

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AT EVENT MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY
OF BANGLADESH'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNITED NATIONS
New York, 26 September 2014**

Your Excellency, Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,
Your Excellency, Mr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh
to the United Nations,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to join you in celebrating the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's membership in the United Nations.

Allow me to offer a personal recollection. In 1973, as a Foreign Service officer posted in New Delhi, I was part of the team that was responsible for establishing my country's diplomatic ties with Bangladesh. When I visited for the first time, I was deeply humbled by what I saw, because your country reminded me so much of mine at the end of the Korean War. There were so many shortages I had to tear small strips of paper for my counterpart at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for him to be able to write me a memo!

At the same time, despite the poverty, destruction and human misery there was a burning determination to build a new country.

I have made many visits since. Each time, I have been struck by the enormous progress that has been made.

Bangladesh has built a thriving economy and made important gains towards the Millennium Development Goals. The frugality and common purpose I witnessed 40 years ago have been driving forces in this great success. I particularly commend the work that Bangladesh has accomplished in disaster risk reduction at a time of climate change. And of course, Bangladesh is one of the top contributors to United Nations peacekeeping.

I am pleased that the dream of "*Shonar Bangla*" [*Golden Bengal*] that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had for his country is steadily becoming a reality.

It is a special pleasure to congratulate Bangladesh and its people for their achievements and its efforts as a dynamic UN Member State. The United Nations and I look forward to deepening this relationship in our shared pursuit of peace, development and human rights for all.

Thank you.