



Minutes of the
Follow-up Meeting of Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF)
7 November 2010

Venue: NEC Conference Room, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka

1.0 Agenda:

- Introductory statement by Mr. M. Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Secretary, ERD & Co-Chair, Local Consultative Group
- Introductory statement by Mr. Chris Austin, Country Director, UK DfID & Co-Chair, Local Consultative Group
- Presentation on BDF Follow Up on Progress by Mr. Bijon Kumar, Joint Secretary, ERD & Co-chair, LCG Aid Effectiveness Working Group
- Floor discussion
- Remarks by Dr. Masihur Rahman, Economic Affairs Adviser to the Hon'ble Prime Minister,
- Remarks by Air Vice Marshal (Retd.) A K Khandker, BU, MP, Hon'ble Minister for Planning,
- Concluding statement by Mr. Abul Maal A. Muhith, MP, Hon'ble Minister of Finance

2.0 Summary: The objective of the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) follow up meeting was for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) to share progress on the BDF Agreed Action Points since February 2010 and discuss with development partners (DPs) its long-term plan to reach the middle income status by 2021 and the plans for the new 6th Five-Year Plan. The meeting discussed key development issues and areas such as national and sector strategies, aid effectiveness, improved governance and institutional changes, investments in power and energy, environment and climate change, transport and communications and the use of new technologies, such as ICT (Digital Bangladesh). Improving development effectiveness and programme delivery were at the heart of the discussions, with governance issues (the need for institutional and policy reforms, local government strengthening, improved implementation capacity and reduced corruption) and Digital Bangladesh and climate change featuring prominently. The Hon'ble Finance Minister outlined progress made so far to increase domestic revenue mobilisation and improve budget implementation, speed up investments in the energy and power sectors, agreements made to enable substantive climate change investments, joined up plans for food security and not least good

progress in implementing the Digital Bangladesh strategy at local and national levels. The Finance Minister stressed that further improvements are needed in different sectors and he requested development partners to continue providing substantial assistance in a timely and effective manner. GoB and DPs agreed to have a further review of the updated BDF Action Plan in early 2011.

3.0 Introductory Statement by Mr. M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Secretary ERD and Co-Chair, Local Consultative Group (LCG)

Mr Bhuiyan welcomed the development partners and the representatives from the Government of Bangladesh, including the Ministers of Finance and Planning and the Economic Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister. Mr Bhuiyan noted that the Follow Up meeting itself is one of the expected outcomes from the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) in February 2010. He said that progress made so far over the last eight months by different Ministries/Divisions is overall satisfactory. However, there is yet scope for improvements and GoB still has to find ways and means to improve upon the progress as well as strengthen the cooperation with the DPs.

4.0 Introductory Statement by Mr Chris Austin, Country Representative DFID and Co-Chair, Local Consultative Group (LCG)

Mr. Austin welcomed GoB's initiative to hold the follow-up meeting in a timely manner and with good participation from both GoB and DPs. The meeting, with its focus on actions and results, contributes to transparency and accountability. Mr. Austin noted that a lot has been done over the last few months and that the BDF Agreed Action Points are only a selection of some of the priorities that GoB wants to take forward with the support of DPs. As such, it is a valuable tool for our ongoing dialogue. DPs are keen to align further with GoB to accelerate priority areas, improve quality implementation, monitor results and achieve real development outcomes. Mr Austin emphasised four areas that are considered a important from the DP perspective:

- Progress on the 6th Five-Year Plan; aiming for a prioritised, result oriented, operational and resourced plan, which will for the basis for the joined up GoB-DP results framework,
- Further improvements in public financial management (PFM) and domestic resource mobilisation to strengthen accountability, transparency and not least public service delivery,
- Further improvements in broader and inclusive partnerships; with effective collaboration between GoB, DPs, civil society, NGOs and private sector, and,
- Improvements in public administration through civil service reforms at national and local levels, aiming for improved programme implementation and effective service delivery.

5.0 Presentation on Progress of BDF Agreed Action Points by Mr. Bijon Kumar Baishya, Joint Secretary (Coordination), ERD, and Co-Chair, Aid Effectiveness Working Group

Mr. Baishya presented the background to the action points and stressed that the GoB Ministries/Divisions and implementing agencies have been working hard over the last eight months to implement the agreed plans. Also, the 2010/2011 National Budget included the financial aspects of the agreed actions and the upcoming 6th Five-Year Plan, planned to be shared and consulted with all stakeholders and endorsed by Parliament in early 2011, is expected to contain priorities in line with the BDF agreed actions.

On “Partnerships and Sector/Programme Approaches”: The Joint Cooperation Strategy (JCS) was signed by GoB and 18 DPs in June 2010. Implementation of the JCS Action Plan, which includes holding regular BDF meetings, is ongoing. New National sector programmes are being prepared for Primary Education and Health. A new Climate Change Resilience Fund has been established, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme proposal has been approved and the Country Investment Plan was endorsed by GoB in June 2010.

On “Institutional Changes – Governance”: There is progress in improving domestic revenue through the National Board of Revenue. Decentralisation and strengthening of the Anti-Corruption Commission is approved, capacity to implement the Right to Information Act agenda and to raise public awareness has been improved, the Domestic Violence Bill has been passed and there is progress on decentralisation of local government and the new Civil Service Act is under process for finalisation.

