

**National Statement by H.E U Win Myint,
President of the Republic of the Union of
Myanmar**

at Fourth BIMSTEC Summit

30 August 2018, Kathmandu, Nepal

*(Theme: “Peaceful, Prosperous and Sustainable Bay of
Bengal Region”)*

**Agenda Item 6 - Statement by Leader of
Delegation of Myanmar (7 minutes)**

**Mr. Chair, Your Excellency Prime Minister K.P
Sharma Oli,
Excellencies,
Secretary General of BIMSTEC,
Distinguished Delegates,**

- First of all, I would like to congratulate Prime Minister K.P Sharma Oli and the Government of Nepal for hosting this important Summit.
- I would also like to express our profound thanks and appreciation to the Government and the people of Nepal for the warm and generous hospitality extended to me and my delegation.
- It is an honour to attend this meeting for the first time and I believe that our meeting will provide

opportunities to exchange views on ways and means of strengthening BIMSTEC cooperation.

Mr. Chair,

- At the Third BIMSTEC Summit, held in Nay Pyi Taw in 2014, we agreed to deepen cooperation within the framework of BIMSTEC and to strengthen institutional mechanism. Member states also reached an agreement on the establishment of a permanent BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka and appointment of the Secretary General.
- I would also like to congratulate the first Secretary-General Mr. Sumith Nakandala for his active and valuable contribution. Let me also take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Shahidul Islam as the second Secretary General of BIMSTEC.
- I would like to congratulate the Government of India for the successful hosting of the BIMSTEC Leaders' Retreat in October 2016. The Outcome Document and Agenda of Action of the BIMSTEC Leaders' Retreat provide a practical guideline for BIMSTEC cooperation.

Agriculture

Mr. Chair,

- Agriculture is the mainstay of the national economy for many of us. It further contributes to

regional sustainable development in terms of food security and nutrition.

- One of the daunting challenges for our world is to ensure food and nutrition security for its rapidly growing population, which is estimated to reach 9.6 billion by 2050. The BIMSTEC region, which is home to 22 % of the global population, must inevitably face this challenge.

- While expressing my appreciation the excellent work done by the BIMSTEC Expert Group Meeting on Agriculture, I am happy to inform you that Myanmar, as a Lead Country of the Agriculture sector, will host the first BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture in Myanmar in 2018/2019.

Energy

Mr. Chair,

- Most of the Member States in our region are blessed with an abundance of energy resources, including hydro power. However, the ever-increasing demand for electric power is always higher than the available supply. This situation requires us to enhance energy cooperation and

energy trade among Member States to fill the energy gap in our region.

- The signing of the MoA¹ for the establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre in 2009 in Myanmar marked a significant achievement in BIMSTEC energy cooperation. Our continued cooperation is vital for the early operationalization of the BIMSTEC Energy Center.
- I am happy that the MoU for the establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection will be signed during this Summit. I firmly believe that it will be a framework for electricity inter-trade among Member States.

Transport and Communication

Mr. Chair,

- Connectivity plays a key role in unlocking the door to socioeconomic development and ultimately, to the enhancement of regional integration. It is with pleasure and satisfaction that I note the progress achieved in the preparation of the draft BIMSTEC Master Plan on Transport Connectivity. I would like

¹ Memorandum of Association (MoA)

to express our sincere appreciation to the ADB² for their assistance in formulating the Master Plan.

Poverty Alleviation

Mr. Chair,

- Despite the significant achievements of Member States, poverty still remains a challenge for all of us.
- We therefore welcome the Colombo Statement on Poverty Alleviation adopted at the Third BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation on 20 December 2017, which reaffirms our commitment to alleviate poverty in the BIMSTEC region to improve the well-being of the peoples, and to ensure a dignified life for them.

Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

Mr. Chair,

- On 5th July 2016, Myanmar deposited its Instrument of Ratification of the BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking, which was signed in 2009.
- I wish to underscore the importance of the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs Meeting as a key

² ADB- Asia Development Bank

component of the BIMSTEC's security cooperation, which provides platforms for strategic dialogue and practical cooperation in the BIMSTEC counter terrorism sector.

- As a lead country of BIMSTEC Sub-group on Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals. Myanmar hosted several meetings within the BIMSTEC counter-terrorism and transnational crime framework.
- Myanmar has been facing the scourge of terrorism. Therefore, we attach great importance to the issues of terrorism and trans-national crime, and we assure you of our continued active cooperation within the BIMSTEC framework.

Trade and Investment

Mr. Chair,

- Although the BIMSTEC Free Trade Area Framework Agreement was signed in 2004, the finalization of the constituent agreement is still under negotiation. In the mean time, we should work together to promote trade and investment through the exchange of trade and business delegations, and the organization of investment promotion events among Member States.

Future Direction of BIMSTEC

Mr. Chair,

- The BIMSTEC mechanism, comprising meetings at different levels, plays an important role in steering BIMSTEC activities. However, I am of the view that the formulation of the Rules of Procedure of the BIMSTEC mechanism would be a key to effective and efficient cooperation. Therefore we welcome the idea of drafting the Rules of Procedure which would also be a basis for the formulation of the future BIMSTEC Charter.
- The simultaneous implementation of 14+2 cooperation areas will not be feasible for BIMSTEC due to financial and resources constraints. Therefore, we have identify priorities to ensure the effective implementation of our projects.
- We understand that funding is a matter of concern for the mechanism. Therefore, we welcome the idea of exploring the alternative financial resources for our cooperation. In the mean time, we should expand our engagements with development partners for the implementation of common projects.

Conclusion

As of 30/8/2018

- In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our firm commitment to strengthen BIMSTEC cooperation towards “Peaceful, Prosperous and Sustainable Bay of Bengal Region”.
- I thank you, Mr. Chair.
