

## 6th World Islamic Economic Forum

Statement of  
H.E Sheikh Hasina  
Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Wednesday, May 19, 2010

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah  
Your Excellency Hon'ble Dato' Sri Najib Tun Abdul Razak  
Prime Minister of Malaysia,  
Hon'ble Heads of State and Government  
Hon'ble Tun Musa Hitam, Chairman of WIEF  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Assalamu Alaikum.

I am pleased to be here at the Sixth World Islamic Economic Forum. I thank the Prime Minister of Malaysia, also the patron of WIEF, for inviting me to this important gathering. I am grateful to him, his government and the people of Malaysia for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to me and to my delegation since our arrival in the charming city of Kuala Lumpur. I also thank the WIEF Foundation for the excellent arrangements made for us and for the success of the Forum.

The WIEF is indeed a timely initiative for mobilizing the resources of Muslim majority countries to create synergy for their own development. The WIEF also acts as a bridge for synchronizing financial systems and economic activities of Muslim nations with the rest of the world. It thus plays a key role in expanding opportunities of Muslim countries. Since its inauguration in Kuala Lumpur five years ago the WIEF has grown into a useful forum for exchange of ideas between policymakers and business leaders, and the operating enterprises in the Muslim world. The recent meetings of the Businesswomen's Forum and the Youth Forum reveal the growing reach of this Forum even among less conventional industry and business leaders.

The theme of WIEF "Gearing for Economic Resurgence" is timely and relevant in the aftermath of the recent world economic meltdown. In order to protect ourselves from unexpected economic upheavals in the future, we need to find new solutions for the present problems; conform our own economic policies; and shield ourselves from the uncertainties of the external financial system. We also need to build on our synergies to have a multiplier effect on our efforts through sharing of our own resources, technologies and market opportunities.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My government emphasizes on public-private partnership for accelerating economic progress. We offer business friendly policy options to the corporate sector for their rapid growth. We are preparing ambitious developments where foreign participation will be welcome and have adopted most liberal investment policies, including easy repatriation of capitals. Significantly, we have also initiated "Digital Bangladesh 2021 Program" aimed at turning Bangladesh into info-tech based and knowledge-driven, middle income country, in a decade.

My government plans to rapidly expand basic ICT based services to remote rural communities; introduce social and health care services through internet; equip schools with computers and internet connectivity; establish e-governance for greater transparency and accountability. This calls for extensive investment for which we invite global companies attending

this Forum to come forward and invest in these new areas. Their participation would help realize our Vision 2021.

Rapid and sustainable growth of Small and Medium Enterprises is a dependable vehicle for accelerating economic growth, generating employment, alleviating poverty and, therefore, we have constituted a SME Foundation. The government is playing the role of a facilitator by way of removing policy obstacles, and extending promotional support. The public and private sector entrepreneurs from all over the world are coming to see how we have marshaled SMEs for economic and social progress, which are also empowering women, particularly in the agricultural sector in the rural and underdeveloped areas. We cordially invite the champions of commerce and industry of your countries to personally see our efforts and explore possibilities of participation.

We are also striving to train our youth with skills to add to our workforce abroad where they have already earned reputation as honest, law abiding and hardworking workers. Most of them are working in your countries and are contributing to your development efforts. In our endeavor, we welcome governments and companies to collaborate with us, in training and developing the human resource of nearly 160 million of our people. A productive workforce is also on demand within our country which has been achieving a steady 6% growth rate despite the worldwide financial crises, and the adverse effects of climate change, and which rate will increase substantially in future.

Bangladesh is among the frontline countries impacted by climate change. Increasing frequency of floods, cyclones, droughts, encroaching salinity, melting of glaciers, rising sea level are seriously affecting many of our countries represented here. The cause is global warming and Green House Gas emissions, which all our countries put together contribute very little of it. Bangladesh, whose efforts to attain the MDGs and other development programs are being hindered due to climate change, therefore, wishes to see establishment of an OIC/WIEF Task Force to find ways of support to member countries facing such climate change challenges.

At present, Bangladesh, all by herself, is trying to implement its 134 climate change action plans, including dredging of all major rivers, and many other measures. Bangladesh is also making efforts to build roads, railways, highways, bridges, a deep sea port, and generate power and explore gas and oil. Our tourism sector which showcases Cox's Bazaar, the longest natural sea beach in the world, and the "Sundarbans" the largest mangrove forest and home of the Royal Bengal Tiger, is also being developed. These are some areas where countries and companies present here may get involved in with win-win partnerships.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Sixth World Islamic Economic Forum is a significant event with a large participation of Muslim majority countries, institutions and private companies. I believe it is the aspiration of all of us present here to honestly cooperate, in the true spirit of brotherhood for successful solutions of our common and individual concerns. I believe it is also our aspiration to genuinely involve ourselves in each other's socio-economic activities to strengthen our economies, thereby, improving the overall well being of our peoples. Let us do so with the spirit of spontaneity, sincerity and without further passage of time.

I thank you all.

Khoda Hafez

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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