

Bangladesh Statement at the General Debate of the 2023 HLPF to be delivered by Mr. Md Akhter Hossain, Principal Coordinator of SDGs at the Prime Minister's Office

Tuesday, 18 July 2023' General Assembly Hall, UNHQ

Madam President,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

Since 2015, Bangladesh has made steady progress in implementing the SDGs, building on its experience of achieving the MDGs, under the visionary leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In 2022, Bangladesh ranked 104 among 163 countries. Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh was conferred with the SDG Progress Award by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Like the rest of the world, Bangladesh's journey toward achieving the SDGs has faced serious challenges since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, the very year when Bangladesh participated in her 2nd VNRs. The challenges of the pandemic have been magnified by an increase in the frequency and intensity of human-made crises and natural disasters. Although our economy started to rebound in 2021, the war in Ukraine that resulted in market shocks, inflation, supply chain disruptions, food, energy and financial crises, and global economic downturns have slowed down the SDGs implementation.

Madam President,

Bangladesh is on-track to achieve several milestones of SDG-6. The percentage of the population currently using safely managed drinking water services, and safely managed sanitation facilities is steadily increasing while nearly three-fourths of the population now uses hand-washing facilities with soap and water. Nonetheless, many challenges remain. One challenge is the level of water stress. Another is the high level of arsenic contamination in groundwater, which does not meet the safety standards.

Madam President,

Bangladesh has achieved another milestone as it has brought 100 percent of its population under electricity coverage by March 2022.

Madam President,

We know that SDG-9 is based on three interconnected pillars of infrastructure, industry, and innovation. Several key challenges are associated with the implementation of SDG-9 in Bangladesh which include the high cost of doing business, lack of quality infrastructure, managing land constraints, shortcomings in attracting adequate FDI, low access to efficient utility services.

To address these issues, the Government of Bangladesh is putting in place the required policy frameworks in the areas of transport, information and communications technology, and trade.

Madam President,

In the wake of multiple crises that the world faces today, we need bold, ambitious, accelerated, just and transformative actions, anchored in international solidarity and effective cooperation at all levels.

Resource constraints, capacity deficit, lack of access to low-cost, low-interest-rate financing for development, lack of efficient technology, unsustainable levels of debt, and inadequate climate actions are some of the major challenges that hinder our efforts on the SDGs implementation.

The world must rally behind developing countries like Bangladesh, which are disproportionately affected by the interlinked global crises, and help them address these issues to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030, and be an upper middle income country by 2031.

I thank you.