Mr. President,

I take this opportunity to express our sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Cambodia at the tragic loss of lives in the stampede on a bridge during the Water Festival yesterday.

It is my privilege to introduce the resolution entitled ‘Implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace’ contained in document A/65/L.8 dated 29 October 2010 at this year’s Plenary on behalf of the co-sponsors. Since the tabling of the resolution, the following countries have joined the list of co-sponsors: Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Guyana, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Peru, Russian Federation, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Qatar, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Vietnam. Since 2001, this resolution has been tabled and adopted every year with consensus. This shows the commitment of the entire world community to make the world safe for our future generation. Here, let me quote from the Statement of our Prime Minister delivered in this year’s United Nation’s General Debate: “Our unflinching commitment to peace finds expression in our annual flagship resolution ‘Culture of Peace’ in UNGA sessions. Recent years have shown an extraordinary record of co-sponsorships because of the reference to the International Mother Language Day. Ever since this ‘Day’ was adopted by UNESCO, in recognition of language martyrs who gave their lives in 1952 for their mother tongue ‘Bangla’, it is celebrated worldwide with growing fervor every year.”

Given this backdrop, it is important to continue dialogue among civilizations and create a mindset and environment of tolerance, respect for diversity and cultural values as most conflicts and wars begin at heart. Therefore, it is necessary to solidify and strengthen a sense of tolerance, a sense of sensitivity and a strong relationship between different cultures, ethnicities, languages and civilizations for betterment of all. In this regard, I am pleased to refer to Bangladesh’s humble initiative, entitled, “International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010”. Bangladesh will continue to play its constructive role in this regard.
Mr. President,

The culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that rejects violence and prevents conflicts through dialogue among individuals, groups and nations. We firmly believe that a world order that is informed by a culture of peace is conducive to the attainment of our development goals, including the MDGs. We see great value in the principles of tolerance, respect for diversity, democracy and understanding. These ideals were endorsed by the Member States in the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace in 1999. Bangladesh had privilege to steer the process.

As we ended the International Decade for a Culture of Peace, we need to start taking stock of what we have achieved since the beginning of the decade. I believe this 10-year long exercise has had some impact on our psyche to make a peaceful world for all especially for our future – the children.

I believe in the days ahead we should focus on implementation. The Programme of Actions enjoys universal support. I sincerely believe that this resolution will advance Culture of Peace in eight areas of cooperation. One of these areas that we need to stress upon is to raise public awareness and disseminate public information on Culture of Peace. UN Department of Public Information (DPI) should take special information strategy on promotion of Culture of Peace. For that we believe adequate resources need to be placed at the hands of DPI. At national level, respective governments may go ahead with this by active cooperation with both print and electronic media in collaboration with respective Ministries.

Proper coordination among various agencies of the UN is vital. In particular, we welcome UNESCO Executive Board to provide specific budget in this regard. We call upon the Peace Building Commission (PBC) to reflect relevant Programme of Actions at country level. We as the coordinator of the NAM caucus on PBC raise it again and more so, as the NAM summits endorsed it.

We wish to express our profound gratitude to all the stakeholders who have contributed and are contributing to the promotion of a culture of peace. We specially thank UNESCO, the lead agency which has carried out programs to promote the idea worldwide. Our sincere thanks go to the NGOs and civil societies who take the idea of a culture of peace around the world. We commend the submission of the World Report by civil society, in particular the Working Group on the Culture of Peace at the UN. In this pursuit, academics and media also have an important role to play. We need to involve youth in the process and the children as well – we may first listen to them and then take measures accordingly for the betterment of their lives.

Mr. President,

There have been some changes in this year’s draft resolution on ‘Implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace’. We added three new PPs and one new OP. We also modified five OPs. In new PP 14, we welcome the summary
Out of the five modified OPs, OP1 states that the objective of the effective implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace is to strengthen further the global movement for a culture of peace following the observance of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), and it calls upon all concerned that renewed attention be given to this Objective. The modified OP11 welcomes the efforts made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to continue to enhance the communication and outreach, including through the culture of peace website, along with its efforts to coordinate and implement its activities to promote the objectives of the International Decade of Culture of Peace at the regional and global levels.

Mr. President,

Immediately after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, our Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman pursued the policy of ‘friendship to all, malice towards none’ in the conduct of the country’s international relations. This principle has always guided us in tuning our relations with the countries all around the globe, especially with the neighbors. Our peacekeepers are assisting the UN Peacekeeping operations even at the cost of their lives in different parts of the world in difficult terrains basically in the pursuit of peace. They also carry in their hearts the idea of ‘culture of peace’ and they put the idea into action as well. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission of the UN we are discharging our responsibilities. We believe that a culture of peace holds the key to sustainable peace in post-conflict societies. Even in the societies which are in peace or in apparent peace, we have to nurture this idea so that no one can think about the violation of peace.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to extend our profound gratitude to all the Member States who have shown their solidarity by co-sponsoring the annual resolution during the last ten years. Last year, we had as many as 118 co-sponsors and I hope this year the number of cosponsors will be even higher. The increase in the number of co-sponsors in each successive year has been a matter of great encouragement to the delegation of Bangladesh to the UN General Assembly.

In view of time constraint, the current draft resolution could not enjoy the endorsement of more co-sponsors. May I request my distinguished colleagues from other missions to co-sponsor the resolution by providing their valuable endorsement to it now?

I thank you, Mr. President.