

(Monogram)

COP 15

Statement

by

Her Excellency

Sheikh Hasina

Hon'ble Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Copenhagen

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim**Mr. Chairman,** *President*

I warmly congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this crucial conference. I am confident that your dynamic leadership would assure successful outcome of this conference. I also thank you, and the friendly people of Denmark, for the warm hospitality accorded to me and to my delegation, since our arrival in Copenhagen.

Mr. Chairman,

The Conference is a critical one with far-reaching consequences for mankind. Inability to take correct and immediate decisions here would result in topographical changes, food and water insecurity, health hazards, and mass movements of people. Such a nightmare can be avoided by rising above perceived and petty national interests, and wise, collective leaderships, and resolute decisions.

An important development is developed countries' realization of their responsibility of unbridled greenhouse gas emissions, which have resulted in global warming and climate change. Important also is their readiness to cut emissions for reversing the present adverse climate trends. However, to achieve science recommended levels, political will and bold decisions are needed for investment of resources and technologies.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh's greenhouse gas contribution is negligible, but is one of its worst victims. Climate change, and increased frequency, ferocity and erratic pattern of natural disasters are causing havoc in Bangladesh. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has ranked Bangladesh as the most vulnerable country to floods, third most to tsunami, and sixth most to cyclones in terms of human exposure. In addition, salinity intrusions in coastal areas are reducing our cultivable land and threatening the world's largest mangrove forest, the Sunderbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In Bangladesh, climate refugees are increasing everyday. Visible sea level and temperature rise are destroying fish sanctuaries, and livelihood of our fishermen. Natural disasters, river bank erosions and salinity intrusion are taking toll on lives, and uprooting farming families in millions. They are swelling our cities and causing social disorders. Fund allocated for development are being diverted for their rehabilitation affecting our MDGs. In fact, climate change is costing us a significant portion of our GDP.

It is estimated that a meter rise in sea level due to global warming would inundate 18% of our land mass, force 20 million climate refugees with 40 million more losing their livelihood by 2050. In fact, scientific estimates indicate, a billion people would be displaced all over the world by 2050, by climate change. Therefore, it is a must to adopt a new legal regime, under the UNFCCC Protocol, ensuring rehabilitation of climate migrants worldwide.

Mr. Chairman,

To meet climate change challenges, all nations must take immediate action on the basis of the Bali Action Plan on sustainable development for survival. Developed countries must commit to deep and legally binding cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed Annex One Parties must reduce emissions by 45% by 2020 below 1990 level, allow peaking by 2015, reduce greenhouse gas concentration to 350 ppm by 2100, and limit global warming to below 1.5 degrees or to no more than 2.0 Degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities must be upheld.

At national level, Bangladesh has brought a paradigm shift from relief and rehabilitation, to disaster risk management. We have also adopted adaptation and mitigation programs comprising 134 action plans. They include dredging major rivers; afforesting 20% of land by 2015 creating a carbon sink; protecting biodiversity; strengthening coasts, river banks with mangroves; modernizing disaster management; developing crop varieties attuned to climate change; changing agricultural practices; using clean coal technology; developing nuclear power, renewable energy, among others.

A priority is dredging to deepen rivers to hold more water, contain flooding, reclaim inundated land, maintain navigability, raise riverbanks with excavated silt, erect homes on raised land for the displaced, etc. These would entail huge fund. COP 15 must, therefore, agree to provide compensatory grant funding, which should be adequate, sustainable and easily accessible, to meet full cost of adaptation, particularly of the Most Vulnerable Countries -

MCVs, low-lying coastal states, small-island developing states and the LDCs.

Disbursement of fund must take into account the extent of vulnerability to climate change, size of population exposed to risk, adaptation initiatives by countries concerned etc. Adaptation funding must be at least 1.5% of GDP of developed countries, separate from ODA as stipulated in the Brussels Program of Action. Developed countries must also allow transfer of eco-friendly technology, particularly to MVCs and LDCs, at affordable costs. These must be kept outside the Intellectual Property Rights Regime. There is also need to establish an International Center for Adaptation, Research and Training under UNFCCC for bolstering capabilities through shared experiences on adaptation

Mr. Chairman,

We have come to the beautiful city of Copenhagen with hopes of justice, equity, and a fresh start for the common safety of mankind. We have come to see a world united for once, with a singular vision of saving our frail mother planet. Indeed, our futures are intertwined, and depend on the choices we make here. Time is of essence, for long gone is the time for myopic, self centered stands. Time is now for collective wisdom and right decisions for a greener, habitable world. Let us not forget that posterity would judge us for the choices we make here and the world we leave behind for our future generations.

I thank you.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.