On “Public Private Partnerships”: PPP is a priority of Government and the new strategy and policy have been approved. The Bangladesh Infrastructure Development Fund and the Sustainable Energy Development Agency have been created recently to improve investments over the coming years. There has also been a general increase in private sector involvement in investments in energy-power and other infrastructure projects.

On “Use of New Technology/ICT for change”: GoB is mainstreaming ICT in the national and local administration as a tool to deliver information and services to the public and the private sector. As an example, there is an ongoing roll-out of internet kiosks to 4,500 Unions, aiming to serve two million citizens per month. SMS is also being increasingly used at field level health facilities and SMS/IT is used for early warning disaster preparedness. Ongoing initiatives aim for IT to be used for interactive learning in education and within law enforcement, land registration, safety net programmes and not least in banking and commerce.

6.0 Key Points from the Floor Discussion

6.1 Ms. Ellen Goldstein, the World Bank Country Director in Bangladesh spoke on behalf of the DPs on the 6th Five-Year Plan, the development results framework and public financial

management. Ms. Goldstein noted that the Government was on track with the drafting of the 6th Five-Year Plan which will link the NSAPR II to the long-term Perspective Plan 2010-2021, as well as specify the kind of support expected from all Development Partners. DPs are encouraged to see that GoB plans to maintain a participatory process in formulation of the 6th Five-Year Plan, including early consultations with DPs and other key stakeholders. Ms. Goldstein hoped that the Five-Year Plan will be explicitly linked to the MTBF and the annual budget. These linkages may provide an opportunity for integrating the capital and revenue budget.

Ms. Goldstein noted that DPs are pleased to move ahead with the commitment made at the BDF to establish a joint Development Results Framework for Bangladesh. This commitment has also been captured in the Joint Cooperation Strategy Action Plan. Since the Development Results Framework will be aligned with the Sixth Five-Year Plan, DPs encourage GoB to launch both documents at the same time. The Development Results Framework will constitute both a mechanism for Government to monitor its own progress in implementing the Five-Year Plan, as well as a tool to mobilise additional resources around its long term vision. The World Bank and other DPs are looking forward to working together with GoB to enhance its capacity to develop and monitor the implementation of the results framework in an expedient manner.

Ms. Goldstein welcomed the increasing trend of revenue collection and encouraged GoB to expedite the reform initiatives for tax administration and policy. The proposed rollout of the MTBF to all Ministries and Divisions by the next budget year is a positive step. This will lead to better utilisation of resources allocated in the budget. Ms Goldstein welcomed the GoB's commitment to the ongoing PEFA (Public Expenditure and Financial Assessment), and hoped that the findings will be used both as an input as well as a monitoring tool in the Public Financial Management (PFM) reform programme. DPs will be happy to support the implementation of these reform actions as part of their ongoing support programme to PFM reform in Bangladesh. Ms. Goldstein, on behalf of the DPs, welcomed the creation of an inter-ministerial committee to review and streamline the project approval (DPP/TAPP) processes, and she encouraged GoB to implement the recommendations coming out of this review to speed-up implementation of the annual development programme.

6.2 Mr. Milko van Gool, Head of Operations at the European Union Delegation in Bangladesh welcomed on behalf of the DPs, GoB's efforts to provide for an inclusive development of the country. Good examples include involvement of the Parliament for the first time during the consultation on the NSAPR II and involvement of civil society during the drafting of the Joint Cooperation Strategy and the new sector programmes in health and primary education.

Mr. Van Gool stressed that DPs share the belief that the Government and the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have strong complementary roles to play in making development happen. CSOs in Bangladesh are a tremendous asset to their country in several ways. CSOs are crucially important service providers and implementing partners and an indispensable complement to GoB capacity in many areas, helping Government meet its objective of delivering services at citizens' doorsteps. Mr. van Gool emphasized that CSOs in Bangladesh

have since 1971 been able to build up a unique body of expertise and know-how which is recognised nationally and internationally, and which even allows some of them to contribute to development results in other countries.

CSOs also play an important role as think-tanks and as advocates for the poor, the disadvantaged, and the marginalised. Mr. van Gool noted that as the critical and often vocal monitors of our performance that they are, they keep DPs and GoB alike on their toes. This dialogue is an essential element of development anywhere.

Mr. Van Gool recalled that we, collectively, committed at the HLF Forum in Accra to strengthen our partnership with civil society and to ensure an inclusive process for development. This is a shared responsibility, shared between the executive and the legislature, development partners and - obviously - also the civil society organisations themselves, the NGOs. The draft report on the Paris Declaration that has just been circulated reminded us that that the volume of aid to Bangladesh channeled through NGOs has quite increased over the last 10 years, from around 16 % to 22 % or a very respectable US\$ 414m in 2009.

For the good results of this partnership to continue and for our commitment to strengthen our partnership with civil society, it is imperative that an environment be maintained and reinforced that enables NGOs to achieve their full potential as partners in development. GoB services play a key role in that. Mr. van Gool stressed that DPs are looking forward to working with the NGO Affairs Bureau to achieve such an enabling environment.

DPs are very interested to follow discussions that would result in changes to the working environment of NGOs, as these can have a direct impact on the quality and inclusiveness of our support to this country. And, DPs promote and support an open and transparent debate before any significant changes are translated into new laws.

6.3 Dr. Justin Lee, Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh stressed that DPs support GoB's inclusion of the private sector as a key partner in Bangladesh's growth and development. He commended GoB's efforts so far to improve the business and investment environment which has been recognised, for example, in the recent "Doing Business Indicators". He, on behalf of the DPs, encouraged the Government to harness the contributions of the private sector, NGOs and others to help achieve the country's development plans.

