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Bangladesh

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Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1–4	3
I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process.....	5–93	3
A. Presentation by the State under review.....	5–23	3
B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review.....	24–93	5
II. Conclusions and/or recommendations	94–96	16
Annex		
Composition of the delegation		21

Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, held its fourth session from 2 to 13 February 2009. The review of Bangladesh was held at the 4th meeting on 3 February 2009. The delegation of Bangladesh was headed by Dr. Dipu Moni, Minister for Foreign Affairs. At its 8th meeting held on 5 February 2009, the Working Group adopted the present report on Bangladesh.
2. On 8 September 2008, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Bangladesh: Argentina, Egypt, and the Philippines.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 5/1, the following documents were issued for the review of Bangladesh:
 - (a) A national report submitted / written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/4/BGD/1);
 - (b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/4/BGD/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR, in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/4/BGD/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Czech Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Denmark and Germany was transmitted to Bangladesh through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the UPR.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. At the 4th meeting, on 3 February 2009, H.E. Dr. Dipu Moni, Minister for Foreign Affairs, made an introductory statement. Her presence at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in her first overseas undertaking as Foreign Minister of a newly elected Government underlined the importance her Government attached to the guarantees of the inviolability of fundamental rights provided for in the Bangladesh Constitution.
6. She highlighted significant developments since the presentation of the national report, particularly the lifting of the state of emergency and the holding of free, fair parliamentary elections in the country. The 2008 parliamentary elections, held under a non-party caretaker government, had witnessed the participation of an unprecedented number of voters. For the first time, more women than men had cast ballots. The electoral process and the outcome were unreservedly lauded by observers from home and abroad. The state of emergency was lifted weeks before the elections, which resulted in full restoration of fundamental rights.
7. Bangladesh thanked the international community for its support in the country's democratic transition. The Grand Alliance led by the Awami League had won the elections with a huge margin, and its election manifesto was clear on the issue of promotion and protection of human rights by stating that Bangladesh shall spare no efforts in realizing that goal.

8. The National Report was a result of broad consultations with representations of various stakeholders, and the consultations with civil society had been particularly rewarding as their perspectives had helped shape government positions on a range of issues.
9. A number of institutional reforms undertaken to strengthen rule of law and good governance were highlighted, including separation of the judiciary from the executive.
10. Reference was made to the establishment in 2008 of a National Human Rights Commission, a three-member body headed by a former Supreme Court judge and including a distinguished woman from civil society and a representative from a minority community. The Commission was empowered to receive and investigate allegations of human rights violations from any individual or group and to monitor the overall human rights situation in the country and make appropriate recommendations.
11. The reconstituted Election Commission had completed the registration of 80 million voters, with photographs and biometric features, and the Rules of Procedure of the Anti Corruption Commission had been reformulated. Bangladesh would ensure independent functioning of those institutions, and would adhere to its commitment to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and bring corrupt people to justice.
12. The delegation stressed that economic and social rights were of paramount importance: eradication of poverty was the Government's top priority and more than half the budget had been allocated for poverty-reduction activities. As a result of these and other efforts, poverty declined significantly. Bangladesh was often cited for its best practices of social safety net programmes and the Government had plans to further widen the social safety-net, particularly to combat the impact of the global financial crisis. The Government's emphasis on education was also highlighted: the education sector received the single largest share, about 15 per cent, of the annual budget.
13. Bangladesh expressed its commitment to food security for all, emphasizing that it had been able to contain the impact of the global food crisis and highlighting its strategy both to reduce food prices further by increasing domestic production and to ensure greater access to agricultural inputs that would improve farmers' productivity and income.
14. The delegation noted the Government's intention to institute comprehensive police reform. Steps were being taken to update and improve the Police Act of 1961. A draft ordinance developed through consultations with all stakeholders stipulated codes of conduct for the police, with a particular focus on upholding human rights in the discharge of duties and on gender guidelines for the treatment of women and children. The process of setting up a victim support centre and a criminal intelligence analysis unit was under way.
15. One of the Government's foremost goals in the field of human rights was to bring to justice all those who committed the most atrocious crimes against humanity during the war of national liberation. The Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, had already indicated that Bangladesh would seek United Nations help to ensure that the mechanisms adopted for the proposed trials of the perpetrators met international standards and safeguarded the basic principles of justice. Parliament had passed a unanimous resolution that there would be a trial of the perpetrators and the victims may expect redress. Bangladesh was committed to reversing the culture of impunity that had afflicted other areas of its national life. The Government intended to resurrect due process, expunge extra-judicial modalities and objectives, and promote political harmony and reconciliation.
16. Regarding the status of specific groups, the delegation indicated that women in Bangladesh were increasingly assuming leadership roles at both national and local levels, and that the principal focus had been to eliminate gender disparities in areas of law, economics, politics and family. An Inter-Ministerial Committee co-ordinated the implementation of CEDAW's provisions, resolute action had been taken to stop violence

against women, and One-Stop Crisis Centres (OCC) established in all six Divisions for victims of violence provided victims with emergency medical treatment, police assistance, legal aid, and shelter facilities.

17. The delegation provided information on recent amendments to the Citizenship Act. According to the Bangladesh Citizenship (Amendment) Ordinance 2008, children born of a Bangladeshi woman married to a non-Bangladeshi were now entitled to Bangladeshi citizenship. The delegation also referred to special measures taken to address feminization of poverty, including the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) Programme with nationwide outreach covering nearly 750,000 poor rural women.

18. Concerning children, reference was made to the National Plan of Action against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children, including Trafficking, and to the National Social Policy on Alternative Models of Care and Protection for Children, which would harmonize national laws on juvenile justice with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Bangladesh had eliminated child labour from the readymade garments sector, and this remained a noted case for global replication.

19. Among government measures aimed at the development of religious and ethnic minority groups, a separate Ministry had been set up for the tribal communities residing in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It was mandated to uphold social, economic, cultural and educational rights of the hill people.

20. Bangladesh was attentive to the rights of the persons with disabilities. It had established 46 Focal Points in government ministries and departments to deal with disability issues.

21. Both print and electronic media played a role in protecting citizen's fundamental rights. The existence of some 544 daily newspapers, 357 weeklies, 62 fortnightlies and 93 monthlies was an example of a vibrant print media.

