

Launching of the 2nd Edition of Climate Vulnerability Monitor (CVM)

Address by

Her Excellency **Sheikh Hasina**

Hon'ble Prime Minister
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Asia Society, New York, 26 September 2012

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Her Excellency President Laura Chinchilla Miranda of Costa Rica,
His Excellency President Dr. Mohamed Waheed of the Maldives,
His Excellency President Anote Tong of the Kiribati,
His Excellency Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania,
His Excellency President Girma Wolde Giorgis of Ethiopia,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum and Good Morning to you all.

1. I am very happy to be here today at the launching of the new edition of the "Climate Vulnerability Monitor" published by DARA. It is an important publication with interesting findings from recent studies on climate change highlighting the challenges to be faced, particularly by the climatically vulnerable countries, which indicates that it would adversely affect all countries inevitably in varying degree of intensity.
2. For decades, we have come across numerous reports of the grave consequences of unbridled carbon gas emissions in the atmosphere. It led to 17 years of negotiations, which, however, could not as yet produce a legally binding document on global warming. Despite science based evidences and growing calls, we observe an inertia from those who are responsible for the danger we are in today. Countries that will suffer most from climate change impacts, formed the Climate Vulnerable Forum at the initiative of the Maldives before the COP15 in 2009 at Copenhagen. The CVF is today an advocacy group and also a communication platform and the Climate Vulnerable Monitor, an effective means for communicating new evidences of the adverse effects of climate change, its magnitude and the injustices emanating from them. The first edition of the publication is already an international reference tool. This edition with its new findings will no doubt generate renewed international interest and emphasize urgency for taking preventive measures.
3. The CVM examines interesting new areas such as the nexus between the rise in temperature and loss of labor productivity and extra energy bills for cooling down homes and workplaces. It quantifies these figures in dollar values. The Monitor also indicates that

the climate change effects cause loss of 1% of world GDP and that it would become 3% unless effective measures are taken to reduce it; death of 4.5 million, mostly children in low income countries, every year and this is on the increase; and retardation of development efforts. There is also increase in adaptation costs with the passage of time. What is possible with 100 billion US dollar today will cost 10 times more in 2013. This is why we have been advocating for adaptation measures side by side with mitigation.

4. Indeed, the impact of climate change effects is leaning more towards the developing countries, having inadequate sustaining capacities. For Bangladesh, our vulnerability stems from high population density, low resource base, high incidence of natural disasters, salinity intrusion and submergence of land due to the sea level rise. They are all creating havoc in our lives, property and livelihood. The situation would become disastrous with even a meter rise of sea level due to global warming as it would inundate a fifth of Bangladesh, mostly the 134 islands in the Bay of Bengal, displacing over 30 million people and leading to mass migration. The scenario would be just as horrifying as the Small Island States. What may be true for us today, will be true for the rest of us, tomorrow.

5. Climate Change will also cause, particularly in South Asia, a decline in food production. We apprehend a 14%, 45%, 15% reduction of rice, wheat and maize production, respectively. This will result in additional price increases and will impact food security. It is estimated that one degree Celsius rise in temperature is associated with 10% productivity loss in farming. For us, it means loss of about 4 million metric tons of food grain, amounting to about 2 billion US dollar. This is about 2% of our GDP. If one adds up all other damages, our total loss would be 3-4% of GDP. Without this loss, our GDP growth would have risen to 10% allowing employment growth, enhanced food production, greater allocation to health, education and to other priority sectors of overall economic development.

6. We have clear evidences now that the two degree stabilization target is at stake. It must not happen if the world is to be saved. We must make judicious use of fossil fuel to save humanity. This is why we are emphasizing on green growth and sustainable development. For that we need technology transfer and funding support. Therefore, our development partners must not backtrack on their earlier commitments. Yet we find in them tendencies to confuse climate change support for development finance. In COP15, they promised to provide us new and additional support beyond development assistance to meet additional costs incurred by us due to the climate change. But we see funds being generated as "fast start finance", which, however, is are falling far short of the commitment. Similarly, we are yet to see any clarity on mobilization of funds or operationalization of climate funds when the fast start finance ends this year.

7. Although we are least responsible for causing the climate change disasters, we are yet doing all we can to meet the challenge. Costa Rica, Samoa, Ethiopia and the Maldives have promised to be carbon neutral in the next one decade. In Bangladesh, within our limited resources, we have mobilized 300 million US dollar in creating the Climate Change Trust Fund for implementing our 134 adaptation and mitigation programs, including planting trees on 20% of our land mass to create a carbon sink, depending more on renewable energy to meet our rising demands etc. Let me affirm that Bangladesh, as a responsible

member of the international community will never exceed the average per capita emission of the developing countries. This is our commitment to low carbon development.

8. We expect such commitments and responsible behavior from those who have created this climate change crisis with their reckless carbon emissions in selfish pursuit of their own development. It is time for them to take positive action for the interest of saving humanity. In Durban, we have again restarted the process that we started in Bali five years ago. This is possibly the last opportunity. If we fail, we are in peril. With the participation of all countries, we must immediately craft a legally binding agreement based on equity and common but differentiated responsibilities.

Dear Participants,

9. The frustrations did not hold us back. We established the CVF in 2009 to promote a broad based international cooperation to fight the climate change crisis. We intend to launch a vigorous advocacy campaign, and are in the final stage of creating a predictable and secure funding mechanism for CVF to support our programs. As for this publication, I am confident, it would enhance our understanding of the causes, impacts, and the action needed, to act together with a greater sense of urgency. The climate change challenges are formidable, but unfortunately our response due to lack of determination has so far been inadequate. If this trend continues, we will cause irrevocable damage to our planet and an uncertain future for the humanity. Our inaction and inadequate response are causing loss of lives, livelihoods and violations of the rights of our people. By highlighting the impact, we are seeking to inspire urgent action. This is what this Forum and the Monitor intends to achieve. We seek the kind understanding and cooperation and also contribution from all to support these endeavours of ours, aimed at seeking "climate justice".

10. With these thoughts, I take the honor of launching the Climate Vulnerability Monitor 2012.

I thank you all.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu.

May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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