

## **Bangladesh Development Forum 2010**

**Dhaka, 15-16 February, 2010.**

### **Inaugural Session**

***Welcome Remarks by M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan  
Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh***

**Respected Chief Guest, Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Participants,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

A very Good Morning to you all.

It is my privilege to welcome you all to the Bangladesh Development Forum 2010. We are honoured this morning by the gracious presence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, who has kindly consented to inaugurate this event. You may recall that in the past the Government and the Development Partners used to meet in Paris on an annual basis. Later, the meeting was shifted to Dhaka under the name Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF), which reflects the stronger ownership and leadership of the Government. The main objective of BDF 2010 is to share with Development Partners our vision to make Bangladesh a middle income country by 2021.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

You are all aware that despite resource constraints, vulnerability to natural disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, Bangladesh has made substantial progress in reducing poverty, accelerating the pace of socio-economic development and achieving some of the MDGs. We take pride in the way Bangladesh has dealt with external shocks like international food and fuel price hike and global recession. The prudent policies of the Government together with the resilience of our people were key to this success. We also thank our Development Partners for their support which helped us to make this progress.

**Distinguished Guests,**

In Bangladesh, external resources, most of which is ODA, constitutes around half of the development budget. Therefore, its proper utilization is crucial for growth and poverty reduction. The support of Development Partners has helped Bangladesh to develop its human resources, build resilience to natural disasters, cope with the food crisis, and develop crucial infrastructure. The Government has charted out a challenging, but achievable agenda, with a goal of becoming a middle income country. The potential is there---we have stable macroeconomic fundamentals, strong democratic institutions and a stable Government in place---all are instrumental to robust growth.

**Distinguished Participants,**

In the Inaugural Session, we have invited three honored representatives to speak on behalf of all Development Partners. The World Bank has been the co-organizer and co-chair of the Aid Group Meetings in the past. It is also our largest development partner in terms of the volume of assistance. ADB is our regional development bank. It was quick to respond with generous support to face the recent global financial crisis. Japan has been our largest bilateral partner for the last three decades. However, we fully appreciate that the value of partnership is measured both in quantity and quality of assistance. From that perspective, we hold all our Development Partners in high esteem.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is our pleasure to organize the Bangladesh Development Forum at this point of time. It is a shared responsibility of both the Government and the Development Partners to build consensus on some key issues as well as action plans to make this Forum successful. I urge upon all Development Partners to work together in forging alliance with the Government in our efforts to put Bangladesh on a higher trajectory of growth. Collaborative actions must be undertaken to minimize the transaction costs, secure stronger coordination and thereby enhance aid effectiveness. The Government of Bangladesh strongly feels that there is a scope of deeper and broader collaboration in pursuing the commitments of Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. I am happy to inform you that significant progress has been made in developing the Joint Cooperation Strategy (JCS). The Government welcomes this initiative, which, through harmonizing the approaches of the Development Partners, will enhance coordination amongst them, facilitate alignment to the country systems and strengthen Government ownership.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Before I conclude, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the esteemed high-level delegates from the DP headquarters for travelling long distances for attending this meeting. I am also thankful to the Dhaka-based DP colleagues particularly the members of the Local Consultative Group, who are not only participating in the Forum, but worked hard together with the Government in organizing this event. We are grateful to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, for her inspiring leadership in building a strong partnership amongst us and for her gracious presence here to formally inaugurate this important event. We are thankful to the distinguished guests and participants for your kind presence and continued support.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I once again welcome you all to this meeting and thank you very much for your kind attention.

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