22. Bangladesh acknowledged that the contribution of civil society and NGOs to national socio-economic development and to the promotion and protection of human rights had been praiseworthy. Government-NGO partnership was a hallmark of Bangladesh's development scene. Coordinated activities took place in areas such as agriculture and rural development, physical infrastructure, healthcare and family planning, primary and secondary schooling and environmental protection.

23. Bangladesh noted there were many discriminations and oppressive practices embedded in its age-old social systems and customs. Many of these stemmed from poverty and the absence of real development. Resolving them might and would require time. However, they would be addressed. Bangladesh had embarked on a path of inclusion by striving to guarantee people's rights to food, knowledge, security and vote as well as to end all oppression.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

24. During the inter-active dialogue, statements were made by 48 delegations. Additional statements by twenty-six delegations which could not be delivered during the dialogue due to time constraints are posted on the UPR extranet when available.*

* Switzerland, Yemen, Denmark, Russian Federation, Japan, Belarus, Serbia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, South Africa, Kuwait, Jamaica, Latvia, Uzbekistan, Canada, Uruguay, Syrian Arab Republic, Colombia, Sweden, Oman, Ukraine, Slovakia, Afghanistan, Maldives, Djibouti, Jordan, Burkina Faso.

25. A number of delegations congratulated the delegation of Bangladesh for its comprehensive presentation and for the national report, with its detailed and useful information about the country's achievements and challenges. A number of delegations stressed that Bangladesh had reached out to relevant stakeholders in preparing the national report. Delegations welcomed the establishment in 2008 of a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), with a mandate inter alia to receive allegations of human rights violations and to review the overall human rights situation in the country. Bangladesh was also commended for being a party to most core international human rights instruments and for its micro-credit schemes.

26. A number of delegations welcomed the successful holding in 2008 of free and fair parliamentary elections and the formation of a democratically elected government, events that demonstrated Bangladesh's firm belief in democracy, heralded the return of democratic rule and constituted an essential element for the democratic transition.

27. A number of delegations welcomed the significant advances in the field of primary education, being mandatory and free of charge. Schoolbooks are free of charge. Annual allocations for education amounted to 15 per cent of the general budget, with impressive gains in the high net enrolment rate and the positive enrolment ratio of girls to boys. Bangladesh was commended for achieving the MDG related to gender parity in primary and secondary education, and for the decrease in girls' school drop-out rates.

28. A number of delegations welcomed the progress achieved in the field of human rights despite the major challenges that Bangladesh, one of the most densely populated countries, faced because of economic and environmental difficulties.

29. Algeria recommended that Bangladesh pursue its efforts within the Human Rights Council on the issue of climate change and human rights. Noting the considerable efforts made for women's rights, Algeria enquired about the challenges faced and the measures taken to overcome social difficulties impeding the realization of women's rights. Algeria recommended that Bangladesh, with the assistance and cooperation of the international community, pursue its efforts for the realization of rights of women and women's empowerment as an important sector of society that can contribute significantly to the development of the country. Algeria welcomed the major efforts made to reduce poverty and improve living conditions. It recommended that Bangladesh, with the assistance and cooperation of the international community, pursue its efforts, despite constraints, to combat poverty, particularly among women, including material and non-material poverty (in terms of exclusion).

30. United Arab Emirates commended the efforts made by Bangladesh to provide the necessary legislative framework to protect human rights, enshrined in the constitution and national laws, by giving full regard to international instruments. They also praised the steps taken to promote the right to education and requested clarifications about the initiative of non-formal education.

31. Cuba stressed the serious commitment of Bangladesh to human rights, and the huge efforts made to combat hunger and poverty and guarantee basic needs, particularly in the areas of food, housing, education and health, especially in times of financial crisis. Cuba highlighted the priority given to the rights of women, particularly regarding their participation to economic, political and social life, and the importance given to the rights of the child. It recommended that Bangladesh pursue (a) its positive efforts to promote and protect the right to education, including the education of girls, and (b) its positive efforts for the promotion and protection of the rights of women.

32. Saudi Arabia commended the new government's numerous initiatives to reform the Constitution and review national laws to bring them in line with international instruments. Vaccination campaigns had been successfully carried out, reducing child and infant

mortality rates. It recommended that Bangladesh (a) continue its strategic plan adopted in 2005 for eliminating social and economic disparities in order to reduce poverty, in particular in isolated regions, and (b) continue while working with concerned parties, its comprehensive national strategy to improve the health situation, in particular to promote women's health during pregnancy and post natal care.

33. Venezuela noted that more than 60 million people live below the poverty line in Bangladesh and acknowledged the efforts made to reduce poverty. It encouraged Bangladesh to spare no efforts to consolidate programmes of social protection and assistance, in particular programmes for the transfer of food, development programmes on behalf of vulnerable groups, particularly women in poverty, and micro-credit programmes which have produced positive results for this segment of the population. Venezuela requested more information on the Strategy for Poverty Reduction in the Lagging Regions of Bangladesh, which should take into consideration the impact of the international food and financial crises.

34. The Lao People's Democratic Republic recognized that Bangladesh had made significant progress in the field of human rights, including in national security, development and education. It recommended that Bangladesh (a) strengthen and continue sharing its experience and the promotion of the role of gender in the national leadership, (b) and enhance the promotion and protection of fundamental human rights in accordance with its level of socio-economic development through harmonization with international human rights instruments.

35. Nicaragua congratulated Bangladesh for its firm resolve to remain faithful to its obligations under human rights instruments and its compliance with the voluntary commitments made to the Human Rights Council. Institutional reforms had been undertaken, enabling the public administration to be more effective in promoting human rights. It enquired whether the NHRC was established according to the Paris Principles, and recommended, if this is not the case, that Bangladesh bear in mind these Principles in establishing the Commission to guarantee its full independence in the exercise of its functions.

36. Singapore indicated that the new Government is committed to continuing the promotion of human rights. Singapore recognized the recent enactment and/or amendment of relevant domestic legislation. Bangladesh had been right to focus on poverty alleviation and eradication, on women's empowerment and the rights of children. Singapore recommended that the Government continued to place emphasis on these areas. It commended the valuable role played by many NGOs and innovative social enterprises in contributing to improving the lives of millions of people.