Dr. Lee emphasised that fair and mutually-beneficial terms and conditions will be most important to attract much-needed domestic and foreign investment, especially in critical sectors such as energy and infrastructure. Looking forward, DPs can assist Bangladesh attract investment in priority sectors and DPs are willing to help with GoB's proposal for an "Investor Forum" for the Communications and Transport Sector. Dr. Lee expressed DPs' willingness to support GoB start up a dialogue process with the private sector. Such processes have been very effective in other countries. Given the focus on export diversification and energy trade in the upcoming Five-Year plan, DPs suggest that trade issues could be included in the next BDF Action Points follow up. For example, reviewing trade regimes may complement discussion on enhanced regional links and on tax reform.

6.4 Mr. Stefan Priesner, UNDP Country Representative to Bangladesh noted that the Government has outlined a set of clear policy logic related to civil service reform. Change is needed to make the civil service accountable to the people, minimise political influence and ensure basic service delivery. Mr. Priesner mentioned that GoB's Vision 2021 on Good Governance included encouraging statements such as "Institutions of the State and Administration will be freed from partisan influence. The basis of appointment and promotion will be performance, commitment, efficiency, honesty and loyal service; political dynamics will have no relevance in these activities". He also reminded the participants that GoB at the the BDF in February 2010 concluded that "the Government will strengthen local government through decentralisation of service delivery and the gradual devolution of power. It will introduce a new Civil Service Act in 2010 to strengthen and reform the civil service".

Mr. Priesner noted that the past year had witnessed some progress aimed to bring about short term change and, less so, long term reform of the civil service. As examples, he mentioned that the Civil Service Act has been drafted to provide clarity as to the mandate and structure of the civil service. Accountability has been further strengthened with monitoring mechanisms such as the citizen's charter and the citizen's report card. Human resource management reform steps have been taking aiming to move towards introducing a merit based environment.

Mr Priesner reminded the participants that there also remain some very important structural challenges to the reform process that will need to be addressed short and long term. In this context, he mentioned DPs concern about recent events and potential for political interference, the perception that corruption could continue to have a negative impact on progress and that local government institutions are not capable of delivering services because of inadequate financial and human resources and governance structures.

Mr. Priesner, on behalf of the DPs, outlined a suggested list of priorities for the coming year in the area of institutional change and good governance:

- Publication of the Civil Service Reform Road Map,
- Public consultation on the provisions of the draft Civil Service Act,
- Establishment of a reform coordination mechanism, ;
- Foster implementation of policy instruments including decentralisation to enhance service delivery,
- Combine E-solution/E-governance with Business Process Change to improve overall efficiency within central and local administration and not least service delivery.

6.5 Mr. Farook uz Zaman, Representative, Islamic Development Bank in Bangladesh welcomed the BDF dialogue as a testimony of cooperation to enhance the development of Bangladesh. The people of Bangladesh have always been resilient and in spite of huge challenges, achievements have been made over the last twenty years. For example, the tax administration has improved by the leadership of the Finance Minister. Bangladesh has also taken the leadership in meeting the challenge of climate change. Mr. Farook uz Zaman stressed "growth with equity" as a key priority for poverty reduction. Mr Farook uz Zaman also mentioned that in the long term, the reduction of aid dependency will continue as other

financial sources become more available as Bangladesh moves towards becoming a middle-income country by 2021.

6.7 Mr. Urs Herren, Ambassador for Switzerland endorsed the development of a joint results framework as a tool for joined up monitoring and follow-up of progress. He was pleased to note the attempt of decentralisation for improving the local level service delivery. He stressed that coordination of service delivery at various levels including at the union level is important for further development progress and positive changes for the people of Bangladesh.

6.8 Mr. Svend Olling, Ambassador for Denmark noted that the BDF process is a good tool for enhanced development dialogue and coordination. He stressed the need for further improvements on institutional reforms, including HRC and ACC, and that GoB's civil service road map would be a good initiative for change that DPs would support. He also mentioned that the Climate Resilience Fund is an important programme for the DPs and there is strong head quarter interest. The joined up challenge is now to make the fund operational and start implementing the much needed climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

6.9 Mr. Tamotsu Shinotsuka, Ambassador of Japan endorsed the ongoing LCG restructuring work, aiming to make GoB lead the working groups and he welcomed continued good coordination among various ministries as well as inter-ministerial coordination needs to improve. He mentioned that more effort should be given on education to reduce high drop outs and on health to tackle maternal mortality. The quality of services needs to improve and the country-level system should be institutionalized by disseminating good practice, especially in the health and education sectors. He also emphasised the importance of private sector for increasing investment and the need to make strenuous efforts on power and energy situation to attract more foreign direct investments (FDI). It's important to use existing resources in a timely manner. He also suggested that delays in budget approval processes should be addressed.

6.10 Mr. Thevakumar Kandiah, Country Representative for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) emphasised the need to improve delivery of development results. As examples, he mentioned that Public Private Partnerships schemes (PPP) need to be further simplified to reduce the steps and time lines and focus on implementation. There is a need to improve overall performance of the development programme portfolio. The Padma Multi-purpose Project will need major coordination between all the partners, both GoB and DP. There are huge opportunities to strengthen regional cooperation, which is crucial for economic growth. Opportunities have risen with the visit of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India and China.

