

**Speech by H.E. Ambassador Inoue
for Dissemination Workshop
on
Bangladesh Harmonization Action Plan (HAP)
under the framework of implementing the Paris Declaration**

Mr. Md. Amimul Islam Bhuiyan,
Secretary, Economic Relations Division (ERD)

Mr. Manoj Basnyat,
UN Resident Coordinator a.i. Bangladesh

Mr. Muhammad Abdul Majid,
Member, Planning Commission

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum

On behalf of the Development Partners in Bangladesh, I would like to congratulate ERD for organizing a Harmonization Action Plan dissemination seminar for development practitioners, which is an important step towards implementing the spirit of 'Paris Declaration' in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh signed the "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness" in 2005, which highlighted the importance of coordination and harmonization in development assistance to further enhance aid effectiveness. It declares the partnership commitment of both Partner Countries and Development Partners in the key areas, such as effective leadership and ownership of Partner Country, alignment of aid with Partner Countries' priorities and systems, strengthening development capacity of Partner Countries, harmonization of Development Partners' actions, managing for results, and mutual

accountability. On the basis of outputs drawn from the Paris Declaration, Government of Bangladesh, with Finance Division in 2004 and 2005 and later with ERD since 2006 as focal point, prepared Bangladesh Harmonization Action Plan in close collaboration with Development Partners. Through the series of discussions between Government of Bangladesh and Development Partners, the Harmonization Action Plan has been endorsed in August 2006. I see this action plan as a clear indication of the initiative of the Government of Bangladesh to localize the spirit of the 'Paris Declaration' in the context of Bangladesh. We, Development Partners in Bangladesh, highly appreciate that Government of Bangladesh has been actively participated in Paris agenda and worked closely together in this efforts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It should be kept in mind that aid coordination for the sake of coordination should be avoided. Practical approach will bring more fruitful results and reduce transaction costs. Guiding principle should be how to enhance aid effectiveness and achieve development outcomes in pursuit of Millennium Development Goals and how maximize development assistance for that purpose.

In order to implement the spirit of the 'Paris Declaration' and Harmonization Action Plan, I would like to stress the role of line ministries and departments that are directly responsible for implementing and monitoring of development projects. It is thus your role to grasp the substance of the 'Paris Declaration' and Harmonization Action Plan, interpret them in Bangladesh context, review current practice in management of development assistance, and recommend ways and means to improve outcome of development assistance. I would ask you to bring Paris Declaration indicators down to the realities in Bangladesh and provide practical suggestions for better aid coordination. I profoundly believe such workshop is the first step towards this direction with more substantial involvement of the development practitioners in line

ministries and departments.

I understand that in many Partner Countries line ministries and departments are less involved in the discussion on harmonization as it was usually done by planning or finance ministries. It is now recognized that involvement of actual development practitioner of line ministries in this process is critical to grasp the practical realities in the management of development assistance and to bring the workable and effective measures for improvement.

For line ministries and departments to be more involved in practical and meaningful aid coordination and harmonization, they need to build capacity with extreme sincerity and attention. Development Partners are grateful to work together to identify the real needs in this regards. Experience of Sector Wide Approaches or SWAPs and procurement reform would also provide us lessons regarding what kind of capacity building is required for line ministries and departments to better manage coordination in order to achieve real goal of aid effectiveness.

Ladies and Gentleman

Last, but not least, I would like to emphasize the important role played by PRS-HAP Cell, under the leadership of ERD Secretary, in promoting the implementation of the “Paris Declaration” and Harmonization Action Plan. PRS-HAP Cell is indeed instrumental in coordinating not only harmonization agenda, but also wide range of donor coordination issue including the Local Consultative Group. As more and more issues, such as Evaluation of Paris Declaration and LCG forum, is ahead of us, I would like to request ERD Secretary to place high priority to the strengthening of PRS -HAP Cell and we, Development Partners, are already ready to support this efforts.

I hope that ERD will further enhance coordination among the concerned line ministries and departments and consolidating their inputs and bring real voice

of the Partner Country to DAC. I assure you Development Partners' continued support and willingness to work together for better coordination and harmonization.

I would like to conclude my remarks by expressing my expectation that this dissemination workshop will deepen your understanding on the 'Paris Declaration' and Harmonization Action Plan and simultaneously raise awareness on the practical realities to enhance aid effectiveness .

Thank you for your attention.