

Bangladesh Country Statement for the ARF Inter-Sessional
Meeting on
Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crimes
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
29-31 May 2011

Mr. Co-Chairs, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning

At the outset, let me express our sincere thanks to the Government of Malaysia and Japan for co-hosting such an important meeting of ARF in this beautiful city of Kuala Lumpur . Our special thanks to Malaysia for the excellent arrangement and hospitality offered to us.

Mr. Chairmen,

Bangladesh unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We believe that no act of terrorism should be condoned because of their circumstances, method or objective. At the same time, we believe that the root causes of terrorism should be addressed. We believe that the international efforts to combat terrorism would be more effective if we address the conditions of prolonged and unresolved conflicts, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalization, as well as promoting sustained economic growth. Bangladesh is a forerunner in promoting a culture of peace as well as ethnic and religious tolerance. Numerous development programs, including micro-credit, women-empowerment and non-formal education, have been undertaken to address poverty and socio-economic disparity. We have also been pursuing 'motivational measures' in order to stop abuse of religion as a pretext for undertaking acts of terror. The religious leaders including Imams have been playing an instrumental role in this regard. We have also been promoting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogues. Our media has been playing an important role in raising awareness against terrorism and extremism.

The primary objectives of Bangladesh 's counter-terrorism efforts are to (a) ensure the security of lives and livelihoods of its citizens from terrorist attacks and (b) defeat the forces of terrorism that

challenge the authority of the State and the legitimacy of its Constitution.

Within a short time, Bangladesh has been able to establish effective counter-terrorism programs, institutions and enact anti-money laundering laws. As a result, terrorist threats posed recently by the Islamic militant groups have been brought under control. The country has also adhered to various international legal instruments to fight terrorism, and actively cooperated to develop regional cooperation against terrorism.

The Government of Bangladesh has taken some concrete measures to address money laundering and terrorist financing. Government is always keen to guide and support for the strategic drive to facilitate remittance flow through official channels. Under its relevant provision, the NGO Affairs Bureau is empowered to cancel registration, stop project activities and take legal action against the violators. So far, Bangladesh has closed the operation of Saudi Arabia-based charity Al-Haramain Foundation and the local Rabita Trust office in compliance with relevant UNSC resolutions. The Government has also ordered freeze of account of Kuwait-based charity Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) for their alleged involvement in terrorist financing.

Mr. Chairmen,

Bangladesh has been following "zero tolerance" in its efforts to counter terrorism and religious extremism. The Government has been aggressively pursuing those who are involved in extremist activities and many suspects have already been arrested from various parts of the country and huge quantities of arms and ammunitions have been recovered and many have faced legal consequences.

The Anti Terrorism Act 2009 has been enacted by the Government to furthering its commitments and work. Bangladesh is firmly committed to counter-terrorism efforts in the regional and international levels through multilateral and regional anti-terrorism frameworks and cooperation. Anti Terrorism Act, 2009 includes all reporting requirements as per international standards as well as provisions of punishment for non-compliance of such reporting by the designated reporting agencies.

At the regional level, Bangladesh , as party to the relevant regional conventions remains determined in combating cross-border crimes and terrorism. Bangladesh as a State Party to all thirteen UN conventions and protocols on terrorism has adopted a number of legislative and administrative measures. These are in line with the four pillars of the Plan of Action of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Co-chairs,

The menace of terrorism cannot be fought in an isolated manner by any single state. We would, therefore like to see a holistic approach in our global fight against terrorism. Technical cooperation and international financial assistance in combating terrorism are still not adequate for the developing countries, particularly the LDCs to meet the challenges. We would therefore, stress that necessary resources both technical and financial, be geared up to this effect for the effective implementation of the Terrorism Strategy.

Let us work together to make ARF most effective organization to counter terrorism in an innovative and peaceful way.

Thank you for your attention.