



ADB OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific

Combating Corruption In the New Millennium

The Secretariat

FORMAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTION PLAN FOR ASIA-PACIFIC (Tokyo, 30 November 2001)

BANGLADESH

**Name of Speaker: Dr. Abdul Moyeen KHAN
Minister for Information
Ministry of Information**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues and participants, ladies and gentlemen.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to participate at this Conference on Combating Corruption in the Asia-Pacific Region.

I thank the organizers and sponsors of the Conference for inviting me down here, my greetings and best wishes to all of you.

It has become quite evident from our deliberations here during the last two days that corruption is a huge systematic and endemic problem in the countries of Asia and Pacific. It throttles our efforts for the better quality of life for all gracious people. We in Bangladesh, have remained a perennial pray of this cult that has already been identified as one of the principal causes of underdevelopment and economic backwardness.

In fact, corruption was one of the main issues in the recently held parliamentary general elections in Bangladesh. Our party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, took a firm position against rampant corruption which resulted from the actions of the immediately past Government, which even led to Bangladesh being branded as the most corrupt nation in the world in one of the reports of Transparency International, who is participating in this Conference.

Our landslide election victory shows that the people of Bangladesh have given an emphatic verdict against political and administrative corruption.

We are therefore pledge-bound to implement the Anti-Corruption measures. These are contained not only in our election manifesto but also as a part of the commitment being made in this Conference, under the joint auspices of the ADB and the OECD, and, as part of our commitment made to our people, just before the last elections.

Mr. Chairman, it may be of interest to the participants of this Conference that the top three items in our election manifesto are linked to combating bad governance.

The first item was the restoration of law and order, made necessary as a consequence of corrupt practices. It was stipulated that the administrative and law enforcing agencies would be de-politicized and their actions would be made more transparent and more accountable.

The second item was the direct control of corruption, where appointment of abolishment as early as possible including establishment of an independent and autonomous anti-corruption commission has been stipulated. Transparency in government partners and disclosures of assets and properties of public representatives had also been pledged in this section.

Thirdly, was an item on administration and justice. We made a commitment for upholding economic and social justice through the process of parliamentary democracy, transparency and accountability of government activities. This requires the separation of the judiciary from the executive and the freedom of state owned radio and television, which we are already implementing.

The Government of Prime Minister Bekon Ghalisas Azia is bound to implement these commitments in successive phases. The present conference and the adoption of the Action Plan could not have been more appropriate for us in our own context. Mr. Chairman, we consider the Anti-Corruption Plan for Asia and the Pacific to be very appropriate, timely and relevant. This, in fact, brought me here to confirm the commitment of our Government to this exercise.

The real challenge does not indeed lie in just the formulation and adoption of a plan. It lies in the implementation process. Here, we need to strengthen and overhaul our legal and institutional framework and seek a radical change for the better in our social and cultural attitudes, ethics and morality.

The pillars that we seek to erect, as I have said before, are those for developing effective and transparent systems for public services, strengthening anti-corruption actions and promoting integrity in business operations. Supporting active public involvement and, if possible, subsequently trying to raise the voices of the grassroots are the real challenges which we have to face in the coming future.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot lose hope for our future, and we must contribute to striving harder and harder to rescue our teeming millions from the dark abuse of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, malnutrition and other forms of deprivation. Declaring an all out war against political administrative and business corruption in the countries of the Asia-Pacific region can be a very good starting point for attaining that noble goal.

Mr. Chairman, I do hereby convey the consent of our Government to the Action Plan already taken here and I believe together in the Asia-Pacific region we will work in every way to achieve the welfare of the people of this region.

Thank you very much.