

Statement by H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain
Hon'ble Foreign Adviser of Bangladesh
at the Seventh CICA Ministerial Council Meeting
17 December 2024

H.E. Jeyhun Bayramov, Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Hon'ble Ministers
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good day!

I am pleased to join with you all to this 7th CICA Ministerial Council Meeting particularly, at a time when we are in pressing need for robust cooperation for a sustained peace, stability and security across Asia and beyond. I express my sincere thanks to the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting this very important meeting and providing yet another platform to share our concerns, to express our optimism and to provide directives for better future that we all aspire to. I would also like to thank the Republic of Kazakhstan for their commendable Chairmanship in achieving important milestones on transforming CICA into a full-fledged regional international organization and establishment of permanent CICA Secretariat in Astana.

Excellencies,

It has been twenty-five years since we agreed to set principles to foster a beneficial relationship among CICA member states aiming to further peace, security and stability through confidence building measures. These initiatives have a profound impact in addressing and minimizing multiple threats and to harness benefits in economic, environment, political and human dimensions. As an active member of CICA since 2014, Bangladesh is pleased to contribute to this process, especially in the role of co-chairs in information technology, natural disaster and environmental protection areas. Bangladesh stands ready to engage more meaningfully with CICA in days to come.

Excellencies,

Bangladesh recently witnessed a revolution by students and common people in quest for freedom, equality, and a just society. We lost hundreds of lives in the struggle. The interim government in Bangladesh led by the Nobel Laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus, with the overwhelming support of our people and the international community, is committed to ensuring transition to an inclusive and pluralistic democracy and eventually creating an atmosphere to hold free, fair and participatory elections. We count on the support of CICA member states' during this process.

Excellencies,

The world is navigating through an unprecedented time in recent history, marked by devastation from war and conflict, resulting in immense loss of lives and economic hardship. The ongoing catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza, with countless innocent civilians, including women and children, is a stark reminder of the urgent need for a just and lasting resolution to such conflicts, based on UN resolutions and international law.

Close to home, Bangladesh is deeply concerned about the plight of the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals, who took refuge in Bangladesh. The burden of hosting over 1.3 million Myanmar nationals underscores the pressing need for their safe, dignified, and voluntary repatriation to Myanmar. The international community must act decisively to address the root causes of such crises and ensure accountability for atrocities, including ethnic cleansing and facilitate speedy repatriation of the Rohingyas.

Distinguished Colleagues,

We are deeply concerned by the adverse consequences of climate change, which continue to intensify natural disasters, displacing millions and threatening lives and livelihoods globally. Despite being a climate-vulnerable nation, Bangladesh has demonstrated leadership in adaptation and mitigation, and we call for strong global action in mitigating climate impacts, particularly for the most affected nations.

On the other hand, we are encouraged by the transformative advancements in science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship that have lifted millions out of poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. These

tools give us hope and the means to build a more equitable and sustainable future.

Excellencies,

The world is in turmoil. Each day, we hear fresh news about conflict, instability, and new threats to humanity. To address these challenges, we must strive to translate each word of our declarations into action that we adopt today. We have an obligation to transform a better world for our future generations. For that, we must work together to reshape the world through solidarity and compassion.

I thank you all.