Mr. President,

I thank the General Assembly for organizing this event.

With the passing away of Nelson Mandela, an icon of freedom, hope, forgiveness, and reconciliation, the mankind has lost a great warrior of conscience and uprightness. His saying like "overcoming poverty is not a task of charity, it is an act of justice" or "like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural, it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of the human beings" will continue to inspire and guide us. His words and works of wisdom has inspired all of us across nations to strive for freedom, peace, equality, tolerance and human dignity through inculcating 'culture of peace' and therefore, his departure is a loss to global community.

In the fight against apartheid, Madiba spent the prime of his youth in prison but never did he lose faith in the equality of man irrespective of race, color, creed or origin.

The demise of Madiba is an irreparable loss. His loss is not only for one country or one continent; this is a loss for every human, every country and every continent.

Mr. President,

On behalf of the people of Bangladesh, and on my behalf, I wish to convey our heartfelt and deepest condolences to the Government and people of South Africa and to the Mandela family. Indeed, to the millions of people in Bangladesh, Mandela is a moral icon of true leader. I vividly recollect his visit to Bangladesh in 1997 along with Yasser Arafat that energized the
whole nation with indomitable courage and hope and he eloquently thundered and I quote, "we know too well that our freedom is incomplete without freedom of the Palestinians".

The people of Bangladesh has great love and respect for Mandela. We also have many songs, poems in Bangla language dedicated to this great man. Truly he is a symbol of struggle for freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity to the people of Bangladesh.

The news of Nelson Mandela’s departure came as a shock to the people of Bangladesh. Bangladesh observed a three-day state mourning, from 7-9 December to pay tribute to this great leader. President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh expressed deep shock and sent condolence messages. President termed Mandela a towering figure and stated and I quote, "the world lost one of its most influential and courageous figures and Nelson Mandela will be remembered forever for his long struggle for the emancipation of the people and standing against injustice of apartheid", unquote. He also attended Mandela’s funeral.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina termed Mandela as one of mankind’s greatest liberators and said and i quote, "humanity has lost a tireless fighter for peace, freedom and equality in his death". Prime Minister recalling Mandela’s visit to Bangladesh in 1997 marking the celebration of 25th anniversary of Bangladesh’s independence also added and I quote, "the example of this great leader will guide all those who fight for social justice and peace in the world", unquote.
At this time, the people and Government of Bangladesh stand solidly beside our beloved brothers and sisters of South Africa and we pray for salvation of the departed soul of this great leader and convey our deep sympathy to the bereaved family and friends.

Mr. President,

Mandela has taken leave of the mundane world but his undying spirit and the gifts he offered to his nation and the world at large will continue to inspire people to be a better human. He will live in human hearts as ever before because he embodies the essence of a humble soul, a fearless liberator of a nation and an iconic leader of humanity - all combined together in one complete and enlightened person. Nelson Mandela leaves us with a legacy and great vision to attain greater wellbeing for the people. May his legacy live on, and may his soul rest in eternal peace---Ameen.

Thank you.