37. France welcomed the lifting of the state of emergency and the constructive reforms undertaken. It asked (a) when Bangladesh intended acceding to and implementing the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (b) what measures were envisaged to effectively implement legal instruments on women's rights, in particular laws relating to prevention of violence, under-age marriages and the practice of dowries; and (c) what measures were being taken to abolish child labour and to implement the related national plan of action. France (a) invited Bangladesh to ratify OP-CAT; (b) strongly encouraged it to abolish the death penalty, and while awaiting such decision, to adopt a moratorium on executions, and (c) recommended the withdrawal of all reservations to the CEDAW.

38. Brazil recognized the important initiatives to protect children and women and affirmative actions to guarantee access of ethnic minorities to higher education and to government recruitment. Poverty alleviation has been a priority of Bangladesh. Brazil requested information about the adoption of a comprehensive approach to address violence against women and about measures to guarantee the security of minorities and ethnic

communities. Brazil recommended (a) bearing in mind Human Rights Council resolution 9/12, entitled “Human rights goals”, the ratification of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees; (b) bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 62/149, the establishment of a moratorium on executions, with a view to abolishing the death penalty; (c) taking into account the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the taking of further measures to prohibit all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment, and the raising of the minimum age of criminal responsibility; (d) positive consideration of the request to visit by the Special Rapporteur on summary executions.

39. Malaysia noted the reform of the Election Commission, the separation of the judiciary from the executive and the important progress in the realization of the right to food and the fight against poverty. Malaysia (a) recommended that Bangladesh share its experience and best practices in this area with other developing countries. Malaysia applauded the efforts to achieve economic growth and social progress, and was encouraged by the serious efforts made to combat violence against women and children. It (b) recommended that Bangladesh redouble efforts and allocate more resources in this area, in particular through increasing women’s empowerment, public awareness, education and training, as well as increase vigilance and monitoring by the relevant authorities.

40. Pakistan said that the strengths of the Bangladesh society included adherence to pluralism, democracy, gender justice and women’s empowerment. Bangladesh deserved appreciation for its National Women’s development policy, vibrant media and civil society. Its judiciary has played an important role for human rights. Pakistan welcomed the significant actions taken for the rights of people with disabilities and indicated that the vision of the newly elected government requires international support, especially towards combating the adverse effects of climate change.

41. Chile welcomed the efforts by Bangladesh to promote human rights. Bangladesh has not ratified OP-ICCPR 1 and OP-ICCPR 2, OP-CAT, CED and ICRMW. Chile (a) recommended that it consider doing so. Chile asked about follow-up to CEDAW’s call for the adoption of a comprehensive approach to combat and eradicate violence against women. Chile noted that Committee on the Rights of the Child was concerned about the sentencing to life imprisonment of children from the age of 7 years and to the death penalty of children from the age of 16 years. It recommended that Bangladesh (b) adopt a moratorium on the death penalty, as a primary step towards its abolition; and (c) consider abolishing article 377 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes sexuality against the “order of nature”.

42. Indonesia appreciated the strategies to achieve democratic goals and to cooperate with international human rights mechanisms. It noted initiatives undertaken in the fields of education and health care, and encouraging results in reducing infant and maternal mortality. It asked Bangladesh about strategies to meet its MDGs. Indonesia recommended that Bangladesh continue its efforts to further the enforcement of child rights and laws. It hoped that the international community would support Bangladesh in its efforts.

43. Bahrain mentioned that national plans and projects had been developed to combat poverty and increase per capita income. The 2000 national policy aimed at providing basic health care without discrimination. A national strategy had been adopted to provide maternal and child care and to reduce mortality rates. Bahrain commended the adoption of a national food policy and recommended that Bangladesh (a) continue efforts to draw up a national plan to provide health care to all without discrimination and (b) create job opportunities and provide social services to face development challenges and combat poverty.

44. Egypt noted that the government and civil society have been implementing programmes for poverty alleviation, employment and income generation for the poor and the disadvantaged. Egypt enquired, inter alia, about efforts of Bangladesh to address multi-dimensional challenges in fulfilling its human rights commitments, about its specific needs in terms of technical assistance and capacity building and training, and how the international community and OHCHR could help in implementing its human rights strategy. Egypt recommended that Bangladesh (a) continue its efforts to strengthen its national human rights mechanisms and continuously upgrade its laws, policies and institutions in the area of the promotion and protection of human rights; (b) continue its efforts to develop the work of its national institution for human rights, as an effective human rights watchdog; (c) build, with international support, the national capacities to fulfil the reporting obligations to treaty bodies and (d) continue its efforts to ensure consistency between national laws and international human rights conventions which it has ratified.

45. Zimbabwe applauded Bangladesh for placing emphasis on actualization of all human rights through democratic governance, institutional strengthening and pro-poor policies. Welcoming achievements in poverty reduction, it recommended that Bangladesh continue to implement identified measures, plans and policies focusing mainly on poverty eradication.

46. Myanmar noted with admiration that Bangladesh has adopted a peaceful and successful democratic transition in 2008 and commended its continued efforts for human rights. Myanmar said that the international community should extend its sincere support for the advancement of fundamental rights to all citizens of Bangladesh.

47. Thailand welcomed the special emphasis placed on poverty alleviation; concrete steps taken to attain the MDGs; measures taken to address feminization of poverty and initiatives empowering women such as the Vulnerable Group Development Programme. Thailand urged Bangladesh to ensure the full and effective implementation of existing laws and policies relating to the rights of women and children, in order to protect these rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination.

48. Sri Lanka was heartened by the recent progress made in further strengthening democracy, good governance and the rule of law and welcomed the recent institutional reform initiatives. It welcomed the holistic and multi-pronged approaches being implemented to alleviate poverty and promote human rights. It welcomed the encouraging advances in achieving human development and MDG's. Sri Lanka was pleased to see that women are increasingly assuming leadership roles and asked for more information and best practices on efforts to combat trafficking in women and children.

