professor Dr Ainun Nishat**

Vice Chancellor

BRAC University

Professor Dr Ainun Nishat has been working as catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator, championing the wise use of natural resources and sustainable development in Bangladesh for decades. His arena of work and interests include water resource development and management, environment management, biodiversity conservation, coastal zone and wetland conservation and management, disaster management, adaptation to climate change and climate variability and related policy advocacy. Prior to that he was working as the Senior Advisor, Climate Change, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Asia. He was Country Representative of IUCN in Bangladesh from 1998-2009. Before joining IUCN, Dr Nishat was a Professor of Water Resources Engineering of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) where he was a faculty member for over 26 years (1972-1998).



**Dr Mahfuz Kabir**

Senior Research Fellow

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies

Dr Mahfuz Kabir obtained PhD in Economics from School of Economics and Finance, Curtin University, Australia (record PhD student in economics) sponsored by Curtin Business School Doctoral Scholarship. He was a researcher of External Sector and National Security components of background studies of the Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-2015) of the Government of Bangladesh. His areas of contribution and interest include green economy, disaster and climate change, international trade and regional integration, budget, microfinance, household survey, time series and panel data econometrics, stochastic frontier analysis, partial and computable general equilibrium modelling. He has more than 60 publications from reputed national and international houses.

**Mr Md Shahidul Haque**

Foreign Secretary

Government of Bangladesh

Mr Md Shahidul Haque is a career diplomat. He obtained an MA (International Relations) from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in USA (1988) and was awarded Honourable Mention for Robert B Steward Prize for high academic achievement there. He also obtained First Class First, both in Masters and Honours, in Social Welfare from the University of Dhaka. He was also awarded the Dhaka University Chancellors Award, the Grants Commission Award and the Chancellors Gold Medal for his outstanding academic accomplishment.

Mr Haque worked earlier, in the Bangladesh Missions in London (First Secretary, Consular: 1990-94), and Bangkok (Counselor, 1994-96) before serving as a Minister (Director General) in the Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva (1999-2001). He had also served as a Director in various Wings of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Bangladesh, including as the Director of the Foreign Secretary's Office (1996-1998). He also served as Director General and Additional Foreign Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr Haque has represented Bangladesh in various international fora. As a Counselor/Minister at the Bangladesh Permanent Mission in Geneva, he dealt with WIPO, ILO, IOM and IAEA in Vienna.

Mr Haque's areas of academic interests range from migration, climate change, development, trade and human rights issues. His articles on migration and human trafficking issues were published in various national and international journals. He served in the Editorial Board of the IOM World Migration Report and also contributed to IOM's 3 volume training guide on Essentials of Migration Management (2004) as well as IOM-OSCE Trainers Manual on Labour Migration Management (2010).

**Mr Neal Walker**

UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative

Bangladesh

Mr Neal Walker has arrived Bangladesh on 1 April 2011. Previously, he was UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for the Kyrgyz Republic (2006-2011). From 2005-2006, Neal was Chief of Country Office Oversight & Support for Latin America and from



2002-2005 he was Senior Policy Advisor for the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP New York. Neal worked in Guatemala as Senior Deputy Resident Representative (1999-2002) and from 1996-1999 was Deputy Chief for North East Asia in the Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. He spent three years as Deputy Resident Representative in Equatorial Guinea (1993-1996) and began his career with UNDP as Assistant Resident Representative in Sudan (1990-1993). Before joining UNDP, Neal worked for five years for the Organization of American States in the Department of Regional Development where he had various technical assignments covering Bolivia and Central America. Neal holds a BA in Political Science from Eckerd College, Florida and an MA in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He speaks fluent English and Spanish.

### **Ms Sarah Cooke**

Head of DFID Bangladesh

Ms Sarah Cooke arrived in Bangladesh as the DFID Country Representative in October 2012. Prior to this, as Head of the Growth & Resilience Department, she led DFID's policy work on economic growth, investment climate reform, social protection and food security/nutrition/agriculture. She has also worked as Head of the Aid Effectiveness & Accountability Dept, was Deputy Head of the Secretariat to the Commission for Africa and was the Senior Economic Adviser in the International Directors' Office. Before joining DFID, she worked as a Deputy Director in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office, leading cross-Whitehall strategy projects. There, she wrote the first UK International Energy Security and Climate Change Strategy and led the development of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, which was launched by Tony Blair at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002. Sarah has significant overseas experience, having lived and worked in the Solomon Islands, Guyana and Guatemala. She also has private sector experience, beginning her career as a Management Consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers.

### **Mr M Riaz Hamidullah**

Director General (EA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Government of Bangladesh

Mr M Riaz Hamidullah is a career diplomat. He is currently Director General (Economic Affairs), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh. Previously he was, inter alia, Director General (Europe & EU), Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Director, SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu; Director, SAARC & BIMSTEC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations. He has represented the Government of Bangladesh in many national, regional and international meetings. He was educated in Aligarh Muslim University (BSS in Economics) and University of Dhaka.

### **Professor Dr Mustafizur Rahman**

Executive Director  
Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Dhaka

In 1986 Dr Rahman started his teaching career as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Accounting and Information Systems, Faculty of Business Studies, University of Dhaka. Having



taught for twenty-five years, Professor Rahman took voluntary retirement from the University of Dhaka in 2012. At different points in time Professor Rahman has served as a member of various national bodies and committees set up by the Government of Bangladesh. These include, inter alia, WTO Advisory Committee, National Coal Policy Review Committee, Regulatory Reforms Commission, Committee to review 'National Sustainable Development Strategy', National Task Force to monitor the impact of Global Financial Crisis and Core-committee for Transit and Connectivity. He has served as a member of the Panel of Economists for the Sixth Five-Year Plan and the Ten-Year Perspective Plan of Bangladesh and he is currently a member of the Panel of Economists for the Seventh Five Year Plan of Bangladesh. Professor Rahman has been a member of Bangladesh delegations to various multilateral and bilateral negotiations including several WTO Ministerial Conferences.