

Statement

By

His Excellency Mr. M. Morshed Khan, M.P

Hon'ble Foreign Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

at

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Assembly

international community at this time. The peculiarities of our geography render flooding a seasonal occurrence. It is therefore, imperative that we seek measures that will

Monterrey consensus should be pursued with determination. While it is important to set targets, it may be more important to create the means to achieve them.

For the cause of development to progress we need an environment of peace worldwide. Sadly, in many parts of the world this is lacking. We are concerned with the persistent violence in Iraq. We are encouraged by the return of the UN to the scene. We would now expect the UN to play a central role in facilitating the democratic process and also in the reconstruction and humanitarian work in the country. In Afghanistan holding of a successful election next month, will be critical to the country's stability. Our people cherish their close bonds with the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan and we pray that their travails will be over soon. A core issue in the Middle East remains the unresolved problem of Palestine. The Palestinians have suffered far too much for far too long, and the Wall now only exacerbates it. Perhaps, there can be a two-State solution on the basis of pre-1967 borders with an independent Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital. Till that is achieved there must be respect for international law, and all peoples in the region must be able to live in peace and security, free from violence, destruction and acts of terror.

Mr. President,

Wherever it has been possible, Bangladesh has not fought shy of contributing to post-conflict stability. We have always done this under the aegis of the United Nations. In UN peacekeeping, we are among the top in the list of participating countries in this regard. Over the past 20 years we have been involved in 28 Peacekeeping operations across 4 continents. Currently we are participating in 12 missions out of 16 ongoing UN missions. We have done so because we see this as advancing our role and perception as a constructive and stabilizing international actor. We also want to spread across the troubled parts of the world the lesson and axiom we have derived from our own experience. It is simply that for development to take place, conflicts must first cease.

Mr. President,

We believe that there is a direct relationship between disarmament and development. Bangladesh is party to all major international Conventions and Treaties on disarmament. We have denounced all weapons of mass destruction. Our geographical location makes nuclear weapons a direct and legitimate cause for concern for us in the South Asia region. Bangladesh therefore, supports all measures partial and otherwise towards arms control, conventional and nuclear disarmament.

Bangladesh has condemned international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We remain an active coalition partner in the war against terrorism. As party to several conventions on combating terrorism adopted both at regional and international levels , we are pledge bound to their effective implementation .

Mr. President,

Bangladesh has been playing an active role in many important Committees and Commissions of the United Nations. We believe the reforms of the General Assembly, and of the Security Council, currently being discussed, can truly help reenergize the system, and enable these institutions to reflect the realities of the contemporary world.

Consultations should be broad-based and should not be guided by perceived interests of a few. Bangladesh believes that any increase in the membership of the Council should be based on certain criteria which includes, the respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution and the aspirant's contribution to international peace and security; its proven track-records in democracy; its compliance with the UN resolutions; its avowed commitment to nuclear disarmament and its profile as a major partner in development; its contribution as voice of the economically disadvantaged countries.

Bangladesh believes, that the ultimate focus of any reform exercise should be on enhancing the Council's credibility and democratic profile through its working methods, its decision making processes and the very substance of its deliberations and not merely creation of new centres of privilege. In this regard, the Report of the High level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes which is expected to be available in December, this year will provide scope and opportunity for further deliberations.

Mr. President,

The quest for world order must begin at our own doorstep. Bangladesh is committed to maintain the credibility of SAARC, to provide its socio-economic mandate, to reduce tension and create a broad-based climate of confidence building. Bangladesh will takeover the chairmanship of the thirteenth SAARC Summit in January, next year. The occasion will mark the 20th anniversary of SAARC. We look forward to celebrate the occasion with due solemnity as well as maintain positive forward momentum. A key