49. Turkey welcomed the announced plan to introduce a "bribery-free court management". It encouraged Bangladesh to pursue the reform agenda to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, combat impunity and address basic needs in over-crowded prisons. Treaty bodies and ILO expressed concern at the prevalence of child labour and incidences of sexual exploitation of children. Turkey recommended that Bangladesh (a) ensure an effective monitoring mechanism to oversee the implementation of the National Child Labour Policy, which it welcomed; and (b) continue to take measures towards the effective implementation of the National Plan of Action against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children including Trafficking. Turkey welcomed the significant progress to reduce poverty, highlighting the focus placed on disadvantaged groups and the establishment of social safety nets.

50. Bhutan welcomed the separation of the judiciary from the executive, which will strengthen good governance, rule of law and the judicial system. Bhutan recommended that Bangladesh (a) continue its good work in further strengthening the judiciary; (b) continue, with international support and cooperation, efforts to ensure basic necessities, particularly

in terms of food, clothing, shelter and education; and (c) continue and strengthen, with international support and cooperation, its efforts to mitigate the negative impact of climate change, as well as disaster management programmes.

51. Senegal acknowledged the considerable efforts of Bangladesh to reinforce its institutional and legal architecture. Significant progress has been made, *inter alia*, in the areas of assistance to persons with disabilities, eradication of poverty and hunger. Senegal encouraged Bangladesh to stick to the path of their economic and social development, in particular by reinforcing efforts regarding awareness-raising and education, with specific attention to people in rural areas, and by regularly submitting their periodic reports to treaty bodies.

52. The Netherlands noted that the creation and strengthening of key institutions are important achievements. Efforts to tackle impunity and corruption are commendable, but much remains to be done. The Netherlands recommended that the government (a) ratify the optional protocol to the convention against torture, take measures to protect human rights defenders, including journalists, address the problems of extrajudicial killings and torture by security forces and improve prison situations; (b) take steps to further strengthen the National Human Rights Commission and the Anti-corruption Commission to ensure that they will be able to operate independently and effectively; (c) ensure that women's rights are protected, through effective implementation of existing laws, the development of a comprehensive national action plan to combat violence against women and the adoption of a family code complying with CEDAW's provisions; and (d) eradicate child labour starting with taking steps to finalize the National child labour policy and to implement the plan of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.

53. Australia welcomed the improvement of human rights trends under the Caretaker Government and plans to further implement human rights treaties. Australia recommended that Bangladesh (a) take measures to protect human rights defenders, including journalists; (b) take measures to ensure women's rights are protected through implementing existing laws such as the Early marriage Act and the Dowry Act; (c) take steps to eradicate child labour such as finalizing the National Child Labour Policy and implementing the plan of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. It encouraged Bangladesh to (d) take steps to protect the social, economic and cultural rights of minorities, refugees and displaced persons and recommended that Bangladesh: (e) take steps to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord; (f) take steps to address the culture of impunity for human rights violations by law enforcement agencies. While welcoming efforts to separate the judiciary from the executive, Australia recommended that the government (g) now take measures to ensure the independence of the judiciary, the NHRC and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

54. Viet Nam noted with appreciation the legislative and enforcement reforms in such areas as health, food security, poverty alleviation, rights of women, children and other vulnerable groups. Viet Nam commended Bangladesh for its active role as a member of the HRC and recommended that Bangladesh continue its efforts to ensure the right to food for the citizens. It called on the international community to respond favourably to Bangladesh's request for capacity building and technical assistance to overcome the difficulties and challenges it faces.

55. Azerbaijan noted the level of cooperation between the government and civil society; and reforms contributing to the improvement of the legal framework. Azerbaijan commended Bangladesh for its firm intention to ensure the rights of vulnerable groups, emphasizing progress made in healthcare, and poverty reduction. Azerbaijan recommended that Bangladesh (a) further continue its efforts to improve the human right situation on the ground, with the technical and financial assistance of the international community; (b) consider ratifying ICRMW; (c) take further measures aimed at raising awareness about

human rights among the population at large; and (d) continue its efforts in combating corruption.

56. Nepal noted that Bangladesh adopted numerous laws and mechanisms to meet its obligations and uphold human rights. It underlined the commitment of Bangladesh towards the inclusion of religious minorities and tribal people in the national mainstream. Bangladesh's efforts to the socio-economic development are commendable. Nepal noted significant efforts in poverty alleviation, health and women's empowerment, social safety nets, progress towards the realization of the MDGs. It mentioned that the elected government works to consolidate democratic achievements along with vibrant civil society and free media.

57. Sudan noted that reform measures were introduced to assist the private sector, lead industrial development and provide social safety nets for vulnerable groups. Sudan recommended that the government (a) continue its efforts to protect and promote human rights in compliance with international standards; (b) share with the Sudan and other least and developing countries its best practice of the social safety net and empowerment. It requested the International community to help Bangladesh to encounter all challenges mentioned in its national report, especially poverty alleviation and improvement of the living standards of its people and all environmental constraints that challenge human rights and development efforts. Sudan urged the International Community to help Bangladesh through different programmes of capacity building and technical assistance.

58. The Minister stated that the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh was an independent organization that had already started functioning. Bangladesh had identified some areas which would need to be addressed to further strengthen it in line with the Paris Principles. She indicated the Government's willingness to provide all assistance, technical, financial and otherwise, to make it a strong institution dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights of the Bangladesh people.

59. The Minister drew attention to the national report that elaborated on Bangladesh's commitment and the measures taken to curb violence against women and children. She stated that in compliance with its national and international obligations, Bangladesh would continue working on this very important issue in partnership with NGOs and civil society organisations referring to several laws that address violence against women and children in Bangladesh. She also noted the existence of a separate tribunal for trying cases of violence against women and children. Moreover, she stated that Bangladesh would give full effort for strict implementation of existing laws and initiatives to promote and protect the human rights of women and children.

60. The Minister informed that Bangladesh was addressing the issue of child labour involving children in a comprehensive manner. She noted Government actions on children, including elimination of child labour and ensuring for the rights to health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation. She noted the Bangladesh's successful elimination of child labour from garment sector and the progress being made in other sectors. Bangladesh was trying to counter child labour in informal sectors through provision of free primary and secondary education and through cash for education programmes. She stated that Bangladesh was also committed to implementing the objectives of the global plan of action of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

61. The Minister referred to a number of governmental measures aimed at promoting development of the minority groups, noting different welfare trusts for people belonging to the Hindu, the Buddhist, and the Christian religion. She further referred to a council for inter-faith harmony, where religious leaders from all communities work collectively for development issues like prevention of HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, and primary

education. She further noted the government efforts to ensure representation of religious and ethnic minorities at all levels of government service, parliament and public life.

