

**National Statement of Bangladesh: H.E. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, M.P.,
Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Government of
the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Her Excellency Ms. Leila Benali, Madam President of UNEA 6 and Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of Morocco
Excellencies, Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,
Executive Director of the UNEP, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good afternoon,

On behalf of the Government of Bangladesh, I extend my sincere appreciation to UNEP and to the Government and people of Kenya for graciously hosting this assembly in Nairobi, the Green City in the sun.

Today, we stand at a crossroads in our planetary journey, facing unprecedented environmental challenges that demand immediate unified action and global solidarity.

Recognizing the gravity and complexity of these challenges, the Parliament of Bangladesh passed a motion in 2019 declaring a Planetary Emergency, noting the existential crisis of climate change, the devastating impacts of disasters and extreme weather events, the irreparable loss of biodiversity, looming food insecurity, rising water stress, and the unsustainable use of resources in terms of planetary overshoot.

This motion, passed unanimously, reflects our whole-of-country and all of society commitment to environmental stewardship and serves as a call to action for the global community. We urge nations around the world to follow our lead, acting urgently and decisively to achieve net zero emissions well before 2050, cap temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and transition swiftly to low carbon economies.

In our commitment to combating climate change, Bangladesh, under the dynamic leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has initiated the Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan, aimed at turning climate vulnerability into resilience and thereafter prosperity through a strategic framework that emphasizes sustainable development.

A new Article on Fundamental Principles of State Policy has been incorporated into our Constitution relating to protection of the environment, biodiversity, forests and wetlands for present and future citizens.

Alongside, our National Adaptation Plan and Nationally Determined Contribution outline ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate impacts, showcasing our determination to lead by example in the fight against climate change.

Having contributed the very least to climate change, Bangladesh is one of the most impacted. Glacial melt in the Hindu Kush Himalayas, the water towers for 700 million people, has huge implications for Bangladesh and the region. Flooding in the short term and water scarcity are frightening realities in the medium to long term. Sea level rise in the south leading to displacement of millions, loss of land, salinity intrusion impacting food security are part of the new normal.

Yet we are global champions in the fight against it. However resilience has natural limits and we cannot be expected to go on adapting indefinitely. We have to address the root causes of climate change and not just symptoms. Can we seriously respond to the challenges of Climate Change by increasing emissions and growing the problem? If we want to get out of a hole, we should stop digging and not create a bigger hole.

Whilst we deliberate upon the triple planetary crises of climate change, nature / biodiversity loss and pollution, let us bear in mind the imperative of addressing the trust deficit in multilateralism and the need to put in greater commitment for creating a brighter and equitable common future.

The nexus between forced displacement of people and accelerated biodiversity loss also deserves our focused attention. A case in point is more than 1 million Rohingyas from Myanmar whom Bangladesh continues to host.

The situation in Gaza is another litmus test for multilateralism as the Security Council fails to secure the lives of civilians including of course women and children. When is enough, enough?

We have heard from Speakers at this High Level segment that multilateralism is under stress and global processes have not delivered as per pledges as for instance with regard to climate change funding and means of implementation.

Only 12% of the SDG targets are on track and most of the goals are either in stagnation or regression. Sometimes COVID and conflicts are cited as reasons for not being able to deliver on funding, but let's be honest, funds for the SDG did not flow

even when times were good. What good are landmark decisions and agreements if we are not able to deliver?

The challenges ahead are indeed significant but I believe, our collective actions today will shape the well-being of future generations and the health of our planet.

Additionally, Bangladesh is confronting the critical issue of plastic pollution, which poses a significant threat to our environment and public health. Our rivers, landscapes, and urban areas are increasingly burdened by plastic waste, exacerbating the challenges of pollution and biodiversity loss. Addressing this issue requires concerted efforts at national and international levels, innovative solutions for waste management, and a transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns.

As we deliberate on the theme of “Effective inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution,” let us remember the power of collective action and the importance of solidarity in our endeavors.

The Government of Bangladesh is committed to playing a proactive role in global environmental governance, advocating for the implementation of international agreements, and working towards a sustainable and resilient future for all.

Lastly, I sincerely appreciate Madam President, your leadership to bring us together in this event. I hope this Assembly will guide us towards a more resilient environment, a greener economic recovery and a safer climate for all.

Bangladesh does hope that here in Nairobi we will be able to build on the momentum generated in COP28 through the UAE consensus and be able to act on the basis of a re-imagined, revitalized and reenergized multilateralism.

Thank you.

Joy Bangla.