Statement by Mr. Mohammad Sarwar Mahmood, Charge d’ Affaires, a.i of Bangladesh to the UN on the High-Level Event on Youth
(25-26 July 2011, New York)

Mr. President,

Let me begin by extending our heartfelt condolences to the families of the 68 deceased persons who became victim of the gruesome killing in Norway just last week. Every life is precious on this earth and we are so sad to note that most of those killed were youth attending a summer youth camp.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh appreciates the holding of this High Level Meeting on Youth and the compilation of the Outcome Document. My delegation aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of G77 and China.

Mr. President,

Youths are the most important resource of a country. National development and prosperity of a nation mostly depends on the positive activities of the youths. They are likely to be the future leaders, planners and decision makers. In Bangladesh, the Department of Youth Development was established in 1981 with a view to involving the nation’s young force in the mainstream of national development process through providing proper guidance, motivation and need-based development training. To engage the unemployed youths in the national development process, the Department has been implementing massive programmes on motivation, skill development training, self-employment, micro credit support, community development, so that the trained youths can establish self-employment projects for reduction of poverty.

In Bangladesh, till June 2010, about 3.43 million youths (male & female) were trained in different sectors, especially on computer with internet & networking, graphic design and video editing, livestock, poultry, pisciculture and agriculture, tailoring, block, batik and screen printing, electronics, electrical & house wiring, refrigeration and air-conditioning etc. Out of them about 1.90 million trained youths engaged themselves in self-employment projects. The average income of a self-employed youth ranges from $20 to $670. In some cases successful self-employed youth earn more than $1,300 per month in a country where average per capita income is merely $670 per annum. Moreover, a good number of trained youths obtained jobs in different organizations at home and abroad. Till May 2010, Tk. 9.2 billion (equivalent to $120 million) was disbursed to 7,38,181 trained youths under micro-credit programme for establishing or expanding the self-employment projects. The loan recovery rate is nearly 90 per cent.
Mr. President,

As per its Election Manifesto, the present Government has introduced the National Service Programme for providing employment to the unemployed youths having S.S.C degree or secondary education. They are being employed for two years on temporary basis. Initially, three poverty stricken districts have been selected. The unemployed youths are being provided with 3-month long basic training on ten selected modules and they are being attached with different nation building department/autonomous bodies/local government bodies, etc. During the training the trainees get Tk. 100 or $1.30 as training allowance per day. The Government has the plan to gradually expand the National Service Programme in all districts and upzilas all over Bangladesh. The voluntary youth organizations along with the government organization are playing significant role in the rural development. For active participation of youth organizations in the development process the Department of Youth Development has taken steps for enlistment of youth organizations. About 13,575 youth organizations have already been enlisted with the Department. To encourage club-based activities a sum of Tk. 50.63 million has been sanctioned to 4,861 youth clubs against specific project proposals from "Youth Welfare Fund" and Tk. 10.09 million to 1,870 youth clubs from Revenue Budget.

Mr. President,

On 12 August 2010, the International Youth Day was observed in Bangladesh with due importance. At the national level, the Day was started with a rally which was followed by a seminar on Dialogue and Mutual Understanding in line with the International Year of Youth 2010's theme. In fact, throughout the year 2010, different meetings were organized and attended by delegation from Bangladesh. A huge number of youth leaders were engaged in the opening and closing ceremony of the 11th South Asian Games and the World Cup Cricket inaugural ceremony that took place in Dhaka recently.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to reiterate that the Government of Bangladesh is committed towards converting today's youth into tomorrow's most productive sector of the society and to ensure that the Government is emphasizing more and more on meeting the education and training needs of the youth, encouraging their moral development and taking measures within the available limited resources to create job opportunities for them.

I thank you Mr. President.