6.11 Mr. Ad Spijkers, Country Representative for the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) was encouraged by the positive progress on the investment forum on food security. He mentioned that US\$ 52 million is allocated from the Global Agricultural Resilience Programme for Bangladesh. Mr. Spijkers noted that further investments will be needed in the Southern Delta, where 60 million people live, many of them very vulnerable. These initiatives, linked with infrastructure improvements like the Padma Bridge, will help Bangladesh to move towards food security.

6.12 Ms. Ragne Birte Lund, Ambassador for Norway welcomed the BDF dialogue and noted that Norway sees this forum very crucial for the development of Bangladesh. Norway will continue to participate in the BDF and JCS process, including relevant LCG working groups. She looked forward to further discussions on this as she just had taken up her post in country.

6.13 Ms. Denise Rollins, Country Representative for USAID in Bangladesh reinforced the comments given by other DPs earlier, particularly those related to the energy crisis. She expressed her concerns about the food security challenges in Bangladesh and the population has on feeding the future and on development more broadly. She emphasized the need to address population growth as Bangladesh is adding 2 million people per year. Also, she stressed that further investments need to be made in agriculture to improve productivity to feed the growing population. Completion of the he Country Investment Plan for Food Security will be a key tool for further investments. Equitable development is crucial, and the US plans to continue to focus on health, nutrition and agriculture as core elements of its program in Bangladesh. Finally, Ms. Rollins raised the importance of decentralisation of services as a critical approach to ensuring service delivery throughout the country, particularly reaching the poor. She also mentioned that climate change will continue to be a key area for the US.

6.14 Mr. Mohammad Mejbahuddin, Secretary, Energy Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, mentioned that in response to the overall energy shortage in the country, the Ministry has placed an action plan in the Parliament. Currently, the Ministry is working on the short and medium term planning. Pertaining to gas supply, construction of two major transmission pipelines are underway, covering the northeast areas of Bangladesh and completion targeted at 2012. The Secretary suggested that procedures for development projects in this sector should be made more flexible. The Ministry is also emphasising energy efficiency, encouraging energy efficient boilers in industries and use of modern technology in natural gas power plants. As per the BDF matrix, the Coal Policy has been drafted and is currently with the Minister for review. The Secretary also welcomed DPs review and comments on it. The document is available in Petrobangla and Ministry websites. Finally, the Secretary for Energy emphasized DP's continued role in institutional development, in other words, software aspect of development and also its inclusion as a target in the BDF matrix.

6.15 Mr Fakhru Ahsan, Division Chief, General Economic Division (GED), Planning Commission responding to the queries from the DPs, informed that the 6th Five-Year Plan will aim to address all the issues of development challenges discussed at this forum. The macro-economic framework of the plan is already drafted and currently the sectoral plan is being drafted. Although there is a shift from the poverty reduction strategy to the Five-Year Plan, the document will still focus on equitable and inclusive growth and put high priority in poverty reduction. The Plan at the same time will also focus on the private sector-led development. The Five-Year Plan will have sectoral targets with milestones for ICT and MDGs and new chapters on adaptation to climate change and disaster preparedness, regional cooperation, implementation and monitoring. Due importance to population policy will be given. By December 2010, the Plan will be ready for inter-ministerial discussion and

will undergo consultation at the regional and district levels. The document will be available for comments from DPs in January 2011.

6.17 Mr Moshrraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Secretary, Bridges Division, Ministry of Communications provided updates on the BDF Matrix action point on transport and communication. He informed that the PPP for Dhaka elevated express way has been initiated and so far this will be the largest PPP project. The Padma Bridge is likely to be completed by 2013. He recognized the role of private sector in infrastructure development, but also emphasised the importance of DP pool funds in this sector.

6.18 Mr. Khandker Anwarul Islam, Additional Secretary, Cabinet Division recognized that the BDF Action Plan is a composite vision and has updated the forum audience on the progress on good governance development initiatives supported by various development partners like One stop services in the Union Parishad, computerized terminal services.

6.19 Ms. Shamima Akhter, Joint Chief (Power), Industries and Energy Division, Planning Commission recognized the importance of inter-ministerial cooperation and DP's support in achieving national targets. She said that the 927 megawatt increase of grid supply was achievable only because of speedy decision taken by the Ministry. She also acknowledged that more simplified DP rules and procedures will speed up the development process.

6.20 Dr. M. Golam Sarwar, Chief, Programming Division, Planning Commission commented on two issues- ADP implementation and DPP/TPP process. On the first, he informed that the Government has improved its ADP implementation of earlier records from 85 to 91 percent last year. Currently, the ADP is being prepared in January each year to ensure timely implementation and the Planning Commission also holds regular quarterly meetings with the line Ministries for monitoring. On the issue of delay in the DPP/TPP process, Dr Sarwar informed that no project should take more than 2-3 months for getting approval, since there is a specific timeline for each approval steps. However, due to various reasons within the Government, the process is delayed. The Commission is currently looking at ways to reduce the time of each of the approval steps.

6.21 Mr. Wadud Bhuiyan, Chief, Planning, Bangladesh Water Development Board (on behalf of the Ministry) briefly updated on the progress of the major projects under the Board. The Char Development Project will be integrated with Coastal Zone Management Project and this has been reflected in the Five-Year Plan. The Board has already received approval from Government on 6 development initiatives in the areas of flood management, irrigation and land management.

