

**IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme – 60 Years and
Beyond: Contributing to Development**

**Statement
by
H. E. Sheikh Hasina
Hon'ble Prime Minister
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

**Director General Mr. Yukiya Amano,
Her Excellency Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim ,President of Mauritius,
His Excellency Mr. Tabaré Vázquez ,President of Uruguay,
Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Assalamu Alaikum and Good Morning to you all.

I extend my felicitations to all Member States and the IAEA on the 60th anniversary of the IAEA. I congratulate Mr. Yukiya Amano for his leadership and the Agency for its dedicated efforts in the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under its motto 'Atoms for Peace and Development', in the last 60 years. I also thank IAEA for its support to Bangladesh in its development over the last 45 years.

IAEA holds a special place in Bangladesh's development and energy security. It is one of the first few intergovernmental organizations that granted membership to Bangladesh in 1972, immediately after our war of liberation. I recall references to this organization from Late Dr. MA Wazed Miah, an eminent nuclear scientist who used to visit IAEA as leader of the Bangladesh Delegation in the IAEA General Conference.

It is his bold and forward-looking initiatives that gave the earliest expression to the dream of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to build peaceful nuclear energy in Bangladesh. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman decided to establish an Atomic Energy Research Establishment with the aim to transform the war-ravaged country into a prosperous “Golden Bengal”. In fact, a small Research Reactor has been running successfully in this centre for more than 30 years for research, radioisotope production, education and training purposes.

Bangladesh today is regarded as a model country for its socio-economic achievement, with an economic growth rate of 7.24% this year. Science, technology and innovation played a major role in our achievement. A group of Bangladeshi scientists deciphered the complete genetic code of jute with a great success. We have also devised “science diplomacy” to ensure partnership for sustainable economic development through knowledge generation and sharing.

We aim to make full use of science, technology and innovation to achieve a “Digital Bangladesh”. Accordingly, in the National Science and Technology Policy and the 7th Five Year Plan (2016 to 2021), we have focused on finding solutions to the emerging problems in the sectors of agriculture, food, health, environment and climate change through application of science and technology. The digitization of some public services has helped us to bring the fruits of economic development to the door steps of the rural people.

Excellencies,

Bangladesh enjoys an excellent collaboration with IAEA. We have successfully completed 138 national projects under Technical Cooperation (TC) and participated in 111 regional projects under Regional Cooperative Agreement (RCA). Recently Bangladesh successfully hosted the 39th Meeting of the National RCA representatives.

Under the framework of IAEA's Technical Cooperation programme, we have received support in many areas, such as, promoting nuclear education and research, food safety, food security, human healthcare improvement, use of isotopes techniques in water and environment system management, industrial applications like Non Destructive Testing (NDT), crop and livestock improvement, control of pests etc. Amongst these many activities, let me share two concrete examples of Bangladesh's achievement in the peaceful use of nuclear technology:

First, Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA) has developed high yielding, high nutritive, short duration, salt and submergence tolerant, climate resilient mutant varieties of different crops, by using nuclear technology, radiation and other advanced techniques. We have already developed 92 improved varieties of 13 crops. BINA was awarded with the "Outstanding Achievement Award" in 2014 by FAO-IAEA for its contribution towards the achievement of food security. Bangladesh today is self-sufficient in staple food production and even able to export surplus food grains.

Second, the number of people who can affordably access diagnostic medical care in Bangladesh has increased 10 times over

the last twenty years, as the country has expanded and strengthened its nuclear medicine services. 15 public and 6 private nuclear medicine Institutes in the country carry out more than 400,000 nuclear medicine procedures each year in the areas of oncology, cardiology, nephrology, Thyroid, invitro studies and cerebral studies. Uses of most recent nuclear technologies in the treatment of cancer are a real help to the people of Bangladesh. We have also built well-trained medical staff, advanced imaging tools and a cost-effective source of essential radiopharmaceuticals. As a result, life expectancy has increased and public health indicators have improved remarkably.

Excellencies,

I am happy to announce that Bangladesh has recently stepped into nuclear power generation programme. We regard nuclear energy as a safe, environment friendly and economically viable source of electricity generation to meet the ever increasing demand of electricity of 160 million people of the country and thus unlock our development potentials through enhanced productivity and sustained growth. The Russian supported Rooppur power plant will produce 2400 Mega Watts (MW) electricity by two reactors. Our aim is to generate at least 4000 MW of electricity from nuclear source by 2030.

Excellencies,

Capacity building and transfer of technologies are much needed by the developing countries to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I would call upon developing countries to

forge greater cooperation to draw maximum benefits from the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies through IAEA expertise. I would also call upon the developed countries to help maintain IAEA resources assured and sufficient for the Technical Cooperation (TC) programmes. I call upon IAEA to strengthen its efforts to help member states particularly the LDCs and developing countries to implement the SDGs.

Excellencies,

In conclusion, I would like to say that, Bangladesh is solidly anchored at its principled position on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Bangladesh remains committed to working with IAEA and other international partners in ensuring due diligence of the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

I thank you.

Joy Bangla.

Joy Bangabandhu.