

Country Statement *(3 minutes)*

By

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Session Topic:

A Common Agenda to Advance Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Speakers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualikum,

And a very good day to you all.

I am honored to have the opportunity to speak before the esteemed gathering at the 78th Session of UNESCAP amid commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of its establishment. It is an immense pleasure for me to congratulate ESCAP for its accomplishments in its long journey making commendable contributions to the socio-economic development of the member countries in Asia and the Pacific Region.

The 78th Session is taking place at a time when the world is transitioning to a post-pandemic era with more immense responsibilities than ever before. It is needless to mention that the combined efforts of all concerned partners are a prerequisite to bringing us back to the lost trajectory of sustainable development. Today's session is the right forum to voice our concerns. We urge ESCAP to advocate to the international community for enhancing development cooperation with Bangladesh and other developing countries.

Excellencies,

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Bangladesh relentlessly worked to protect the hard-earned socio-economic growth that the country has been enjoying over the last one decade. Bangladesh faced tremendous challenges both on the public health and economic fronts, which

were overcome through prudent economic, social, and public health intervention under the visionary leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. The country witnessed a three-decade-low economic growth of 3.45% in FY19-20. However, the provisional growth estimate for FY 2020-21 is 6.94% along with other macroeconomic indicators point to the nation finally turning around.

It is indeed a matter of great pride and honor to share in this august gathering that Bangladesh received the final recommendation of UNGA in December 2021 for graduation from the LDC category in 2026, having met the UN eligibility criteria in 2018 and 2021.

Madam Chair,

Excellencies,

Bangladesh as well as the other graduating countries of these regions are exposed to rising challenges intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic in achieving SDGs and sustaining the graduation momentum. We are thankful to UNESCAP for its relentless endeavor to extend support to LDCs including graduating ones in the areas of productive capacity and structural transformation. Nonetheless, we feel that there should be a new era of International Support Measures (ISMs) with the aim of technology and technical knowledge sharing for the smooth transition of all the graduating LDCs.

Excellencies,

Bangladesh is keen on utilizing the opportunities within the Asia Pacific region to facilitate the free flow of goods, services, investment, information, skilled labor, and capital for reversing the disruption caused by the pandemic. It is also of paramount interest to establish seamless connectivity in the areas of transport, energy, and ICT within and outside the Asia Pacific Region. Besides, we need to deepen regional financial cooperation as well as to improve regional surveillance and crisis management capacity, and deliver innovative financing solutions. Bangladesh is engaged in various regional initiatives such as SAARC, BIMSTEC, BBIN, BCIM-EC, etc. in this region with a view to achieving these objectives. We need to capitalize on the best outcomes of the South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation. In the context of Bangladesh's eligibility to be graduated from LDC status, close cooperation between all actors is very crucial.

Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

The recent trend of rising global inflation is another emerging concern in this region. The shock comes at a time when recovery from the pandemic is still incomplete. The Asia-Pacific region is the most vibrant and growing region in the world. It is home to 65% of the world's population. We have to continue to equip ourselves with skills, education, infrastructure, good governance, and above all goodwill to reap the maximum benefits for us all. A strong global partnership will be critical in this important journey for exchange of knowledge, capacity building, financing of the SDGs, and strengthening regional crisis management capacity.

I believe that during this session, we will share our experiences and learn from each other, and agree on a common agenda to implement the SDGs successfully in Asia and the Pacific region as well as other parts of the world.

Thank you all and wish you the very best.

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