6.22 Mr. Chris Austin, Country Representative UK DFID and LCG Co-Chair, was encouraged by the discussions and viewed the BDF as the "embodiment of partnership", which is a key to success. He stressed the need for further close working and real partnership through the LCG Working Group structure, which is now gradually being led and owned by GoB representatives in all of the 18 groups. As an example, he mentioned the plans for Bangladesh to hold a "Urban Forum" in 2011, which will involve GoB, DPs, private

sector and civil society. He also welcomed the upcoming initiative to tackle domestic violence.

Mr. Austin suggested that it would be useful to have another review of the BDF Action Plan in early 2011, preferably before the GoB's national budget deliberations. The upcoming work on a joined up "development results framework", to be derived from the Five-Year Plan, will be a good instrument for bringing GoB and DPs even closer. The process would need facilitation by GoB and DPs at several levels, but it would be worth doing. He encouraged all participants to help sharing the outcome of today's discussions with their respective teams, to ensure that all stakeholders were aware of the BDF Follow Up actions agreed. Finally, he also thanked GoB on behalf of all DPs and looked forward to further dialogue and monitoring of progress.

6.23 Mr. M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Secretary, ERD and Co-Chair, Local Consultative Group (LCG) pointed out that consultations are continuous processes. The LCG structure is an important mechanism for development dialogue and coordination. The BDF is part and parcel of that. Today's discussion and agreed actions will be useful for the next meeting, planned for early 2011. In the mean time, we will work further on the agreed actions. He also thanked the GoB and DP representatives for their active participation.

7.0 Remarks by the Guest of Honour, Dr Masihur Rahman, Economic Affairs Advisor to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Government of Bangladesh

Dr. Masihur Rahman began his speech noting the spirit and format of previous aid group meetings and how it has changed progressively. He noted the spirit of the discussion was frank and positive with assurance of assistance for Bangladesh to achieve its goal. He also acknowledged that DPs have assured assistance with some qualification highly nuanced - indication of others' preferences imposed rigidly.

Dr. Rahman talked about Minimal Convergence Principle which implies that if the policies and programmes of Government are not contrary to the aid policies of the development partners, aid should be available. In this schema the priority and policies of Government take precedence. He mentioned having advocating this principle out of his own experience of the difficulties of managing aid and a pragmatic view to address the problem. He underlined the fact that democracy is based on compromise and conciliation of conflicting choices and a democratic government has to aggregate diverse choices and pick up those which receive broad majority endorsement.

In his speech, Dr. Rahman noted that the Government has a strong commitment to the growth of the private sector - it is considered as the driving force for growth. The recent announcement to off-load shares of public enterprises includes power and energy sector public entities, which are of critical importance. The Government would not have sold shares of the power and energy sector SOEs if the commitment were not genuine. Dr. Rahman also talked about the Government's initiatives in tax reforms - VAT and Income Tax

in particular. He suggested that while the development partners talk about policies to support the private sector, they should also talk about appropriate tax system that the private sector should accept. He also brought up discussion on the critical remarks made at the Bank-Fund meeting in Washington on the deficit public finance expenditure in Bangladesh. In his view, any assessment of deficit financing ought to take into account how it is financed and its inflationary and crowding-out impact.

Dr. Masihur Rahman highlighted the close engagement of CSOs and NGOs with the Government and acknowledged its difference in role from any other authoritarian state in East Europe or South America. He mentioned that a NGO here is the third way type as per Anthony Giddens definition that does not work for profit nor exercise powers of government. The NGOs here mostly deliver services, however, cannot free themselves entirely from expressing and influencing public opinion, even if inadvertently or residually. He underlined the fact that as NGOs assume a critical role in the broad area of governance, there ought to be an audit of their performance.

The Hon'ble Economic Advisor also commented on the Government's initiative in developing regional cooperation with Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal and the scheme which will eventually connect to China through Myanmar. He said that the Joint Declaration of 12 January, 2010 on the occasion of visit of Prime Minister to India was the first act to the regional cooperation. The Banks could provide assistance for realization of the full benefit of cooperation - and their assistance may include know- how, access to world's best practices, and financial resources. He also mentioned the ongoing and already committed assistance of the DPs in regional cooperation.

In his final points, Dr. Rahman surmised that even during the global economic crunch, Bangladesh has shown resilience. Moreover, DPs should not be concerned about being overburdened with aid commitments since the current aid commitment of the DPs is yet to meet their committed aid contribution of 0.7% of GNI to LDCs. Finally he said that partnership should be underpinned by delivery on the promise.

8.0 Remarks by the Special Guest: Air Vice Marshal (Retd) A K Khandker, Hon'ble Minister for Planning, Government of Bangladesh

The Hon'ble Minister for Planning stated the satisfactory progress on project approval and implementation. He said ninety one percent utilization of funds allocated under the Annual Development Programme (ADB) was higher than previous figures. However, the Government has higher targets this year.

Regarding the 6th Five-Year Plan, the Hon'ble Minister said that a democratic government is mandated to do everything with complete knowledge and understanding of the people. This principle and process are also applied to developing the Five-Year Plan. The Sixth Five Year Plan will follow the Perspective Plan, commonly known as the Vision document and is being prepared in line with the objective of the Perspective Plan. Two Five Year Plan will complete the realization of the objectives of Vision 2021. In the Sixth Five Year Plan,

education and health programmes will be clearly laid out. The Government has embarked on a new journey with the preparation of the Five-Year Plan and the Perspective Plan. The Minister expressed great appreciation of the support offered to the Government by the DPs in full implementation of this Plan.