62. The Minister noted that the judiciary had been extremely cautious in awarding death sentences. The death penalty had been given only as exemplary punishments in case of most heinous crimes. The Minister referred to the right to appeal against the death sentence and the President's power to commute death sentences into other forms of punishment.

63. With regard to the accession to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the Minister noted that the Convention contains certain inherent weaknesses making it less relevant in today's situations related to refugee movement, including lack of mechanisms for preventing mass outflow, burden sharing, speedy assistance for those most in need or maximum utilization of the available resources.

64. Czech Republic recommended that Bangladesh (a) adopt further measures to fight impunity for human rights violations, including by law enforcement officials; (b) accede to OP-CAT and (c) the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. It asked whether and in which time frame pending visits from special procedures could take place, and recommended that Bangladesh (d) issue and implement a standing invitation to all special procedures. It further recommended that Bangladesh (e) review its domestic legislation and practice to bring them both in compliance with its international obligations in the area of the rights of the child, in particular regarding (i) protection against kidnapping and trafficking, and (ii) the juvenile justice system, including through providing adequate separate facilities of corresponding capacity for juveniles in detention or prison and adopting specific measures for the protection of their human rights. Asking whether women in mixed marriages can transfer their citizenship to their children, it recommended that Bangladesh: (f) amend the relevant legal provision; (g) provide human rights training to law enforcement and judicial officers, with a specific focus on the protection of the rights of women, children and persons of minority sexual orientation or gender identity, (h) adopt further measures to ensure protection of these persons against violence and abuse and (i) decriminalize same sex activity between consenting adults and adopt further measures to promote tolerance in this regard.

65. Palestine noticed that the government works to protect specific vulnerable groups. Palestine encouraged Bangladesh to proceed with adequate measures to eliminate gender disparities, attain equality through sustainable development, support actively the refugees and adopt a plan of action for eliminating child labor by promoting basic education. Palestine recommended that Bangladesh pursue its efforts in incorporating sustainable environmental development into its policies, considering the impact of natural disaster and degradation of natural resources on human rights despite all existing challenges.

66. Morocco welcomed Bangladesh's objectives, including to achieve the MDG's, in particular combating extreme poverty, through for example, the strategy to reduce poverty in isolated areas, the social protection programs and the fund for providing shelters for the homeless. Morocco requested more information on the NHRC.

67. Qatar indicated that Bangladesh is striving to realize human rights in a comprehensive manner. Policies adopted are related, inter alia, to good governance, human rights, economic and social development, combating poverty, promoting women's rights and an active and responsible society. Qatar mentioned that poverty remains a major problem of Bangladesh, and invited the OHCHR to extend assistance to the government in order to face the challenges impeding the development of human rights.

68. Mexico noted that there are reportedly a culture of impunity in Bangladesh, arbitrary and extrajudicial executions, a practice of torture and degrading treatments. It recommended that Bangladesh (a) develop a national human rights programme to give a new impetus to its commitment and determination to tackle these national problems, and

(b) extend a standing invitation to human rights mechanisms to visit the country and to support national efforts in these areas. It also recommended that Bangladesh positively consider acceding to (c) ICRMW, (d) CED and (e) ILO No. 169 Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples; and that it (f) consider accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and taking measures to ensure effective protection of the human rights of refugees.

69. Liechtenstein welcomed measures taken to increase girls and women's literacy rates. Recalling concerns expressed by CEDAW and CRC about the existence of harmful traditional practices, Liechtenstein (a) recommended that Bangladesh intensify its efforts to protect children from early and forced marriages. Stressing CEDAW's concern at the persistence of violence against women, including domestic violence, rape, acid throwing, dowry-related violence, fatwa-instigated violence and sexual harassment in the workplace, Liechtenstein recommended that Bangladesh (b) adopt a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women and girls. It also recommended (c) acceding to OP-CAT.

70. India congratulated Bangladesh for the significant steps taken recently to strengthen democracy and enhance the promotion and protection of human Rights. India noted the enactment of the Right to Information Act. They also praised the various achievements reached in primary education.

71. Cambodia commended efforts to conduct, among others, police and local government reforms. Efforts made to reduce poverty included the introduction of new social safety nets such as the Cash transfer Programme and the 100 Days of Employment Generation programme. Cambodia wished that Bangladesh continue those programmes. Cambodia recommended that Bangladesh continue to fight poverty with the active support of the international community.

72. China said that Bangladesh has taken effective measures to combat corruption, promote democracy, reform State institutions and the police system and promote national economic development. Remarkable results were achieved in advancing the status of women, protecting the rights and interests of minority groups and combating trafficking in persons. China called on the international community to continue to provide and increase economic and technical assistance to Bangladesh and help it to strengthen capacity building to raise the level of economic, social and cultural rights. China recommended to the government to continue to promote non- formal education in order to make greater progress in advancing people's education level.

73. Germany asked about measures envisaged to address the problem of food insecurity. It noted the serious concerns expressed by CRC, including on ill-treatment and violence against children, juvenile justice, and child labour. Germany asked about the measures taken to protect children, plans to increase the number of birth registrations and whether Bangladesh is considering withdrawing its reservations to the CRC. It recommended that Bangladesh (a) continue combating discrimination and violence against women and girls by enacting effective laws and implementing them effectively, (b) adopt without delay a uniform Family Code that fully complies with the provisions of CEDAW, and (c) fight impunity and holds all officers and persons acting on their behalf accountable for acts of torture and harassment of civilians.

74. Nigeria noted the efforts made regarding women's rights and empowerment as well as progress made in children's rights and welfare, education and primary healthcare. It called on the international community to provide support to Bangladesh to fulfil its human rights obligations and attain its overall MDGs. Nigeria congratulated and encouraged Bangladesh to continue to improve its policies and programs towards advancing the status of women, girls, children, including those with disabilities and the overall human rights

situation, both in the enjoyment of civil and political rights as well as social, economic and cultural rights.

