



Bangladesh's leadership of the Climate Vulnerable Forum

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The wisdom of the leadership was reflected in the articulation of its central message: "[We are] standing indivisible as we are in our determination to act to bring about a resolution to the global menace of climate change which ultimately entails ever greater human suffering, inequity and irreversible damage to the Earth."

Then again, the Dhaka-Glasgow Declaration adopted in 2021 during the second term of Bangladesh's leadership reflected the summary of CVF's core demands and commitments. It renewed the call for high-emitting countries to keep the 1.5 degrees Celsius pledge alive under

including climate migrants. The latter is an issue the prime minister of Bangladesh has been pushing for very strongly at every opportunity.

So, thanks to the strong political lobbying at the highest level by the prime minister of Bangladesh, the COP26 in Glasgow secured the commitment for increased adaptation finance and international dialogue on loss and damage. The strong leadership of Bangladesh in the CVF on loss and damage as the number one priority strongly contributed to the establishment and operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund finally at COP28, held in Dubai in December 2023. Other significant achievements during

protection of human rights in the context of climate change at the 48th session of the UN Human Rights Council, and the establishment of an IUCN Climate Crisis Commission at the September 2021 World Conservation Congress at Marseille. These were a clear signal that the impact of climate change is both a human rights and an ecological crisis that the world community must respond to, including by leveraging and creating synergies between climate change and biological diversity.

During Bangladesh's leadership of CVF, in October 2021 the CVF Global Parliamentary Group was established for active engagement of the



One thread that binds all CVF countries together is their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

VISUAL: STAR



A Bangladeshi villager evacuates to a cyclone shelter on the coast in Cox's Bazar district on May 30, 2017.

PHOTO: AFP

the Paris Agreement and raise their climate ambitions. We may recall that at the CVF leadership meeting, Hasina in her statement summarised the most pressing priorities of the forum such as: the major emitters must submit ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and implement those; developed countries should fulfil their commitments of providing \$100 billion annually with a 50:50 balance between adaptation and mitigation; the developed countries should disseminate clean and green technology at affordable costs to the most vulnerable countries; and the issue of loss and damage must be addressed,

Bangladesh's second leadership term include launching of the Midnight Survival Deadline for countries to raise their climate ambitions, which urged them to submit their NDCs by December 31, 2020. About 70 nations responded to this call. Also, Bangladesh led the establishment of the CVF-V20 Joint Multi-Donor Fund to support members in their climate action. Besides, some other important steps then taken were establishment of a new Special Rapporteur on the promotion and

parliamentarians of all CVF members in the CVF Global Parliamentary Group in order to benefit from the exchange of legislative good practices and to enhance international engagement and cooperation on climate action with the legislative bodies of major economies.

MUJIB CLIMATE PROSPERITY PLAN REPLICATED

Following the adoption by Bangladesh of its "Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan" in 2020, many members of CVF have already or are in the process of preparing similar plans to chart and implement strategic

investment pathways to deliver robust socio-economic development for accelerating prosperity. As the Bangladesh leader indicated, the MCCP changed the narrative from vulnerability to resilience to prosperity. This was reflected in the commendation by other leaders of CVF. For example, the Closing Press Release by the CVF Secretary General on the adoption of the UAE Consensus contained profuse appreciation of such initiatives. Here is a quote from the press release: "Bangladesh's Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan has effectively utilised the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Resilience and Sustainability Fund (RSF), securing \$1.4 billion. This fund, complemented by multilateral, private, and bilateral resources, is crucial for realising our Climate Prosperity Plans. Furthermore, our engagement with China in making the Belt and Road Initiative more sustainable exemplifies our commitment to shared prosperity, as underscored by the UAE Consensus."

LEADERSHIP FOCUSING ON CLIMATE JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

Bangladesh's leadership was always very strong in demanding adequate finance based on justice considerations. For example, in response to the Paris Agreement's provision of a new collective quantified goal to be reached by 2025, the Dhaka-Glasgow Declaration included a clause of a Delivery Plan for the annual \$100 billion in climate finance from developed countries over the period 2020-2024 totalling \$500 billion as additional finance in support of developing country climate actions which include Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans.

The declaration also called for regional and multilateral development banks to integrate vulnerability criteria. Amid a worsening debt crisis compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, climate finance must also reverse the otherwise increasing share of climate finance as loans, and a decreasing share of grants, helping to lessen and not worsen our

debt burden, and free up the necessary fiscal space for ambitious climate action.

It also called for the launching of an Emergency Coalition for Climate Resilient Debt Restructuring to harness debt servicing payments for investments in climate resilience and consistent with a rapid transition to 100 percent renewable energy.

The Dhaka-Glasgow Declaration further called upon urgent discussion, study and work of the IMO for establishing a mandatory GHG levy on international shipping so that majority of such revenues be employed as additional support for urgent climate actions, particularly by the vulnerable developing countries. The declaration also called for a Climate Emergency Pact to rebuild confidence in international climate cooperation, accelerate adaptation and to keep the 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature goals within reach.

ACTIVE DIPLOMACY BY BANGLADESH WITH A 'WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT' APPROACH

Finally, Bangladesh carried out very strong and intensive diplomacy on all fronts to promote the CVF agenda. This was reflected in a number of initiatives by the Bangladeshi missions in Geneva, London, New York and elsewhere. Here are a few examples: the CVF Joint Session with Bangladesh Permanent Mission in Geneva on Climate Change priorities on Health, Labour and Human Rights dimensions were held on February 9, 2021; CVF Commonwealth Dialogue's Call for a Climate Prosperity Partnership' (March 2, 2021); Joint Statement on Climate Change and Human Rights at the 46th session of HRC (March 9, 2021); CVF Parliaments-Global Renewables Congress on Shifting from fossil fuel to renewables (March 24, 2021). Thus, a whole of government approach, led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, earned global acclaim in putting the CVF on the right track. It is expected that now Ghana and the future CVF leaders will carry the torch forward to realise its ultimate mission.



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PHOTO: MOHAMMAD PONIR HOSSAIN