Statement by
H.E. Masud Bin Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York
at the Second Regular Session 2016 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS
on September 8, 2016
on the agenda item 3: UNDP Country Programme and related matters---

Mr. President,
I thank you for giving me the floor.

Mr. President,

Allow me to begin by thanking all the distinguished members of the Executive Board for their positive consideration and approval of Bangladesh Country Programme Document 2017-2020. This will further strengthen the partnership between the Bangladesh and UNDP in both depth and dimension. On behalf of the people and the government of Bangladesh, I would like to express our gratitude and sincere thanks to all the members of the Executive Board for their positive consideration and support.

May I also take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the Administrator Madam Helen Clark and her team for finalizing the country programme document for Bangladesh. I would also specially thank Mr. Hao long Xu, Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific for his valuable contribution towards preparing the new country programme document. We commend UNDP and its staff at different levels who have worked so hard to bring the country programme document at this level for consideration and approval of the Executive Board. We also look forward to forging a greater partnership while implementing the CPD.

Mr. President,

As we had informed the Executive Board during the last Annual Session that the present country programme responds to the needs of the ground and Government’s vision to become a middle income country by 2021. It also aligns with the priorities stipulated in our Seventh Five Year Plan 2016-2020 as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2012-2016). The CPD has also focused the targets of SDGs where UNDP has a distinct comparative advantage within the United Nations system namely, governance, poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction and climate change. It has appropriately emphasized on the implementation of the SDGs. The CPD adheres with the principles of the Joint Cooperation Strategy signed between the Government and its development partners to promote aid coordination. It has identified climate change as a debilitating factor for Bangladesh and is aligned with the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. The country programme will be nationally executed and implemented in close collaboration with the Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance and other implementing agencies.
Mr. President,

The UN System is positively supporting our national development efforts. UNDP’s country programme is reflective of the UN’s continued engagement with Bangladesh. However, we would like to see UNDP’s greater involvement. While the country is capable of formulating its own policies, what is required are funds and capacity building for the implementation of the projects designed in line with national development policies.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh has established a credible record of pro-poor economic growth and already we have been able to halve the number of people who were under the poverty line over the decades. Its success in attaining a number of MDGs earned accolades for it. Bangladesh has initiated actions for the implementation of the SDGs. It has also been graduated to the medium human development group of countries by the UNDP’s ranking. Bangladesh takes due pride in being a world leader in poverty research and innovation. During the past decade, it not only managed to reduce poverty by more than 50% percent through GO-NGO co-operation and public-private partnership but also offered a lot of development lessons to the world. Our vibrant NGO networks have shown many new ways of bringing services to the poor and the neglected. Micro-credit with training, non-formal education, universal immunization service and succour to marginal and landless farmers are only a few to name. However, we have a lot of challenges also standing as stumbling blocks in our way to development. Primarily due to resource constraints and weak capacity of the institutions, Bangladesh is facing difficulties in realization of many internationally agreed targets. We would count on UNDP’s support to a great extent in addressing these challenges.

Mr. President,

We greatly value UNDP as a development partner. Under the new cycle, programmatic support in poverty reduction and climate change will be significantly expanded while support in governance will be deepened and consolidated. We hope that the new CPD would play a catalytic role towards consolidating and scaling up past successes by linking practice to policy and by enhancing institutional capacities in a sustainable manner.

However, one of the main challenges in implementing the proposed country programme would be the mobilization of resources that are required on the ground. UNDP itself has budget constraints. We hope that our development partners would come up with greater resources to enable UNDP to expand its operational activities in the least developed countries like Bangladesh.

Mr. President,

We hope that the implementation of the CPD will bring desired benefits to the people on the ground especially the poor and the most disadvantaged. To that end, the UNDP Country Office would have to work for deeper engagement with the relevant national authorities and other stakeholders. I am confident that the UNDP country office in Bangladesh in coordination with the Government of Bangladesh will soon embark on a robust consultative process to take next steps especially in preparing the Country Program Action Plan (CPAP). I am also hopeful that the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) Director and his team will continue to add value in the process. Cooperation and coordination have been the hallmarks of Bangladesh-UNDP partnership. We hope to see these being further consolidated in the days ahead.

I thank you, Mr. President.