75. Holy See noted positive measures against human rights violations, including the establishment of institutions addressing violence against women and children. It noted a number of cases where people suffered from violence and discrimination, especially women of minority religions, including Hinduism and Christianity. It recommended that Bangladesh investigate complaints concerning discrimination against members of minority religions, while developing educational and awareness programmes addressing these human rights violations. It asked about measures envisaged to confront the plight of indigenous peoples.

76. Italy recommended that Bangladesh (a) as a first step, consider amending their legislation on the death penalty in order to restrict its scope and adjust it to the international minimum standards on the death penalty, and (b) in light of the increasing awareness of the international community on the matter, as reflected in General Assembly resolutions approved in 2007 and 2008, consider the establishment of a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to abolition. Italy indicated that the special rapporteur on religious freedom noticed in 2000, some restrictions on religious freedom, in particular on the activities of the Ahmadis community and that the situation has not changed yet. It recommended that Bangladesh (c) consider enhancing the protection of religious freedom by adopting legislative measures and promoting awareness raising campaigns. Italy expressed concern about children's rights and asked about measures taken, including in particular on protecting girls from early and forced marriages. It recommended to Bangladesh to (d) intensify its efforts to implement without delay existing laws concerning the protection of the rights of the child, including the births and deaths registration Act of 2004.

77. Norway acknowledged efforts to strengthen the human rights situation and recommended that (a) full implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord be made a matter of priority and that a time frame for its full implementation be developed. Noting that Bangladesh accepted the individual complaint procedure under CEDAW, Norway recommended that it (b) consider ratifying other individual complaints procedures under the treaties to which it is a party. Norway recommended that Bangladesh (c) adopt a uniform Family Code that fully complies with the provision of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Noting CEDAW's concerns, Norway recommended (d) the adoption of a comprehensive action plan to address wage inequalities and that maternity leave be made available in all public and private employments. It recommended that Bangladesh (e) withdraw reservations to articles 2 and 16(1)(c) of CEDAW.

78. Islamic Republic of Iran mentioned that Bangladesh has made considerable socio-economic progress which has a positive influence on enjoyment of human rights. It welcomed the recent enactment or amendment of domestic human rights legislation and asked about measures to ensure enforcement at the national level of the conventions to which Bangladesh is a party.

79. United Kingdom welcomed reforms, including towards the separation of lower judiciary and the executive and the re-constitution of the Anti-Corruption and Election Commissions. Bangladesh retains reservations to some treaties. Extra-judicial killings, custodial deaths and torture are reported. Prisons are overcrowded and domestic violence remains commonplace. The prohibition of child labour is not always enforced in the informal sector and a high proportion of children with disabilities do not have access to mainstream primary education. It recommended (a) that Bangladesh take steps to devise a national strategy for delivering justice, to include the police, the judiciary, civil society and government; (b) the NHRC be given powers to effectively protect human rights in

accordance with the Paris principles; (c) that Bangladesh take further steps to address discrimination against vulnerable groups; and (d) the full involvement of civil society in the follow-up to this review.

80. Republic of Korea noted with satisfaction the Government's strong will to realize all human rights through democratic governance. It indicated that although Bangladesh adopted the prevention of women and children repression Act and the Acid Control Act, CEDAW and CRC expressed concern that violence against women and girls, including acid throwing continues to exist. It recommended to Bangladesh to adopt a comprehensive approach to address violence against women and girls and to take effective measures to protect them.

81. Tunisia underlined that Bangladesh makes important efforts to ensure human rights, and has constantly striven to involve all components of the society into the political and economic life. Women are playing more leadership roles. The government continues to give its support to school attendance by providing a financial assistance to poor families. Tunisia requested information on the implementation of these programmes and their social impact.

82. Slovenia recommended that Bangladesh reconsider its position on reservations to international human rights treaties and invited Bangladesh to accede to those international treaties to which it is not a party. Slovenia remained deeply concerned about reports of abuse and sexual molestation of girls and inaccessibility to school. It asked Bangladesh about the intended concrete steps to respond to the reports of CRC, CEDAW, UNICEF and others and to implement their recommendations on the issue of discrimination.

83. The Minister responded to the questions raised and comments made. She confirmed that Bangladesh is considering acceding to OP-CAT.

84. The Minister stated that Bangladesh is genuinely open to hosting the Special Procedures that are relevant to its contexts announcing that Bangladesh would soon be inviting a couple of special rapporteurs.

85. The Minister stated that protection of human rights is part of the regular training programmes designed for law enforcement and judicial officials and for other civil servants. She referred to the police reform project supported by UNDP and other bilateral development partners, under which gender sensitisation training programmes were held. She also referred to human rights training provided by bilateral development partners to some special law enforcing forces, including the Rapid Action Battalion. She expressed hope that the newly established National Human Rights Commission would play a critical role in raising awareness among the law enforcement personnel and judicial officials in terms of the obligation to respect human rights of the suspects in the course of their official work.

86. The Minister stated that Bangladesh had made considerable progress in addressing the problem of trafficking in women and children, noting that awareness campaigns and increased vigilance by concerned agencies had raised the number of arrests and prosecutions of perpetrators of human trafficking.

87. The Minister informed that Bangladesh had the policy of zero tolerance on matters of extra judicial killings, torture, and deaths in custody. She also informed that Bangladesh was working to initiate trials of war criminals who had committed crimes against humanity during the 1971 war of liberation.

88. The Minister stated that Bangladesh was committed to ensuring freedom of the media and protection of journalists underlining that partnership between NGOs and the Government had played a critical role in improving social indicators and expressing its intention to further strengthen this partnership.

89. The Permanent Representative of Bangladesh stated that the most important way of addressing the human rights in Bangladesh was considered to be ensuring the right to employment. He stated that the Bangladesh's economic growth approach had focused on areas where poor can get the jobs, particularly in the agriculture, infrastructure development as well as non-formal activities and rural activities. He noted that in order to generate the capabilities of the poor, education has been highly emphasized whereby the education sector had received high boost.