9.0 Concluding Statement by Mr Abul Maal Abul Muhith Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Government of Bangladesh

The Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Mr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith began his concluding remarks by recalling the joint GoB and DP commitment in the last BDF meeting through agreed action points. He admired the very nature of constructive and energetic discussion in this review meeting and responded on some of the more important issues; like public-private partnership, development results framework, sectoral portfolio, devolution of power to local government, 6th Five-Year Plan, road map for civil service reform, ICT, urbanization and public financial management.

The important item for discussion in that forum was the second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (NSAPR-II), which we called "Steps Towards Change". Both the Government and the Development Partners are committed to the Joint Cooperation Strategy (JCS) to pursue the objectives of the NSAPR-II and the Vision 2021. The development partners by and large endorsed the plan for both Vision 2021 and for the NSAPR-II. The commitments of the development partners and of the Government were captured in BDF Agreed Action Plan outlining 25 Action Points.

Hon'ble Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment for improving partnership not only with Development Partners but also with all stakeholders and associations of various interests. He reminded the august audience of the Government's slogan "Our strength is partnership". Having said so, Mr. Muhith expressed Government's choice for Task Force and Consultative Body based partnership and informed that a couple of task force are already working on Manpower Development, Global Economic Crisis, Power and Energy and ICT. He also pointed at forming a couple of more issue-based task force to attend crucial issues of the 6th Five-Year Plan.

Hon'ble Minister mentioned that the 6th Five-Year Plan will be finalised soon and the Plan, will have sectoral programmes on education, health, ICT and water resource development, etc. Mr. Muhith also appreciated the focus of discussion on the development results framework and hoped that it will be prepared around 6th FY Plan, so that it becomes a part of the Plan. He welcomed suggestions from the members of the Forum regarding the framework. Referring to comments on 'implementation of public programmes and projects', the Minister voiced his concern as well for ensuring effectiveness in implementation, but not with planning process. He also noted his satisfaction with progress achieved in this area during the last one and half year with focused attention from all concerned.

The Minister endorsed the view of the discussion on the road map for Civil Service Reform and informed the gathering about the Establishment Division initiative in this regard, which he expects to be shared with DPs in due course. Mr. Muhith also mentioned about the

amendment of the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) law that has corrected the procedural lacunae to enable the organization to carry out investigations properly and bring up cases on firm footing. He assured that the independence of the organization will certainly be protected and some progress has been made on the issue of its accountability to the Government. He informed that the Whistle Blowers' Act has also been passed. In another point, Mr. Muhith mentioned that the NGOs are a substantial performer in the country's development enterprise and especially in areas of human resources development and credit operations. The Government would like to see and also ensure that activities of the NGOs remain transparent and accountable to some overseer agency. The other objective of the Government is to ensure that NGO activities are well-coordinated and focus on the critical areas of development in the country.

Mr. Muhith expressed his satisfaction with today's discussion, especially highlights on such issues as investment in energy & power and transport sectors. In this context he elaborated the crucial importance of these sectors in achieving national development objectives and outlined GoB's investment programme for energy and power. He also mentioned that such an investment programme outline for transport and communication sector is in progress. The Minister, on principle, endorsed the participant's view on empowering local government systems. Although he talked about emerging balance in power sharing between the MPs and the elected local government representatives at Upazilla level, yet he mentioned that it will take some time to establish an ideal synergy in this matter. At the same time, he informed the participants that transfer of some specific functions to the Upazila Councils is in the process of implementation as part of "devolution" of power to the local government. With respect to concerns about the programmes in education, health and sanitation, Hon'ble Minister observed that development in these sectors will need to go a long way although there has been some commendable progress in some areas, even to earn the global recognition for achieving MDG targets. He asserted that the Government is fully aware of the challenges in this sector and is making every effort to overcome deficiencies to ensure hard work for improving service delivery. Commenting on a point made on aid independence for Bangladesh, the Hon'ble Minister also recalled that the 0.15 %-2% of GNI is what the development partners had committed for LDCs' development. Bangladesh did not even get that much. Bangladesh gets only about 2% of its GNI as external assistance and this is not dependence. In fact, it is the right of a former colony to get this little support.

While referring to some other general comments, the Hon'ble Minister highlighted the position of the Government on export diversification, energy trade within the region, Climate Change Resilience fund, embankment and afforestation, food investment plan and so on. He discussed about the Government's priority in relation to the above mentioned specific issues and asserted that in most cases actions have been rolled out and for some they are in progress. He also mentioned that the Government is yet to finalize a total plan on climate change. However, the Minister confirmed that such a plan will be ready before the upcoming Cancun Conference. On the issue of public financial management, the Minister agreed that the expenditure review should be publicized.

Since regional cooperation is currently a high priority of the Government, he requested technical assistance from DPs in this area. He said that the Government is keen to learn on transit issues from Switzerland and from ADB on development of transportation system in the Mekong Valley. He mentioned that the Government has opened a new chapter with its initiative on the SAARC regional cooperation and changed the scenario taking up a lead role as a transit country. He stated that programmes for cooperation in the areas of environment, energy, transport, tourism, trade and water resources are being developed and acted upon. Finally, he thanked all participants for their valuable comments and presence at today's meeting.

