



# BANGLADESH

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As delivered

**Statement by Ms. Ishrat Jahan Ahmed, First Secretary, Bangladesh Permanent Mission at the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond , New York, 06 October 2005**

Mr. President,

The youth are the catalyst for change and development. The spirit of youth can and must be converted into a tool for change and progress.

My delegation welcomes the holding of the General Assembly Plenary Meeting on the evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of World Programme of Action for the Youth in pursuance of the resolution 59/148 as one of its co-sponsors.

It is my privilege to welcome the youth representatives who are attending this session. The participation of the youth delegates in the debate has given us the opportunity to hear them and listen to their experience at first hand.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh remains fully committed to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the year 2000 and beyond. We pay due attention to all matters concerning the youth, particularly, the unemployed segment of our young population. We emphasize the ten priority areas identified by the World Programme of Action for the Youth and five additional issues of concern acknowledged by the General Assembly Resolution 58/133 of 2003. We attach necessary attention to the proper education, employment creation, health care facilities, skill development and various vocational trainings, entrepreneurship and awareness programmes for our youth. Special emphasis has also been placed on promoting and ensuring the active participation of girls and young women.

Bangladesh adopted a National Youth Policy in 2003. It defines the population under age group from 18 to 35 as youth. As per this definition, we have roughly 45 million

youth. The Ministry of Youth and Sports has a Department solely devoted for the Youth Development. The aim is to transform our young population into an organized, disciplined and productive workforce. The department of Youth Development coordinates various programmes. While implementing these programmes, the Government maintains close collaboration with the NGOs.

Bangladesh has taken numerous positive steps to mainstream her young populations.

First, we have improvised a set of skill development programmes that include computer and IT, electronics, garments, agriculture, secretarial sciences, and so on.

Secondly, we have developed self-employment programmes including motivation training, group formation, credit and input support, close supervision and development of marketing network.

Thirdly, the Government has introduced an initiative called "Family Based Employment Programme" which provides micro-credits to the youth against micro enterprise. Under this programme the youth are also being trained on the small family norms, malnutrition, sanitation, tree plantation, etc. Some 655,11 young people have been given loans from the "Credit Fund" and the realization of loan is nearly 89%.

Fourthly, we have projects to involve the young people in activities like population control, prevention of HIV/AIDS and STDs, reproductive health and safe motherhood. UNFPA is providing assistance in these projects.

Fifthly, various local youth clubs, supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, play a very significant role in community development, raising awareness and various self-employment schemes.

Mr. President,

Secretary General for his 'World Youth Report 2005' provides us important information and analyses on the global situation of the youth. It is disheartening to note that 209 million young people which is 18% of all youth live on less than \$1 a day, and 515 million young people, or nearly 45% live on less than \$2 a day.

South Asia has the largest number of youth living below these two poverty lines, followed by sub-Saharan Africa. In order to make progress in the world youth situation we need to take account of the needs of the South Asian youth, which includes about 9.9 million in my country. My delegation acknowledges that mainstreaming the youth in the process of the poverty eradication is a complex challenge, which requires our continuous attention and concerted action.

We wish to place on record our appreciation for the Secretary-General's report on 'Global analysis and evaluation of national plans on youth employment'. We believe that realizing the commitment relating to youth employment contained in the

Millennium Declaration requires an urgent action at local and national levels, as well as at international level.

Mr. President,

It is easy sometimes to overlook our youth but to do so would be at great peril. Societies that are able to tap the potentials of youth are better adjusted to achieve progress, development and indeed prosperity. None of us can grudge attention to youth, for however distant and remote it may seem, all present are either young now or have been young once.

I thank you, Mr. President.