90. The Minister acknowledged that Bangladesh had immensely benefited from the dialogue as it offered an opportunity to exchange views on human rights situation in Bangladesh. Bangladesh took pride in the fact that many of its initiatives and ideas such as micro-credit and non-formal education were seen globally as examples of "best practices", while it remained keenly aware of its shortcomings.

91. The Minister noted that poverty eradication and ensuring basic livelihood, therefore, remained at the core of its development initiatives. She also noted that Bangladesh suffered from the perils of climate change for no fault of its own. All these impediments are seriously affecting socio-economic development of the Bangladeshi people, which would, in turn, have a negative impact on the full enjoyment of human rights.

92. The Minister expressed hope for a better understanding of the need to address the development concerns faced by Bangladesh and for support of the international community in this regard. She emphasized that achieving the MDGs was one of the necessary pre-conditions for fuller enjoyment of the rights of Bangladeshi citizens.

93. The Minister announced that Bangladesh would give due consideration to all the recommendations that are consistent with the expectations of the Bangladeshi people.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

94. **In the course of the discussion, the following recommendations were made to Bangladesh:**

1. **Consider ratifying or acceding to: OP-ICCPR 2, (Chile), OP-CAT (France, The Netherlands, Chile, Czech Republic, Liechtenstein); ICRMW (Chile, Azerbaijan, Mexico); CED (Chile, Mexico); other individual complaints procedures under the treaties to which it is a party (Norway); OP-ICCPR 1 (Chile); other core international treaties to which it is not a party (Slovenia).**
2. **Consider ratifying or acceding to: 1951 Refugee Convention (Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Mexico), bearing in mind resolution 9/12 of the Human Rights Council entitled "Human rights goals" (Brazil); ILO No. 169 Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (Mexico).**
3. **Reconsider its position on reservations (Slovenia); and withdraw reservations to CEDAW (France) and to Articles 2 and 16 (1) (c) of CEDAW (Norway).**
4. **Continue its efforts to protect and promote human rights in compliance with international standards (Sudan); Enhance the promotion and protection of fundamental human rights in accordance with the level of socio-economic development of the country in keeping with international human rights instruments (Lao PDR); Continue its efforts to ensure consistency between national laws and international human rights conventions which it has ratified (Egypt).**

5. Continue its efforts to strengthen its national human rights mechanisms and continuously upgrade its laws, policies and institutions in the area of the promotion and protection of human rights (Egypt).
6. Continue its efforts to develop the work of its national institution for human rights, as an effective human rights watchdog (Egypt); Give powers to the NHRC to effectively protect human rights in accordance with the Paris principles (United Kingdom).
7. Take steps to further strengthen the National Human Rights Commission and the Anti-corruption Commission to ensure that they will be able to operate independently and effectively (Netherlands, Australia).
8. Continue to improve its policies and programmes towards advancing the status of women, girls, children, including those with disabilities and the overall human rights situation, both in the enjoyment of civil and political rights as well as social, economic and cultural rights (Nigeria).
9. Take further measures aimed at raising awareness about human rights among the population at large (Azerbaijan).
10. Develop a national human rights programme to give a new impetus to its commitment and determination to tackle national problems, such as a culture of impunity, arbitrary and extrajudicial executions and a practice of torture and degrading treatment (Mexico).
11. Take steps to devise a national strategy for delivering justice, to include the police, the judiciary, civil society and government (United Kingdom).
12. Issue and implement a standing invitation to all special procedures (Czech Republic); Extend a standing invitation to human rights mechanisms to visit the country and to support national efforts in these areas (Mexico); Positively consider the visit requested by the special rapporteur on summary executions (Brazil).
13. Ensure the full and effective implementation of existing laws and policies relating to the rights of women and children, in order to protect these rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination (Thailand); Continue to place emphasis on poverty alleviation and eradication, on women's empowerment and children's rights (Singapore).
14. Pursue its positive efforts for the promotion and protection of the rights of women (Cuba); Strengthen and continue sharing its experience and the promotion of the role of gender in the national leadership (Lao PDR).
15. Take measures to ensure women's rights are protected through implementing existing laws such as the Early Marriage Act and the Dowry Act (Australia); Continue combating discrimination and violence against women and girls by elaborating effective laws and implementing them effectively, and adopt without delay (Germany) a uniform Family Code that fully complies with the provisions of CEDAW (Norway); Ensure that women's rights are protected, through effective implementation of existing laws, the development of a comprehensive national action plan to combat violence against women and the adoption of a family code complying with the provisions of CEDAW (Netherlands); Intensify its efforts to protect children from early and forced marriages (Liechtenstein); Amend, if necessary, the relevant discriminatory legal provision concerning the transfer of citizenship to children of women in mixed marriages (Czech Republic); Adopt a comprehensive action plan to

address wage inequalities and make available maternity leave in all public and private employments (Norway).

16. Taking into account the provisions of the CRC, take further measures to prohibit all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment and to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility (Brazil); Review its domestic legislation and practice to bring them both in compliance with its international obligations in the area of the rights of the child, in particular regarding (i) protection against kidnapping and trafficking, and (ii) the juvenile justice system including through providing adequate separate facilities of corresponding capacity for juveniles in detention or prison and adopting specific measures for the protection of their human rights (Czech Republic); Continue its efforts to further the enforcement of child rights and laws (Indonesia); Intensify its efforts to implement without delay existing laws concerning the protection of the rights of the child, including the births and deaths registration Act of 2004 (Italy).
17. Investigate complaints concerning discrimination against members of minority religions, while developing educational and awareness programmes addressing these human rights violations (Holy See).
18. Take further steps to address discrimination against vulnerable groups (United Kingdom); Take measures to ensure the effective protection of the human rights of refugees (Mexico).
19. Strongly encouraged to abolish the death penalty, and while awaiting such decision, to adopt a moratorium on executions (France); Recalling General Assembly resolution 62/149, establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty (Brazil); Adopt a moratorium on the death penalty, as a primary step towards its abolition (Chile); As a first step, consider amending their legislation on the death penalty in order to restrict its scope and adjust it to the international minimum standards on the death penalty, and, in the light of the increasing awareness of the international community on the matter, as reflected in General Assembly resolutions approved in 2007 and 2008, consider the establishment of a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to abolishing capital punishment in the national legislation (Italy).
20. Address the problems of extrajudicial killings and torture by security forces and improve prison situations (Netherlands).
21. Redouble its efforts and allocate more resources to address the problem of violence against women and children in this area, in particular through increasing women's empowerment, public awareness, education and training as well as increase vigilance and monitoring by the relevant authorities (Malaysia); Adopt a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women and girls (Liechtenstein); Adopt a comprehensive approach to address violence against women and girls and to take effective measures to protect them (Republic of Korea).
22. Take steps to eradicate child labour such as finalizing the National Child Labour Policy and implementing the plan of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (Australia); Ensure an effective monitoring mechanism to oversee the implementation of the National Child Labour Policy (Turkey); Eradicate child labour starting with taking steps to finalize the National child labour policy and to implement the plan of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (Netherlands).