The plenary was followed by a press briefing led by the Hon'ble Finance Minister. The Hon'ble Planning Minister, the Hon'ble Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister and the LCG Ex-comm members were also participated in the briefing.

List of Participants (not according to seniority)

Government of Bangladesh:

1. Mr. Md. Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, ndc, Secretary, Bridges Division, Ministry of Communication, Dhaka.
2. Mr. Mohammad Mejbahuddin, Secretary, Energy and Mineral Resources Division, Dhaka.
3. Mr. Mohammad Shafiqul Azam, Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Dhaka.
4. Mr. Khandker Anwarul Islam, Additional Secretary, Cabinet Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
5. Mr. A.T.M. Murtoza Reza Chowdhury, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Dhaka.
6. Mr. A. Awal Howlader, Additional Secretary, Food Division, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
7. Mr. Asit Kumar Mukutmoni, Additional Secretary, Disaster Management and Relief Division, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
8. Mr. Md. Sirazul Islam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Education, Dhaka.
9. Mr. Asit Kumar Mukutmoni, Additional Secretary, Disaster Management and Relief Division, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
10. Dr. M. Golam Sarwar, Chief, Programming Division, Planning Commission, Dhaka.
11. Mr. Naser Farid, Director General, FPMU, Food Division, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
12. Mr. Fakrul Ahsan, Division Chief, GED, Planning Commission, Dhaka.
13. Mr. Md. Shah Alam Siddique, Division Chief, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
14. Ms. Khodege Begum, Chief, IMED, Ministry of Planning, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka
15. Mr. Parimal Chandra Saha, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Dhaka
16. Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam Laskar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
17. Mr. Md. Altaf Hossain, Joint Chief, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Dhaka.

18. Mr. Md. A. Wadud Bhuiyan, Chief Planning, Bangladesh Water Development Board, Dhaka.
19. Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Chief, Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
20. Mr. Zillar Rahman, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Dhaka
21. Mr. Md. Maynul Ahsan, Joint Secretary (Admin.), Law and Justice Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
22. Mr. A.M. Badrudduja, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Establishment, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
23. Ms. Nasrin Sultana, Joint Chief, Economic Relations Division, Dhaka.
24. Mr. Md. Eakub Ali, Joint Chief, GED, Planning Commission, Dhaka.
25. Mr. M. Jalalul Hai, Director, Board of Investment, Dhaka.
26. Ms. Shamima Akhtar, Joint Chief (Power), Energy and power Division, Planning Commission,
27. Mr. Bijash Kishore Das, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
28. Mr. Mohammad Asif-uz Zaman, Joint Secretary (Asia), Economic Relations Division, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
29. Mr. Saifuddin Ahmed, Joint Secretary (ADB), Economic Relations Division, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
30. Mr. Muhammad Mustafa, Joint Secretary (Dev.), Roads and Railways Division, Ministry of Communications, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
31. Dr. M Nasiruddin, Joint Secretary (Dev.), Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
32. Mr. Md. Sultanul Islam Chowdhury, Joint Secretary (Dev.), Ministry of Information, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
33. Mr. Md. Syeedul Haque, Joint Chief, Ministry of Shipping, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
34. Mr. Md. Hedayet Hossain, Joint Chief, Ministry of Post and Telecommission, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
35. Mr. Md. Altaf Hossain, Joint Chief, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
36. Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, Deputy Chief, Ministry of Home Affairs, Dhaka.
37. Mr. Md. Amin Ullah, Director, Board of Investment, Dhaka.
38. Dr. Md. Afzal Hossain, Deputy Secretary, Internal Resources Division, Dhaka.
39. Ms. Ishrat J. Ahmed, Director, UN Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka.
40. Ms. Mahmuda Begum, Director (FABA), Economic Relations Division, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
41. Mr. Mahmud Hasan Salim, Director (Planning), BIWTA, Dhaka.
42. Mr. Md. Rabiul Islam, Deputy Chief, Ministry of Communication, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
43. Mr. Md. Abdul Momin, Deputy Technological Adviser, Ministry of Science and ICT, Dhaka.
44. Mr. Md. Mafidul Islam, Deputy Chief, Law & Justice, Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
45. Mr. Mohammad Azharul Haque, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.

46. Mr. Md. Liakot Ali, Deputy Chief, Roads and Railways Division, Ministry of Communication, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
47. Mr. A.M. Motaheer Hossain, Senior Information Officer, Ministry of Planning, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
48. Mr. Md. Rezaul Karim, Deputy Secretary (Admin.), Planning Division, Ministry of Planning, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
49. Mr. Md. Matiur Rahman, Deputy Chief, Election Commission Secretariat, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
50. Mr. Susanta Kumar Sarker, PS to Hon'ble Minister for Planning, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
51. Mr. Abdullah Al Mamun, Senior Assistant Chief, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
52. Ms. Naima Begum, Senior Assistant Chief, Disaster Management and Relief Division, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
53. Mr. Shah Mohammad Mahboob, Senior Assistant Chief, Food Division, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Dhaka.
54. Mr. Md. Abdul Matin, Senior Assistant Chief, Ministry of Science and ICT, Dhaka.
55. Ms. Naima Begum, Senior Assistant Chief, Disaster Management and Relief Division, Bangladesh, Secretariat, Dhaka.
56. Mr. Shah Mohammad Mahboob, Senior Assistant Chief, Food Division, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
57. Mr. Md. Shahedur Rahman, Senior Information Officer and PRO to Hon'ble Finance Minister, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
58. Mr. Monowar Ahmed, JCS Coordination Officer, Aid Effectiveness Unit, ERD, Dhaka.
59. Mr. Rafique Ahmed Siddique, JCS M&E Officer, Aid Effectiveness Unit, ERD, Dhaka.
60. Mr. Mohammad Shamsul Alam, Liaison Officer, Aid Effectiveness Unit, ERD, Dhaka.
61. Dr. M. Harunur Rashid, AEU Consultant, ERD, Dhaka.

