

Press release



**International trade is driver of global partnership for development: Ismat Jahan**

New York: 10 October 2007

Ismat Jahan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations said that international trade was a driver of global partnership for development and called upon the international community to provide duty-free and quota-free market access for all products from all Least Developed Countries (LDCs) without any restrictions. She made this remark yesterday, highlighting the major concern of the LDCs, while speaking at the general debate of the Economic and Financial Committee of the UN General Assembly. She also praised the developing countries that have provided duty-free, quota-free markets access for the LDCs and invited other developing countries to provide the same facility.

Bangladesh Permanent Representative added that The LDCs, despite their significant efforts, had remained trapped at the bottom of the development ladder and the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and with deadly diseases were still alarming in those vulnerable countries. The LDCs must remain in the special focus of the international community as committed in the Brussels Programme of Action; otherwise, achievement of the MDG's for them will remain only a dream-she stated.

Ambassador Jahan called upon the international community to immediately operationalize the "Aid for Trade initiative" in the World Trade Organization (WTO) with sufficient funding and underscored that it should particularly support the LDCs in building their supply-side capacities and compensating the erosion of preferences. She urged the developed countries to liberalize their markets for all categories of service providers of the LDCs under Mode 4 of General Agreements on Trade in Services (GATS).

Highlighting the importance of Financing for Development, Ismat Jahan expressed concern that the current and projected levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA) fell far short of targets of 0.2 percent of the Gross National Product of the Developed Countries to the LDCs and the allocation of ODA also endured serious distributive inequities. She called upon the donors to address these challenges with urgency to enable all LDCs in meeting their required resources.

Bangladesh Permanent Representative also stated that climate change had emerged as the formidable global challenge and the LDCs including Bangladesh would be disproportionately affected. "Secretary General's High-level event on climate change has generated huge political momentum and we must seize upon it while we go to Bali in December" she added. She also stressed that the post-Kyoto regime should be based on a more concrete, realistic and legally-binding emission reduction targets and also, concrete commitments for adequate means of implementation for adaptation needs of the LDCs. She also underscored the importance of adequate measures to ensure protection and rehabilitation of "climate refugees".

Ismat Jahan concluded by saying that "the Millennium Summit and its follow-up events had embodied a set of time-bound goals and an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism in the United Nations would be crucial for their implementation".

It was her first statement in the General Assembly after Bangladesh was elected the Chairman of the 50 Least Developed Countries on 5 October 2007.