23. Continue to take measures towards the effective implementation of the National Plan of Action against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children including Trafficking (Turkey).
24. Continue its efforts in combating corruption (Azerbaijan).
25. Continue its good work in further strengthening the judiciary in the country (Bhutan); Take measures to ensure the independence of the judiciary (Australia).
26. Take steps to address the culture of impunity for human rights violations by law enforcement agencies (Australia); Adopt further measures to fight impunity for human rights violations, including by law enforcement officials (Czech Republic); Fight impunity and hold all officers and persons acting on their behalf accountable for acts of torture and harassment of civilians (Germany).
27. Provide human rights training to law enforcement and judicial officers, with a specific focus on the protection of the rights of women, children and persons of minority sexual orientation or gender identity and adopt further measures to ensure protection of these persons against violence and abuse (Czech Republic); Consider abolishing article 377 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes sexuality against the “order of nature” (Chile); Decriminalize same sex activity between consenting adults and adopt further measures to promote tolerance in this regard (Czech Republic).
28. Take measures to protect human rights defenders, including journalists (Australia, Netherlands).
29. Consider enhancing the protection of religious freedom by adopting legislative measures and promoting awareness raising campaigns (Italy).
30. Continue its strategic plan adopted in 2005 for eliminating social and economic disparities in order to reduce poverty, in particular in isolated regions (Saudi Arabia); Spare no efforts to consolidate programmes of social protection and assistance, in particular programmes for the transfer of food, development programmes on behalf of vulnerable groups, particularly women in poverty, and micro-credit programmes which have produced positive results for this segment of the population (Venezuela); Continue to implement identified measures, plans and policies focusing mainly on poverty eradication (Zimbabwe); Create job opportunities and provide social services to face development challenges and combat poverty (Bahrain).
31. Continue its efforts to ensure the right to food for the citizens (Viet Nam).
32. Continue, while working with concerned parties, its comprehensive national strategy to improve the health situation, in particular to promote women’s health during pregnancy and post natal care (Saudi Arabia); Continue the efforts to draw up a national plan to provide health care to all without discrimination (Bahrain).
33. Pursue its positive efforts to promote and protect the right to education, including the education of girls (Cuba); Continue to promote non- formal education in order to make greater progress in advancing people’s education level (China).
34. Fully implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord as a matter of priority and develop a time frame for its full implementation (Norway, Australia).

35. Share its experience and best practices in realization of the right to food and the fight against poverty, in particular in the area of micro-credit, with other developing countries (Malaysia).
 36. Pursue its efforts, despite constraints, with the assistance and cooperation of the international community, to combat poverty, particularly among women, including material and non-material poverty (in terms of exclusion) (Algeria); Continue, with international support and cooperation, efforts to ensure basic necessities of its people, particularly in terms of food, clothing, shelter and education (Bhutan); Continue to fight poverty with the active support of the international community (Cambodia); Seek the help of the international community to counter all challenges, mentioned in its national report and especially poverty alleviation and improvement of the living standards of its people and all environmental constraints that challenge human rights and development efforts (Sudan), seek the help of the international community through different programmes of capacity building and technical assistance (Sudan); Share, with the Sudan and other least developing and developing countries its best practice of social safety nets and empowerment (Sudan).
 37. Pursue its efforts, with the assistance and cooperation of the international community, for the realization of the rights of women and women's empowerment as an important sector of society that can contribute significantly to the development of the country (Algeria).
 38. Further continue its efforts to improve the human rights situation on the ground, with the technical and financial assistance of the international community (Azerbaijan).
 39. Call on the international community to respond favourably to Bangladesh's request for capacity building and technical assistance to overcome the difficulties and challenges facing the country (Viet Nam).
 40. Build with international support the national capacities to fulfil the reporting obligations to treaty bodies (Egypt).
 41. Pursue its efforts within the Human Rights Council on the issue of climate change and human rights (Algeria); Continue and strengthen, with international support and cooperation, its efforts to mitigate the negative impact of climate change, as well as disaster management programmes (Bhutan); Pursue its efforts in incorporating sustainable environmental development into its policies, considering the impact of natural disaster and degradation of natural resources on human rights despite all existing challenges (Palestine).
 42. The full involvement of civil society in the follow-up to this review (United Kingdom).
95. The response of Bangladesh to these recommendations will be included in the outcome report adopted by the Human Rights Council at its eleventh session.
96. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review thereon. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Bangladesh was headed by H.E. Dr. Dipu Moni, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and composed of 14 members:

Ms. Munira Khan, Member National Human Rights Commission;

Mr. Mahbubey Alam, Attorney General;

His Excellency Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva;

Mr. Md. Zulfiqur Rahman, Director General (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Mr. Maksumul Hakim Chaudhury, Joint Secretary (Political), Ministry of Home Affairs;

Mr. Md. Mustafizur Rahman, Minister, Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva;

Ms. Sumaiya Khair, Professor, Department of Law, University of Dhaka;

Mr. Muhammed Enayet Mowla, Counsellor, Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva;

Mr. Khondker M Talha, Counsellor, Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva;

Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Director (Foreign Minister's Office), Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Ms. Nahida Sobhan, Director (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Mr. Sharif Mostafa Karim, Deputy Secretary (Administration), Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs;

Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi, First Secretary, Bangladesh Permanent Mission, Geneva;

Ms. Shanchita Haque, Senior Assistant Secretary (UN-1), Ministry of Foreign Affairs.