Development Partners:

62. Mr. Mr. Chris Austin, Country Representative, Department for International Development (DFID), 10 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan 1, Dhaka.
63. Ms. Ellen Goldstein, Country Director, World Bank Office, Dhaka
64. H.E. Mr Holger Michael, Ambassador, Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany, Dhaka
65. Mr. Milko VAN GOOL, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Bangladesh, Dhaka.
66. Mr. Farook uz Zaman, Representative, Islamic Development Bank, IDB-FROB, Dhaka.
67. Mr. Thevakumar Kandiah, Country Director, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Dhaka.
68. Ms. Doris Voorbraak, Deputy Head of Mission, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Dhaka.
69. Ms. Denise Rollins, Mission Director, USAID Bangladesh, Dhaka.
70. H.E. Dr Justin Lee, High Commissioner, Australian High Commission, Dhaka
71. Mr. Stefan Priesner, Country Director, UNDP Bangladesh, Dhaka.
72. H. E. Mrs. Ragne Birte LUND, Ambassador, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka.
73. H. E. Mr. Urs Herren, Ambassador, Embassy of Switzerland, Dhaka.
74. Ms. Diana Dalton, Deputy Country Representative, DFID Bangladesh, Dhaka.
75. H.E. Ms. Anneli Lindahl Kenny, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden, Dhaka.
76. Mr. Andre Bogui, Country Director, International Labour Organisation (ILO), Dhaka.
77. H.E. Mr. Tamotsu Shinotsuka, Ambassador, Embassy of Japan, Dhaka.

78. Mr. Michel Saint Lot, Deputy Representative, UNICEF, Dhaka
79. Mr. Eric Blanc, Trade Commissioner, Embassy of France, Dhaka
80. Ms. Shigeki Furuta, Senior Representative, JICA Bangladesh, Dhaka
81. H. E. Mr. Svend Olling, Ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy, Dhaka.
82. Mr. Md. Forhad Siddique, Development Program Specialist, KOICA, Dhaka.
83. Mr. Ad Spijkers, Representative, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Dhaka.
84. Mr. Diepak Elmar, Economist, World Bank Office, Dhaka
85. Mr. Lisanoro Martin, Results Specialist, World Bank Office, Dhaka.
86. Ms. Julia Jacoby, EU Delegation to Bangladesh, Dhaka.
87. Mr. Tauhid Alam, Strategic Development, UNFPA, Dhaka.
88. Mr. Theo Olthenlen, Education Adviser, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Dhaka.
89. Dr. Frawn, World Health Organization (WHO), Dhaka
90. Ms. Katie Megonald, USAID Bangladesh, Dhaka
91. Mr. Sharon Broun, USAID Bangladesh, Dhaka.
92. Ms. Meriaty Subroto, Sr. Country Specialist, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Dhaka.
93. Mr. M Zahid Hossain, Senior Country Specialist, ADB, Dhaka.
94. Ms. Teresa Labrador, AECID, Spanish Development Agency, Dhaka
95. Mr. Tomas Bergenholtz, First Secretary/ Analyst, Embassy of Sweden, Dhaka.
96. Mr. Samuel Egero, Country Director, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Dhaka
97. Ms. Julie Petit, Deputy Trade Commissioner, Embassy of the Republic of France, Dhaka.
98. Ms. Miki Yamamoto, Researcher/Advisor, Economic and Development Cooperation, Embassy of Japan, Dhaka.
99. Mr. Ryuji Kasahara, Project Formulation Advisor, JICA Bangladesh, Dhaka.
100. Mr. Badrul Arefin, National Consultant, FAO, Dhaka.
101. Ms. Ummee Saila, Advisor, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka.
102. Mr. Hans-Hinrich Schnelle, Head of Development Cooperation, Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany, Dhaka.
103. Ms. Janet Durno, Head of Development Cooperation, CIDA, Dhaka.
104. Mr. Bo Sundstrom, Aid Effectiveness Advisor, DFID Bangladesh, Dhaka.
105. Ms. Rumana Khan, UN Coordination Officer, UNRC Office, Dhaka.
106. Mr. Rajib Ahmed Chowdhury, Operations Analyst, World Bank Office, Dhaka.
107. Ms. Mahmuda Rahman Khan, Senior Program Development Specialist, USAID Bangladesh, Dhaka.
108. Mr. Robert Juhkam, Deputy Country Director, UNDP Bangladesh, Dhaka.
109. Ms. Fadzai Gwaradzimba, Division Chief, South West Asia, Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific UNDP.
110. Mr. Wahida Musarrat, Programme Officer, Royal Danish Embassy, Dhaka.
111. Ms. Laura Watson, Program Manager, BICF, Dhaka
112. Ms. Rachel Payne, Head AusAid, Australian High Commission, Dhaka.
113. Ms. Fariha Haque, Liaison, Officer, UNRC Office, Dhaka