

Statement made by Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh

**Second Ambassadors' Round Table on Investing in the SDGs
Monday 11 November 2019, 1500 – 1800 hrs (Room: XVIII, Palais des Nations)**

Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

How Can international platforms like World Investment Forum help increase public and private sector commitments to the SDGs ?

- Last year, the World Investment Forum 2018 referred to UNCTAD's estimate that developing countries will need between \$3.3 trillion to \$4.5 trillion per year for SDG advancement. According to available figures from 2018, there is an annual investment shortfall of \$2.5 trillion.
- According to UNCTAD's *World Investment Report 2019*: FDI flows to structurally weak and vulnerable economies continued to account for less than 3 per cent of the global total. Flows to the least developed countries recovered from their 2017 fall, back to \$24 billion, the average for the decade. FDI flows to economies in transition continued their downward trend in 2018, declining by 28 per cent to \$34 billion.
- Many are suggesting industrial transformation, upgrading GVC, and movement towards higher value-added industries as objectives of transforming strategies for developing countries. Isn't it like 'putting the cart before the horse'?. Before any such initiatives, the financing source, availability of resources and viable technological base must be ensured for the emerging economies and LDCs.
- Investment is not a panacea and investment alone will not be helpful to attain the SDGs, it must be value added. FDI should be facilitated considering the local priorities and particularities. Particularly in the transforming economies and LDCs, value addition in investment faces capacity constraint. Development partners should support these countries so that the FDI becomes effective.
- Blended finance is a much touted term in financing and the global trend shows clear bias towards advanced developing countries. LDCs remain uncertain on credit rating and motivation of private sector investment in the SDG related sectors. In addition, for many of us, graduation is an issue of honour that comes with serious challenges of losing of preferences and special treatment. Smooth transition is a prerequisite of attainment of SDGs for the graduating LDCs.
- The targets of the SDGs are cross-cutting with complex challenges of localization. To better cater to the SDGs implementation challenges, Bangladesh has mapped its SDG related work designated lead Ministries/agencies and has completed data gap analysis that shows that we have data for 70 indicators, partially available data for 108 indicators and will need to devise new mechanism to mine data for the remaining 63 indicators. For several indicators, targets to achieve within 2030 are not clearly specified and 33 targets are also not quantifiable. Since 2015, we have aligned most of our national policies with the targets of SDGs, which in turn have been aligned with the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) of different ministries/divisions. We are one of the few countries which submitted VNR in 2017 to UN HLPF.

- According to costing projections made up to 2030, Bangladesh would require about USD 928 bn i.e. USD 68 bn per year. We have also identified 5 potential sources of financing gap including public, private, public-private partnership, external including FDI, grants and NGOs. However, it is just that - costing projection. The actual flow of financing is yet to be assessed.
- Following the government initiatives, 10 prominent NGOs have prepared SDGs Mapping showing their interest in actions related to SDGs targets. Based on information collected from leading private sector enterprises through questionnaires actions that are compatible with SDGs have been identified. The private sector developed some business cases particularly in water and sanitation, renewable energy and IT sectors. Government has approved a wholly state-owned venture capital company called 'Start-up Bangladesh Limited'.
- Clearly, as in Climate Change, Bangladesh has done its initial part. Now we sincerely look for meaningful collaboration and support from development partners for implementation of SDG strategies. I am sure many other countries, particularly among LDCs, have also done their initial planning on SDG implementation.
- That brings me to the question – how can International community in Geneva help beyond learning from each other? Has UNCTAD's World Investment Forum performed as more than just a platform to connect the private and public sector and the NGOs. Are there examples of catalyzing collaboration among governments represented in Geneva, specialized organizations and other stakeholders? As I already said, investment is not a stand-alone remedy. For successful implementation of the cross-cutting SDGs, priority-based investment is key and we need mutual, unconditional cooperation among us. We need to bridge the gap between promise and performance.

Thank you.